

# General Assistance Emergency Housing and Shelters

**Presentation from the Department for Children and Families for  
the House Human Services and General & Housing Committees**

# Demographic of Current Households

## Catastrophic

- Fire, Flood, Death of a Spouse or minor child
- Domestic Violence/Sexual Violence
- Constructive Eviction - No Cause
- Court ordered eviction

## Vulnerable

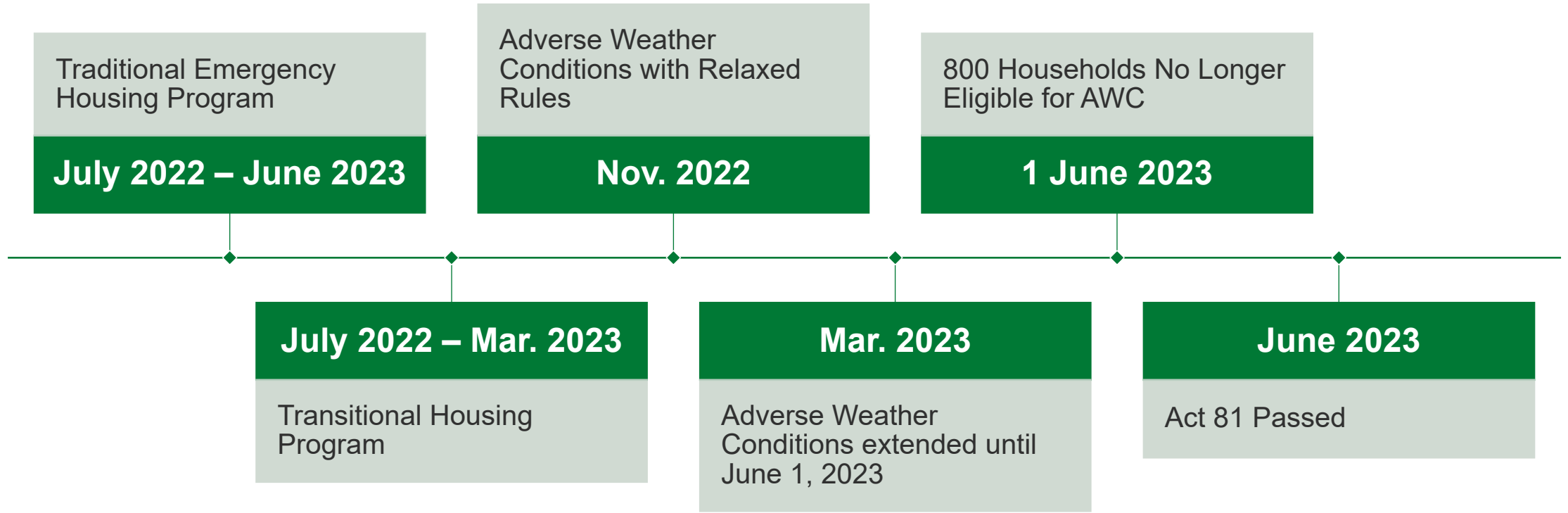
- SSI/SSDI Recipient
- Age 65+
- Pregnant in 3rd Trimester
- Children under 18 or 19 if still attending school.
- Points: Disabled Vet, Open Family Services Case, SSI/SSDI Applicant, discharged from hospital stay, discharged from DCF Custody w/in last 3 years, RU Recipient, Probation or parole

## Adverse Weather Conditions

- Dependent upon weather November 15th to December 15th and March 15th to April 15th
- Non-weather dependent December 15th to March 15th
- Homeless households
- Ineligible if refused shelter bed or other alternative housing

- Eligibility criteria has been the same for several years except hybrid AWC (date to date, non-weather dependent) continues housing between December 15<sup>th</sup> and March 15<sup>th</sup> since the pandemic.
- “Cohort” participants meet the definition of catastrophic or vulnerable, with a few exceptions (could be age 60+)

# The General Assistance Emergency Assistance Housing SFY'23 Program Timeline



# Households By District

This is the current district data on all households in the GA Housing program as of 2/5/2024.

District Office	Total Eligible Households	Cohort Households	Non-Cohort Households	Adverse Weather Conditions
Barre	174	79	15	80
Bennington	186	72	10	104
Brattleboro	218	76	15	127
Burlington	297	104	26	167
Hartford	82	37	11	34
Middlebury	16	6	2	8
Morrisville	26	11	2	13
Newport	23	7	3	13
Rutland	408	174	27	207
Springfield	58	25	6	27
St Albans	71	16	9	46
St Johnsbury	69	9	11	49
<b>Total</b>	<b>1628</b>	<b>616</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>875</b>

# June Cohort (as of 2/5/2024)



1,289

Number of households in the 6/30 cohort on July 1st



616

Number of households in the 6/30 cohort on February 5th.



674

Number of households transitioned out of 6/30 cohort since July 1st



\$131

Average nightly rate this week

# Households in 6/30 Cohort By Size

This is the current district data on all households in the GA Housing program as of 1/22/2024.

District Office	1 person in household	2 people in household	3+ people in household	Total # of Adults	Total # of Children
Barre	41	20	18	107	39
Bennington	46	11	19	96	49
Brattleboro	65	7	7	86	19
Burlington	61	21	25	137	62
Hartford	30	<6	<6	41	12
Middlebury	<6	0	<6	6	<6
Morrisville	10	0	<6	13	<6
Newport	6	<6	0	8	0
Rutland	102	34	43	232	91
Springfield	11	11	<6	36	9
St. Albans	12	<6	<6	20	<6
St. Johnsbury	<6	<6	<6	13	11
<b>Total:</b>	<b>393</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>795</b>	<b>299</b>

# Eligibility Category of Households

This is the current eligibility data on all households in the GA Housing program as of 2/5/2024.

Eligibility Category	6/30 Cohort Households
Age 60+	46
Disabled (SSI/SSDI)	345
Domestic Violence	25
Families with Children	134
Health Code Violations/Eviction	55
Natural Disaster (Fire, Flood, Hurricane)	<6
Pregnant	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>616</b>

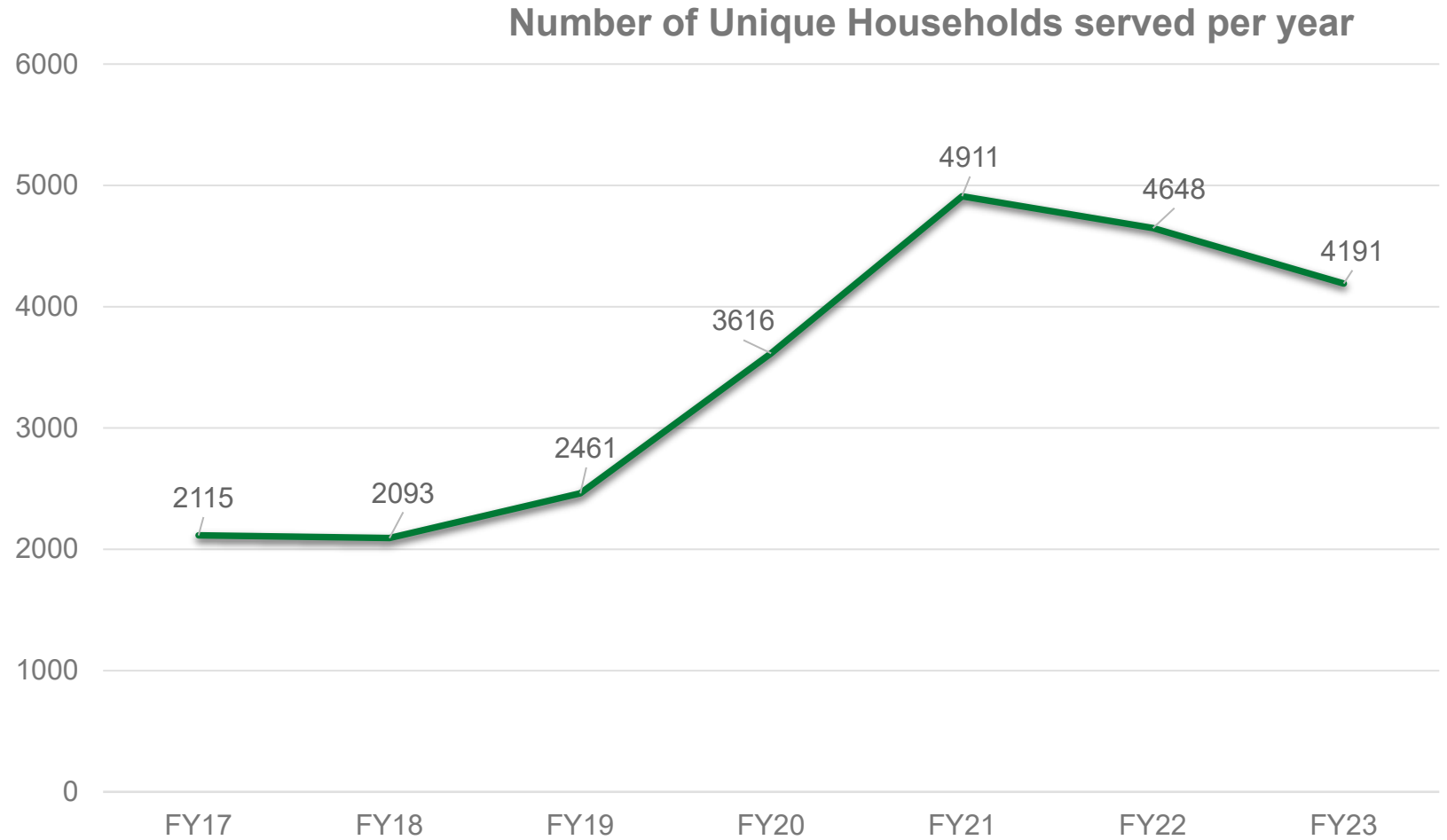
**Notes:** The [range of individuals in SSI/SSDI](#) crosses a range of acuity and health challenge– it can be mental health, chronic health condition, or a physical disability. However, everyone must have had a determination by the federal Social Security Administration.

# GA Housing by Program Category as of 2/5/24

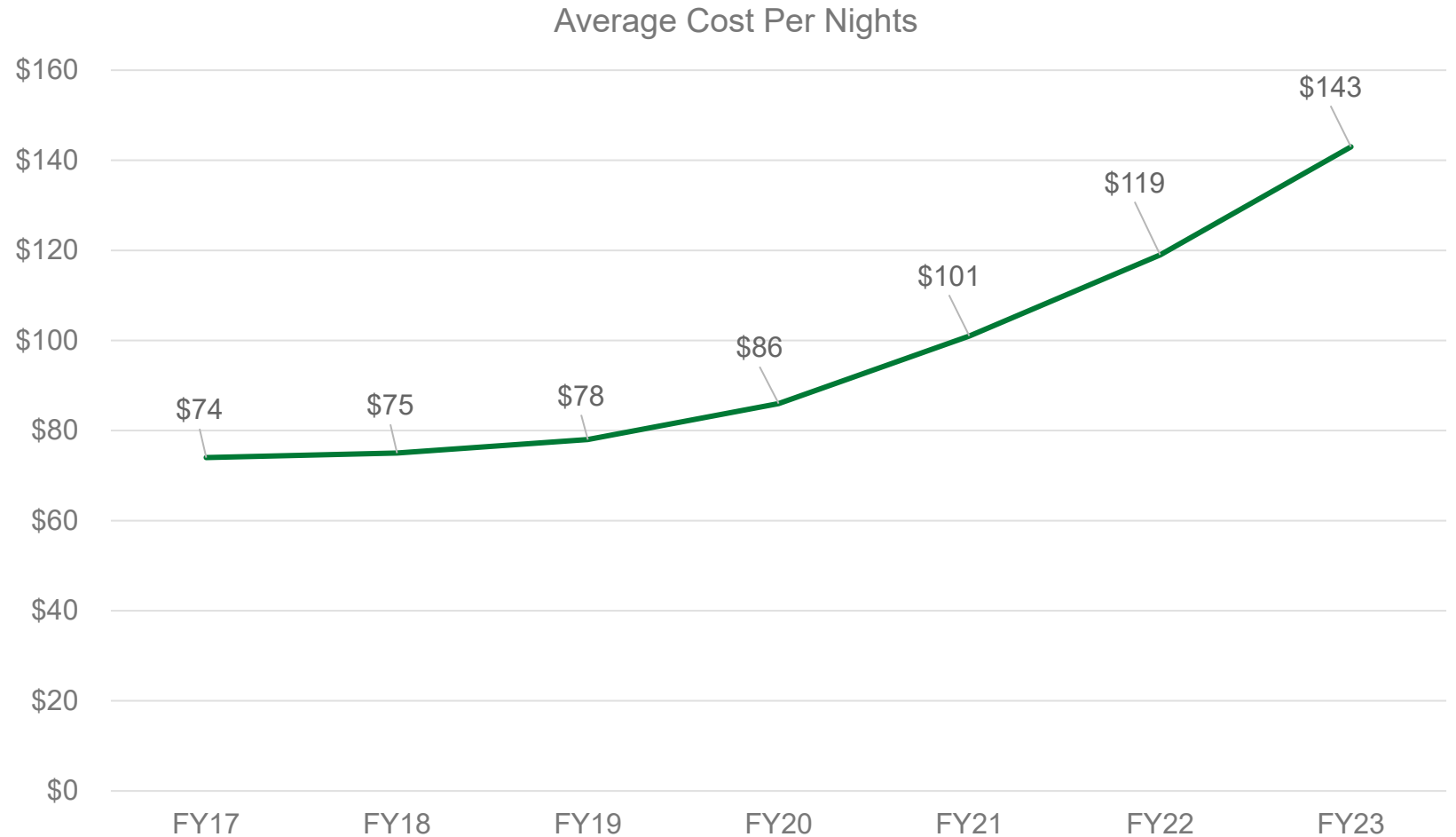
Group	# Households	# Individuals	Adults	Children
6/30 Cohort	616	1055	774	281
Categorically Eligible	137	246	168	78
Adverse Weather	875	1304	1028	276
<b>Total</b>	<b>1628</b>	<b>2605</b>	<b>1970</b>	<b>635</b>



# GA Households Served Annually



# Average cost per night for hotels & motels



In 6 years, the average cost of a motel room nearly doubled.

# Total cost of GA over the years



# Key concerns with the motel system

Inconsistent access to onsite support for services

Service and healthcare providers have safety concerns providing services onsite at some locations

Health and safety concerns in general; condition of hotels

Concerns of exploitation and abuse of guests

Movement across districts de-stabilizes health and social services

Inconsistent amenities (kitchen, laundry, etc.)

# High costs for low return

The current hotel/motel program is expensive:

**\$132 Average nightly rate the week of 12/26/2023**

**That's about \$4,000/month without providing any services.**

## Common services at shelters include:

Case Management	Ability to receive mail
Housing Navigation	Access to a computer
Warm meals	Connection to Recovery coaching
Laundry facility	Job Readiness workshops
Health/mental health care	Substance use treatment

# Housing Opportunity Grant Program

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

- \$27 million of state and federal funding (current year)
- OEO partners with over 40 programs
- SFY24 includes \$7.8 in one-time funds (predominantly funding emergency shelter and financial assistance)

# Housing Opportunity Grant Program (HOP)

SFY24 HOP Awards Summary

Emergency Shelter, Operations & Essential Services (seasonal, year-round, DV, motel pool, emergency apartments, day shelters, extreme cold weather shelters)

Transitional Housing

Homelessness Prevention (Services)

Rapid Re-housing (Services, Rental Assistance)

Coordinated Entry Assessment & Housing Navigation

Innovation

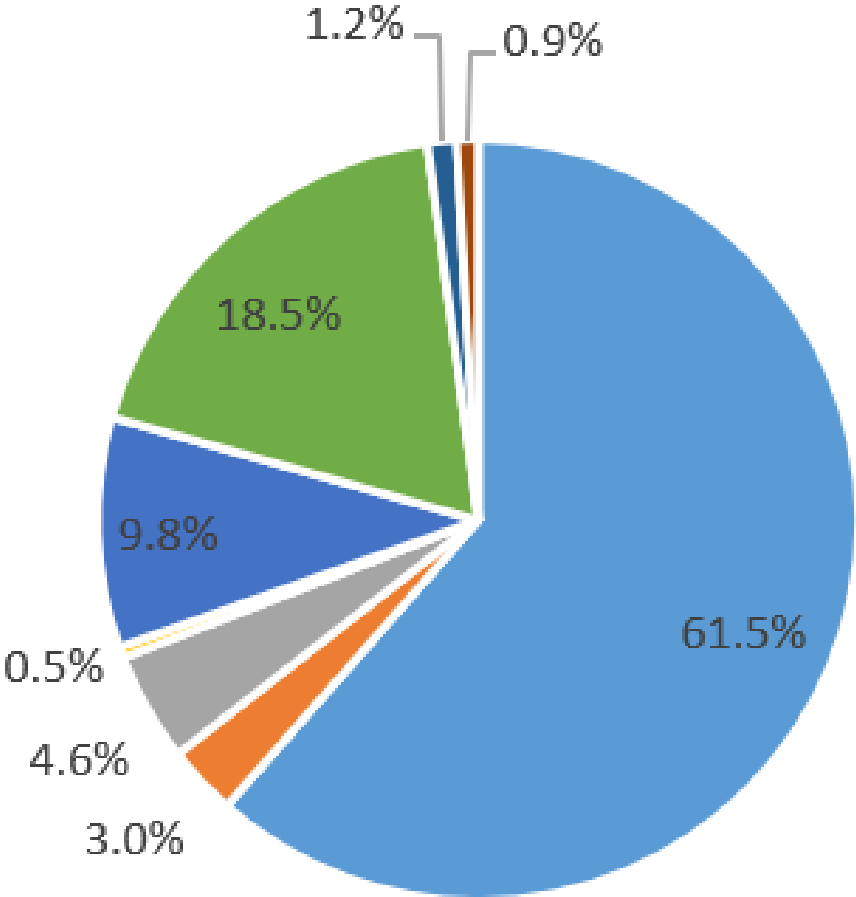
Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)

Flexible Client-Based Financial Assistance

# HOP SFY24 Awards

## SFY24 Awards

- Emergency Shelter
- Rapid Re-Housing
- Homelessness Prevention
- Transitional Housing
- Coordinated Entry Assessment & Housing Navigation
- Financial Assistance
- Innovation
- HMIS





# HOP Flexible Client- Based Financial Assistance

## Rapid Resolution/Prevention:

- Up to \$8,000 per household every three years
  - Essential Household Items (\$750/per household with adults only, \$1500/per household with adults and children)
- Can cover a range of costs tied to a households “housing stability plan”
- Currently homeless or at-risk of homelessness
- Applications submitted to a local fund administrator jointly by household and case manager

Currently \$5 million, with at least \$3 million in one-time funds

## Local Fund Administrators:

- BROC Community Action (Bennington)
- Capstone Community Action (Barre & Morrisville)
- Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity (Burlington & St. Albans)
- Homeless Prevention Center (Rutland)
- HOPE (Middlebury)
- Northeast Kingdom Community Action (Newport & St. Johnsbury)
- Springfield Supported Housing (Springfield)
- Southeastern Vermont Community Action (Brattleboro)
- Upper Valley Haven (Hartford)
- Vermont Network Against Domestic & Sexual Violence (Statewide)

# Average Shelter Costs



---

Per household, per night shelter project: \$90-150/night\*

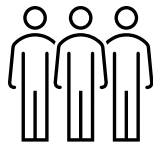
---



---

Least expensive is the emergency apartment model for families (best practice) and young adults.

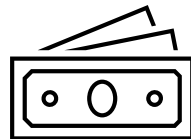
---



---

In a facility-based project, the most cost-effective models seem to be between 20-30 households.

---



---

In older projects, OEO tends to fund a lower share of the project, for more recent projects OEO is funding 95-100% of the cost.

---

\*analysis from summer 2023

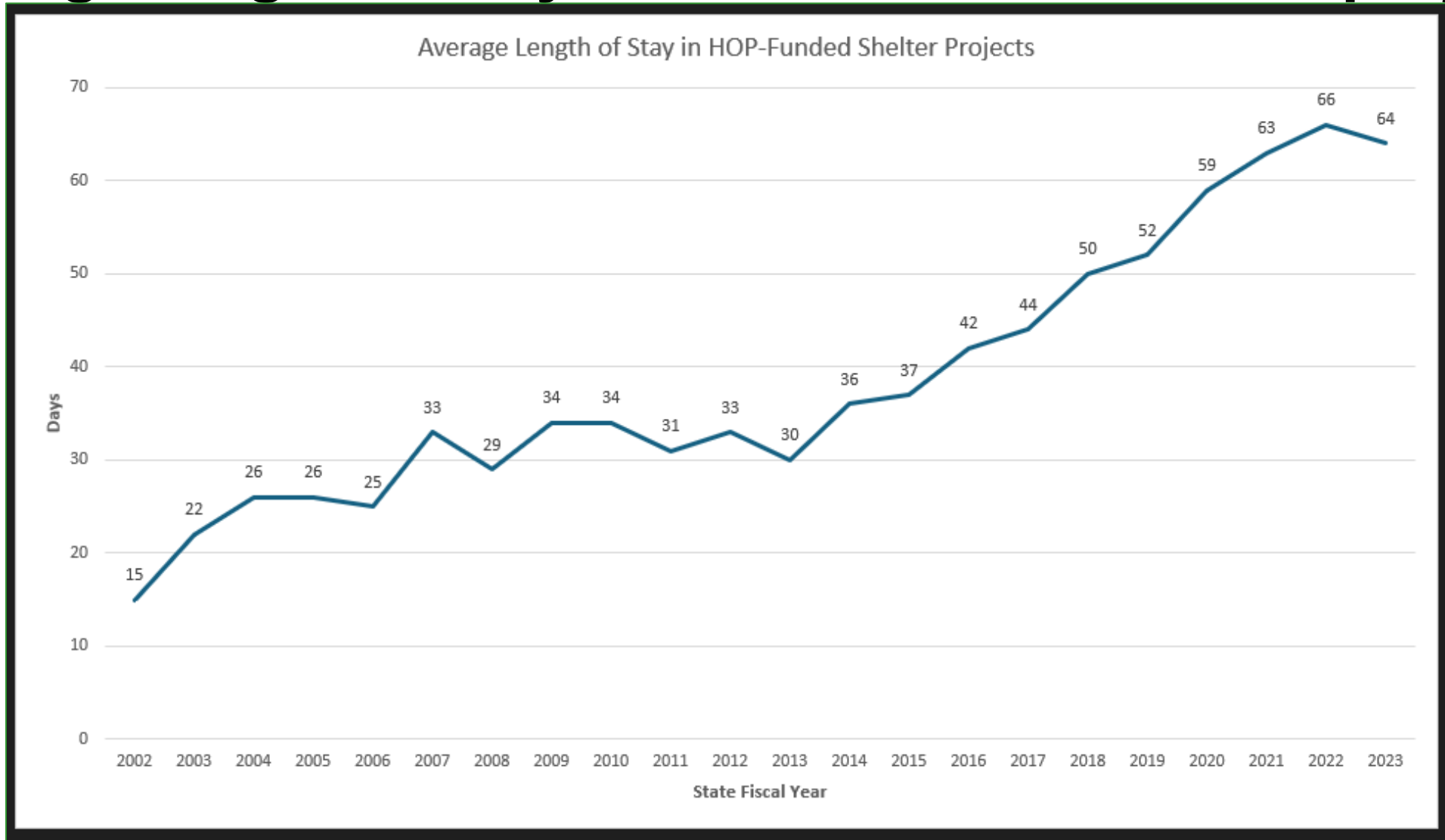
# SFY23 HOP Shelter Data

SFY23 3,180 people  
were sheltered:  
2,547 adults & 633 children

Average Length of Stay: 64 nights



# Average length of stays in HOP-Funded shelter projects



# Emergency Shelter Capacity

Note: Vermont is a shelter first state. That means these beds are all filled before someone is offered General Assistance Emergency Housing.

County	# Total HH Capacity - Currently
Addison	62
Bennington	30
Caledonia	31
Chittenden	178
Franklin	23
Lamoille	19
Orleans	4
Rutland	19
Washington	92
Windham	46
Windsor	35
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>539</b>

# Shelter Expansion



The administration's budget includes \$7.1 million in additional base funding in SFY25 to support emergency shelter capacity at 8 projects for approximately 180 households through the Housing Opportunity Grant Program (HOP) administered by the DCF Office of Economic Opportunity.



These projects are supporting community providers with track records for offering emergency shelter in their communities. They reflect an array of settings and have been developed thoughtfully to meet the needs of guests and align with best practices.

Five emergency shelter projects have been supported in SFY24 with one-time funding.



These projects will not be able to continue into SFY25 without this funding:

Seasonal shelter in Montpelier (15)	Year-round shelter in St. Johnsbury (24)	Young Adult emergency apartments in Brattleboro (4)	Preservation of a shelter project in Burlington (35)	Conversion of youth shelter in Burlington from seasonal to year-round (10)
-------------------------------------	--	---	--	--

# New emergency shelter capacity in SFY25

These projects have been supported via planning, construction, or other state funding in SFY24 and will not be able to open in SFY25 without this funding (approximately 100 households):

Rutland AHS District

Brattleboro AHS District

Hartford AHS District



# Temporary Shelters to Support GA Transition

One-time, temporary shelters anticipated to be paid for through \$2.3 million one-time funding and \$4 million BAA:

## Winston Prouty Center for Child & Family Development

- 20 rooms for families with children (40-48 individuals)
- Approximately 17 months

## Capstone Community Action

- 3 emergency shelter apartments (7 bedrooms)
- 15 months
- One-time leases

## Waterbury Armory

- Congregate shelter (40 individuals)

## Mobile Units

- 46 beds per site, up to three sites (138 individuals)

## Additional Discussions Underway

# New Permanent Supportive Housing Benefit

<b>Benefit Categories</b>	<b>Descriptions of Direct Services available to participants. Goal – January 2025, 100 participants</b>
Pre-Tenancy Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Housing needs and preferences</li><li>• Assistance with locating and applying for housing</li><li>• Housing support plan development</li><li>• Assistance in securing resources and benefits</li></ul>
Tenancy Sustaining Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Assistance with maintaining benefits</li><li>• Connections to community resources</li><li>• Supports to develop independent living skills</li><li>• Eviction prevention services</li></ul>
Community Transition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Home modifications to improve accessibility</li><li>• Security deposits</li><li>• Moving expenses</li><li>• Essential household furnishings</li><li>• Pest eradications</li></ul>

# Family Supportive Housing Program

## Supportive housing for families experiencing homelessness

### Program components

- Permanent housing (MOU with housing providers)
- Intensive, home-based services (small caseloads)
- Financial empowerment support (banking, credit, savings)
  - Referrals for FSH come through the Coordinated Entry process (families experiencing homelessness).

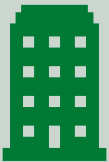
### 9 community providers, 372-465 families

- Family Center of Washington County (Barre AHS District)
- Sunrise Family Resource Center (Bennington AHS District)
- Winston Prouty Center (Brattleboro AHS District)
- COTS/Howard Center (Burlington AHS District)
- Upper Valley Haven (Hartford AHS District)
- John Graham Housing & Services (Middlebury AHS District)
- *In discussion (Morrisville AHS District)*
- Northeast Kingdom Community Action (Newport & St. Newport AHS Districts)
- Homeless Prevention Center (Rutland AHS District)
- Winston Prouty Center (Springfield AHS District)
- Pathways Vermont (St. Albans AHS District)



**HOME Family Housing Voucher**  
Project launched in January 2023 to help families with children exit homelessness.

As of 2/2/24, 96 families have exited homelessness and moved into an apartment with a HOME voucher.



**Landlord Relief Program** launched February 2023

Through December 2023, 215 approval applications (\$777,835); average \$5,179 per landlord.



**Vermont Rental Subsidy program expansion for Reach Up families (\$1.5M).**

143 Reach Up Families received a short-term subsidy that will continue through June 2024.

# Ongoing Housing Options Across AHS (1/26/24)

---

**154** Residential Mental Health Treatment beds with **2** currently available.

---

**63** Intensive Residential Treatment beds with **11** currently available.

---

**96** Recovery Housing beds with **13** currently available.

---

**245** Department of Corrections (DOC) Transitional Housing beds with **3** currently available.

---

**873** Skilled Nursing Facility beds with **171** currently available.

---

Disabilities Aging and Independent Living (DAIL) is working with the DCF Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) to hold a webinar providing information to community partners on eligibility criteria for Choices for Care (CFC) and the process for accessing the different CFC options.

Homeless Health Care Capacity Building Projects - In 2022, the Vermont Department of Health (VDH) received the National Initiative to Address COVID-19 Health Disparities grant from the Centers for Disease Control. Partners were funded to engage in assessments of gaps in care as well as strategic planning regarding filling gaps in care for Vermonters experiencing homelessness. Ongoing technical assistance was provided by VDH, OEO and a national technical assistance partner, National Healthcare for the Homeless.

<b>United Way of Addison County (John Graham Shelter)</b>	Addison County
<b>Greater Bennington Interfaith Community Services</b>	Bennington
<b>Good Samaritan Haven</b>	Washington
<b>United Way of Lamoille County (Lamoille Community House)</b>	Lamoille
<b>Northeast Kingdom Community Action (NEKCA)</b>	Essex, Caledonia, Orleans
<b>Upper Valley Haven</b>	Orange and Windsor North
<b>Groundworks Collaborative</b>	Windham
<b>Neighborhood Connections</b>	Windsor
<b>Samaritan House - Now CVOEO</b>	Franklin & Grand Isle

# Cost of other Programs



Rental Assistance (HOME Vouchers and VT Rental Subsidy) approximately \$24,000/year/household; ideal length of time 24-36 months



Shallow Subsidy for SSI/SSDI recipients approximately \$7,000/year/household; ideal length of time 24-36 months



Permanent Supportive Housing approximately \$2.6 million to enroll 350-400 households



HOP Client-Based Financial Assistance approximately \$3 million additional funds in SFY25 could meet demands based on SFY24 projections



HOP Services (Rapid Re-Housing, Homelessness Prevention, Coordinated Entry Housing Navigation) approximately \$65,000/FTE



\*There are increased state administrative costs that would accompany increases to programming (staffing, operating).

# Unit Generation



DCF does not build housing units.



We are the option of last resort and are designed to be the safety net.



We do partner with other agencies, houses, community partners and others to inform their work, so that our net has fewer people to catch.



Unsheltered homelessness is complex, with many root causes, and will require all hands-on deck.