

# General and Emergency Housing Assistance Application process

## Coordinated Entry

## Permanent Supportive Housing Medicaid Benefit

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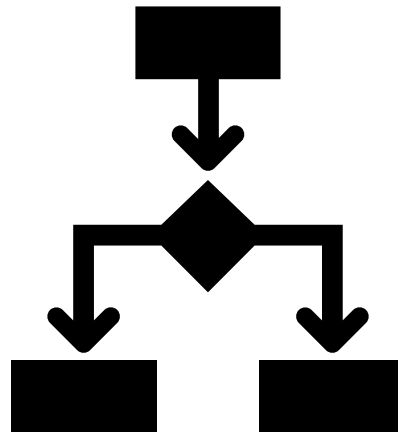
# General Assistance Application Process

In-person or over the phone application

Interview with a Benefit Program Specialist

Homelessness must be verified

Determined eligible/ ineligible based on categories previously mentioned



If eligible, the person would be referred to a shelter if a bed is available

If eligible, but no shelter space if available, the Benefit Program Specialist will locate an available hotel room.

If the hotel agrees to accept the applicant, staff sends the hotel voucher with personal information and check-in and check-out dates.

# Other ESD Programs and Services

- **Aid to the Aged, Blind and Disabled (AABD)**
  - This program provides a financial supplement to recipients of federal SSI who are over 65, disabled or blind and do not have sufficient income to provide a reasonable subsistence needed for their well-being
- **Essential Person Program**
  - Providing cash assistance to household members whose care is essential to an aged or disabled person in the home
- **3SquaresVT and sub-programs**
  - 3SNAP- Cash benefits for food for households where all household members are 65 or older and/or receive SSI.
  - ICAN- Individual Career Advancement Network helps participants with job search, training, education, job retention and employment/training related reimbursements.
  - Farm to Family- Helps income-eligible Vermonters to buy locally-grown fresh fruits and vegetables at participating farmers' markets.
  - SNAP Education- Teaches people how to make their 3SquaresVT dollars stretch, shop for and cook healthy meals and stay physically active.
- **Reach Up, Reach First, Reach Ahead and Post-Secondary Education program services include:**
  - Educational/employment supports
  - Case management services
  - Monthly cash payments to pay for necessities
- **Home Heating Fuel Assistance (LIHEAP)- This is the only program that Vermonter experiencing homelessness would not be eligible for.**
  - Fuel Assistance Program has two components: Seasonal Fuel Assistance operated by the Economic Services Division (ESD) and Crisis Fuel Assistance operated by the state's five community action agencies.
- **Emergency/General Assistance (GA)-** provides emergency financial assistance to eligible individuals and families. This may include help paying for:
  - Personal needs and incidentals (PNI)
  - Housing
  - Fuel & utilities
  - Medical
  - Burial costs

# Office of Economic Opportunity - *Partnering to develop local solutions to end poverty.*

We work with more than 60 community partners who work with more than 80,000 low-income Vermonters to help them meet basic needs in times of crisis, build skills and connect to resources to make their way out of poverty.

Our Mission: Working in partnership with the private sector, community-based organizations, government agencies, and others to increase self-sufficiency of Vermonters, strengthen Vermont communities and eliminate the causes & symptoms of poverty.

Weatherization/Energy Services	Community Services		
<b>Geoff Wilcox, Energy Services Director</b>	Ari Kisler, Community Services Director Lily Sojourner, Community Services Director		Bob Constantino, Community Services Director (temp)
<b>2 Senior Energy Services Program Officers</b> <b>3 Energy Services Program Officers</b>	4.5 FTE Community Services Program Officers		
<b>Programs:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Weatherization</b></li> <li>• <b>Vermiculite, Home Repair Plus (VHR+)</b></li> <li>• <b>Emergency Heating System Grant Program</b></li> <li>• <b>Weatherization Training Center</b></li> </ul>	<b>Housing &amp; Homelessness Programs:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family Supportive Housing</li> <li>• Family Unification Vouchers (MOU with VSHA)</li> <li>• Housing Opportunity Grant Program (emergency shelter, financial assistance, and multiple housing services)</li> <li>• Coordinated Entry</li> <li>• HOME Voucher Program</li> <li>• ERAP Housing Stability Services (through 6/30/25)</li> <li>• Landlord Relief Program</li> <li>• SFY25 – Permanent Supportive Housing Medicaid Benefit</li> </ul>	<b>Community Services &amp; Asset-Building Programs:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Services Block Grant</li> <li>• MicroBusiness Development Program</li> <li>• Financial (&amp; Energy) Coaching</li> <li>• Emergency Food &amp; Shelter Program (EFSP)</li> </ul>	<b>Disaster Response Programs:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disaster Case Management</li> <li>• Disaster Non-Congregate Shelter</li> </ul>

OEO staff across all programs – OEO Director & OEO Administrative Services Coordinator

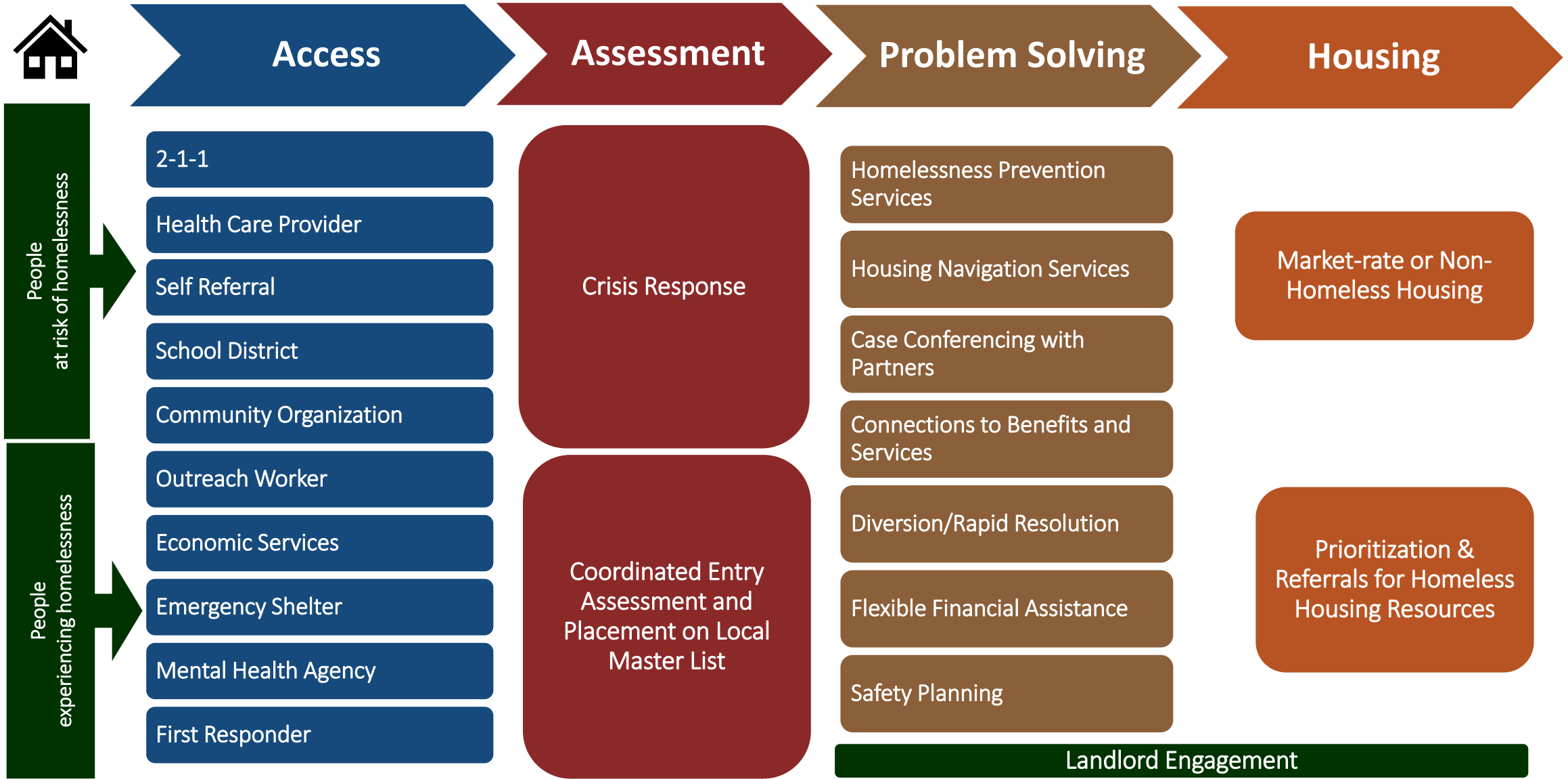
\*Of the 9.5 program officers, only 2 positions are not limited services or temporary.

# Coordinated Entry

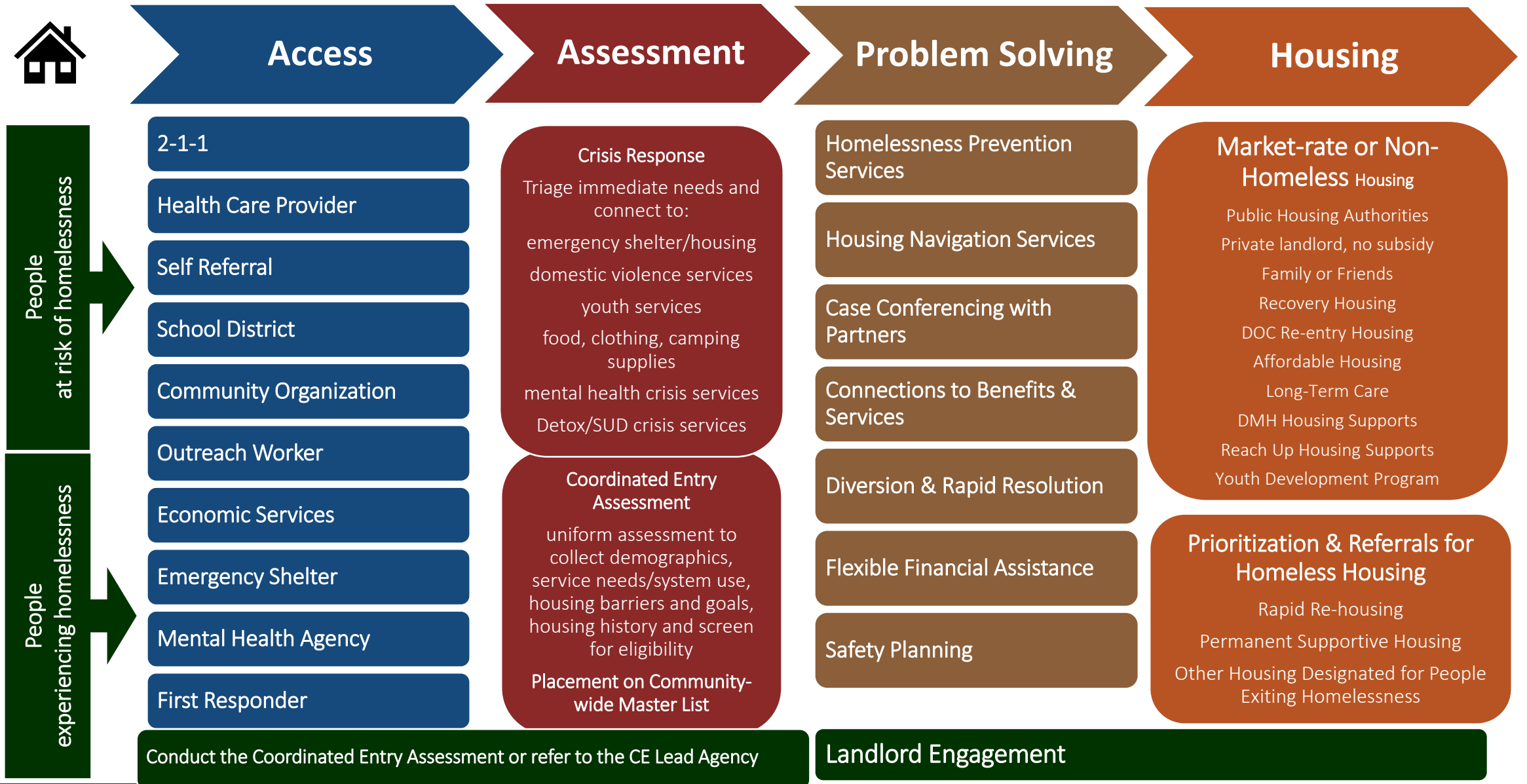
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# Coordinated Entry – Connecting People in Housing Crisis to Housing Supports & Resources



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People  
at risk of homelessness



- Without resources or networks to prevent homelessness and:
- Renting but facing imminent eviction
- Staying with family or friends due to economic hardship
- Overcrowded
- Exiting an institution with no housing identified housing



People  
experiencing homelessness



- Staying in emergency shelter (incl Domestic Violence Shelter)
- Staying in motel/hotel paid for by DCF or by a charitable organization
- Unsheltered (a place not meant for people to live): car, park, abandoned building, *etc*



# Access

2-1-1



Health Care Provider



Self Referral



School District



Community Agency



Outreach Worker



Economic Services



Emergency Shelter



Mental Health Agency



First Responder



These agencies, and others, conduct the Coordinated Entry Assessment or refer to the [Coordinated Entry Lead Agency in the area](#) to help people connect to housing help

## Assessment

### Crisis Response



Triage immediate needs, and connect to:

- Emergency housing/shelter
- Domestic/sexual violence shelter or services
- Youth services
- Food, clothing, camping supplies, etc.
- Urgent Care
- Mental Health crisis services
- Detox/SUD crisis services

### Coordinated Entry Assessment and Placement on Local Master List



The Coordinated Entry Assessment is a uniform assessment and screening tool to collect demographics for all household members, service needs/use of other systems, housing barriers and goals, housing history, screen for eligibility, etc.

Once assessed, households are placed on the local community-wide master list through HMIS or manually

# Coordinated Entry – Connecting People in Housing Crisis to Housing Supports & Resources

## Problem Solving

Homelessness  
Prevention Services



Conflict resolution, landlord-tenant mediation, eviction prevention services

Housing Navigation  
Services



Develop a housing stability plan, address housing barriers (*e.g.*, ID, credit, transportation, criminal record, *etc.*), housing search assistance (incl. applications), document chronic homeless status, *etc.*

Case Conferencing  
with Partners



Weekly or bi-weekly case conferencing for more complex cases: Local Coordinated Entry/Housing Review Team, Veterans Committee

Connections to  
Benefits & Services



Warm handoffs, referrals and support applying to public benefits (*e.g.*, 3SquaresVT, Medicaid, Reach Up, *etc.*), Homeless Education Liaisons, employment services (*e.g.*, VDOL, Hireability), health care (*e.g.*, free clinics, VCCI, SUD treatment/recovery, mental health services), childcare and parenting support (*e.g.* HeadStart, PCC, *etc.*), legal services, *etc.*

Diversion &  
Rapid Resolution



Options in the short term for safe non-emergency housing

Flexible Financial  
Assistance



Assistance with rental arrears, security deposits, moving costs, transportation, fees, IDs, *etc.*

Safety Planning



Support for survivor-led planning to reduce the risk of harm in the future

# Coordinated Entry – Connecting People in Housing Crisis to Housing Supports & Resources

## Housing

Market-rate  
or Non-Homeless  
Housing

- [Public Housing Authorities – Family Unification Vouchers](#), Mainstream Vouchers, Section 8/Housing Choice Vouchers, Public Housing
- Private landlord, no subsidy
- Family or Friends
- Recovery Housing
- [DOC Re-entry Housing](#)
- [Affordable Housing](#)
- [Long-Term Care](#) & Supports for People who need nursing-home level of care
- DMH Housing Supports
- Youth Development Program
- Reach Up Housing Supports

Prioritization &  
Referrals for  
Homeless Housing

- Rapid Re-housing – Up to 24 months of rental assistance with individualized retention services
  - [HOME Family Voucher](#)
  - Vermont Rental Subsidy
  - CoC Rapid Re-housing Voucher
- Permanent Supportive Housing – long-term rental assistance and services for households with the most complex service needs
  - Specific projects, e.g., Beacon apartments, Great River Terrace
  - CoC Permanent Supportive Housing (aka Shelter + Care), A Way Home
  - Family Supportive Housing
- Other Housing Designated for People Exiting Homelessness
  - Units supported by [Vermont Housing Improvement Program](#)
  - Homeless Units developed with [Vermont Housing Conservation Board](#) funds
  - PHA units or vouchers with a homeless preference

## Landlord Engagement

Landlord Liaisons

Landlord Relief Program or Housing Risk Pools

Landlord Outreach Events

# Permanent Supportive Housing Medicaid Benefit

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# Goals

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Reduce homelessness, prevent emergency department use and hospitalization, and reduce overall health costs for high-need individuals.

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Increase the use of HUD vouchers by ensuring eligible high-need individuals have timely support services and access to housing units.

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The approval for the Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) benefit occurred during the latest renewal of Vermont's 1115 Global Commitment Waiver. Specifically, the benefit is required to conform to the guidelines set forth in the 1915(c) and 1915(i) authorities, and it must also adhere to the Conflict-Free Case Management regulation.

The Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) benefit is targeted to Medicaid enrollees aged 18 and older who are:

1. Eligible for full Medicaid State Plan benefits, and
2. Assessed to meet at least one of the needs-based criteria, and
3. Meet at least one of the risk factors.

Health Needs	Risk-Based Criteria
Mental health or substance diagnoses	Homelessness
Acquired brain injury	History of frequent stays in an institutional or residential setting
Delays in cognitive development	History of frequent ED visits or hospitalization
Requiring assistance with 2 or more ADLs (activities of daily living)	History of involvement in the criminal justice system
Complex physical health needs	



## Direct Services available to Permanent Supportive Housing participants.

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

# Process

## Achieved

- Cemented contract with Technical Assistance Collaborative through November 2024 to provide project management
  - Opportunity to extend the contract up to two years
- Underwent extensive stakeholder engagement process to inform the design of the benefit
- Produced a stakeholder engagement report
- Produced a recommendation report

## Current & Upcoming

- Policy decisions
- Benefit structure
- Implementation plan
  - Aim for 1/1/25 start date
  - Goal to enroll 100 households in SFY25
  - Approximately \$2.6 million annually to serve 350-400 households

# More Information

<https://humanservices.vermont.gov/our-work/programs-services/housing-stability>

The Supportive Housing Programs section includes additional information on the work done by AHS with assistance from Technical Assistance Collaborative (TAC) and its partners, Mathematica, to prepare for the benefit. This includes a Stakeholder Report from 2023.

Contact Information:

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