

# Homeless Assistance

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

## Structure & Process

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

# Types of Housing Interventions

## Homelessness Prevention

Strategy that prevents homelessness for people seeking shelter by helping them to stabilize existing housing (or identify immediate alternative housing) and connecting them with services and financial assistance

## Emergency Shelter/ Housing

By design, intended to be temporary and to help guests move into permanent housing as quickly as possible. Variety of forms: seasonal or year-round semi/non/congregate shelters, motel vouchers, DV shelters, emergency apartments, host homes for youth, etc.

## Rapid Re-housing

Intervention that rapidly connects families and individuals experiencing homelessness to permanent housing through a time-limited rental assistance and targeted supportive services

## Permanent Supportive Housing

Evidence-based housing intervention that combines long-term affordable housing assistance with wrap-around supportive services for people with complex service needs, as well as people with long-term disabilities

## Affordable Housing

Housing for which the occupant(s) is/are paying now more than 30 percent of their income for gross housing costs, including utilities

# “3 legs of the Stool” to Solve Homelessness

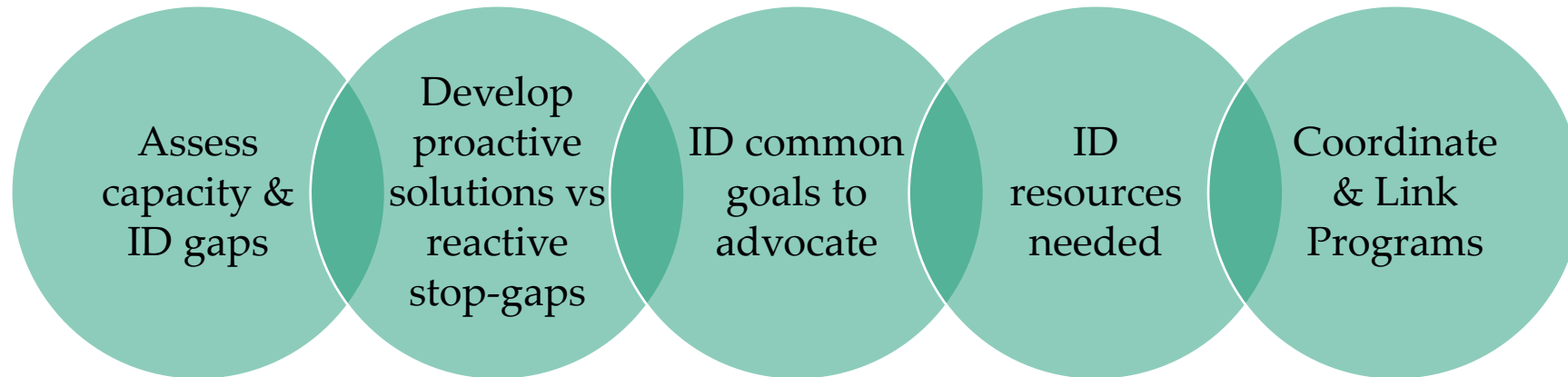


1. *A Unit*
2. *Rental assistance* to fill the affordability gap
3. *Supportive services* tailored to help people get and keep housing – connections to employment and health services

# Vt's Homeless Continuums of Care (CoC)

- Housing & Homelessness Alliance of Vermont, <http://helpingtohousevt.org/>
  - “Balance of State” with 11 local homeless coalitions
- Chittenden Homeless Alliance, <http://www.cchavt.org/>

## LOCAL PLANNING AND COLLABORATION



# What does “homeless” mean?

## *Category 1: Literal Homelessness*

- Unsheltered (*place not meant for human habitation*)
- Staying in an emergency shelter, including domestic violence (DV) shelters
- Staying in an emergency apartment (for families)
- Staying in a host home (for unaccompanied minors)
- Staying in transitional housing for the homeless (e.g., Veterans Place in Northfield)
- Staying in a motel paid for by a community partner (e.g., DV shelter)
- In the General Assistance Emergency Housing Program – aka, receiving a “motel voucher”

# 2023 Point-In-Time Count

*A one-night, unduplicated count of people experiencing homelessness*  
2,256 Households – 3,295 People

109 persons were Unsheltered (5% of total persons)

654 Children (20% of total persons)

366 Families with Children (16% of households)

247 Young Adults (ages 18-24) (7% of persons)

6 Unaccompanied Minors

8% Chronically Homeless

4% Veterans

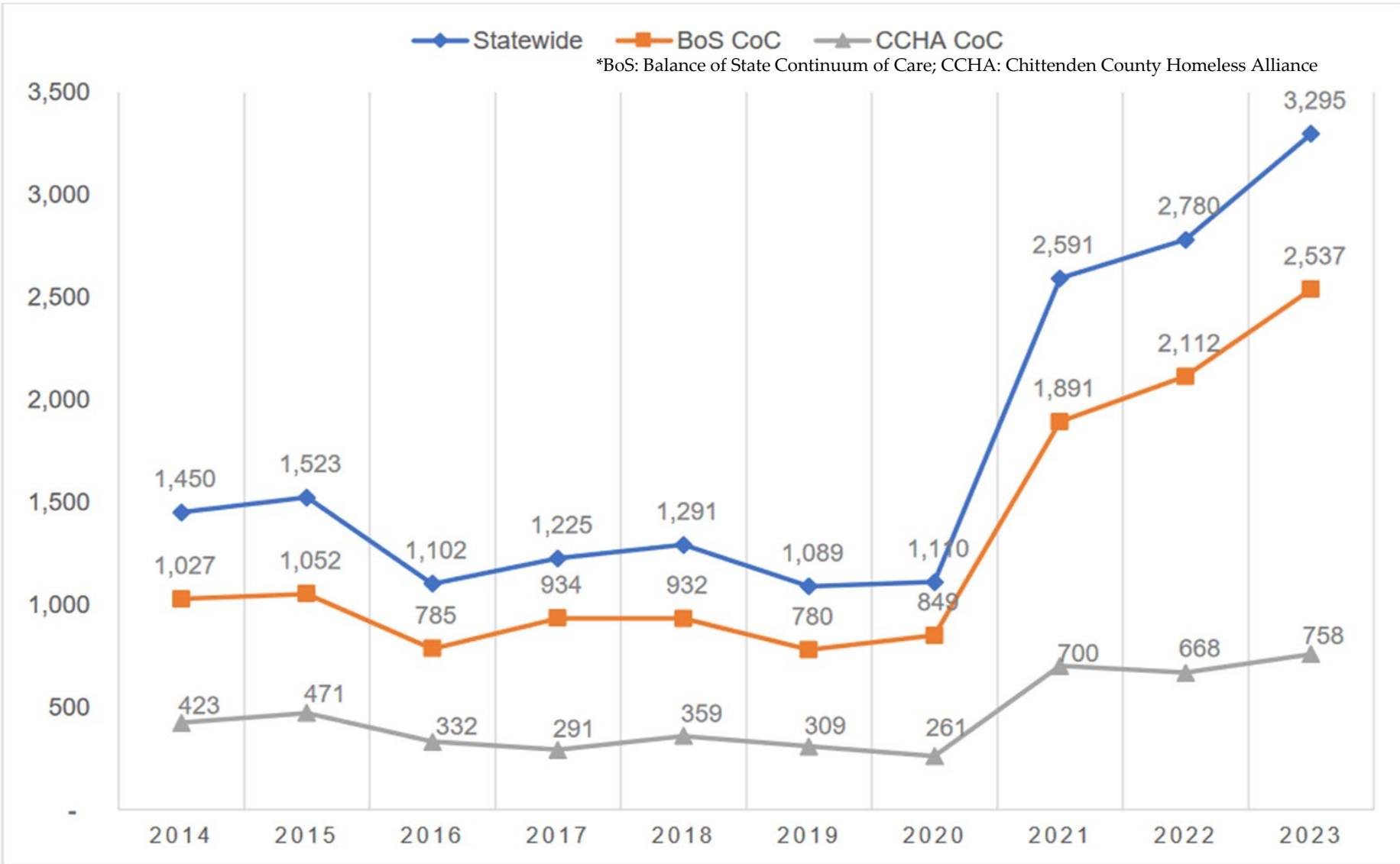
9% Fleeing Domestic or  
Sexual Violence

14% BIPOC

44% Female, 55% Male

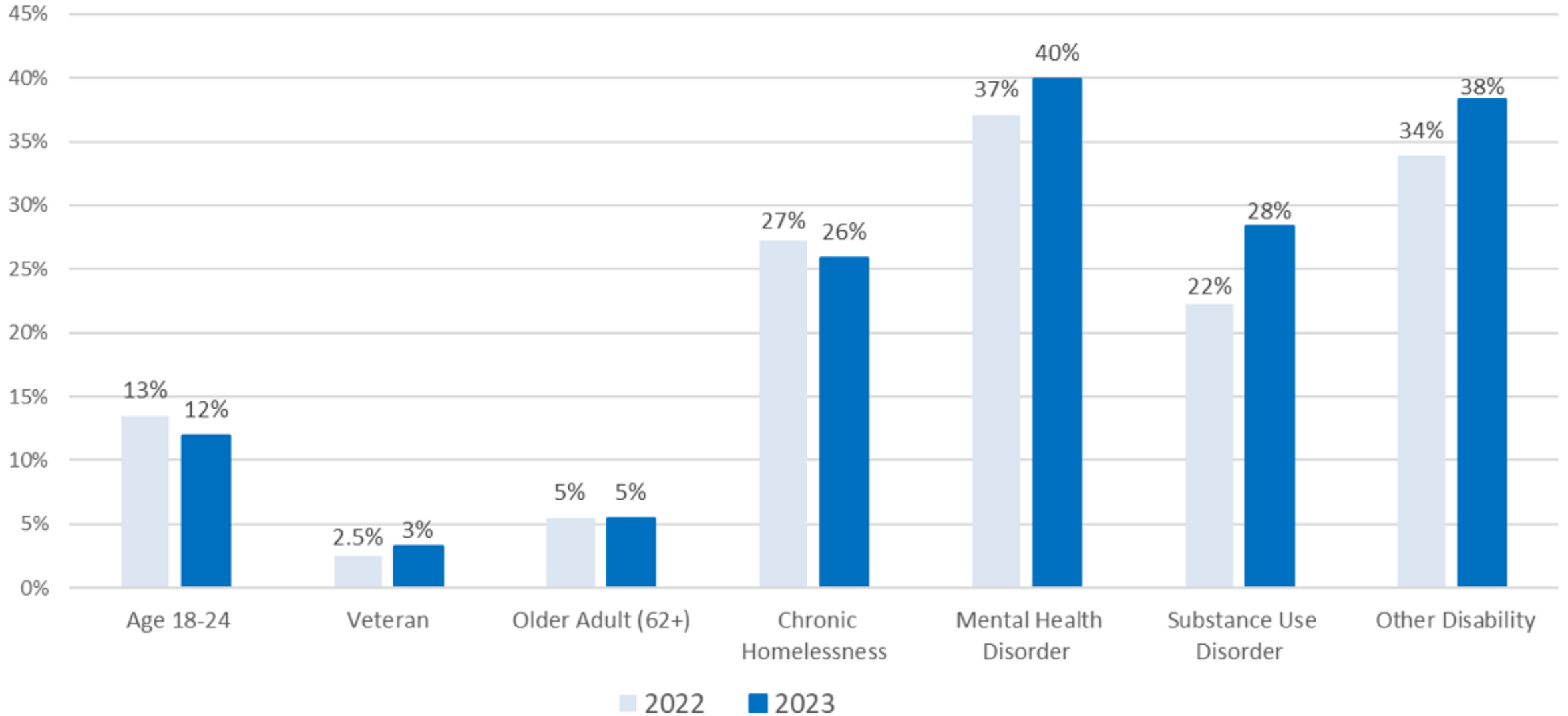
1% Transgender or Gender  
Non-conforming

# Total Persons Experiencing Homelessness





## Characteristics of Adults Served by Emergency Shelters



# Coordinated Entry: Connecting People in Housing Crisis to Help

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



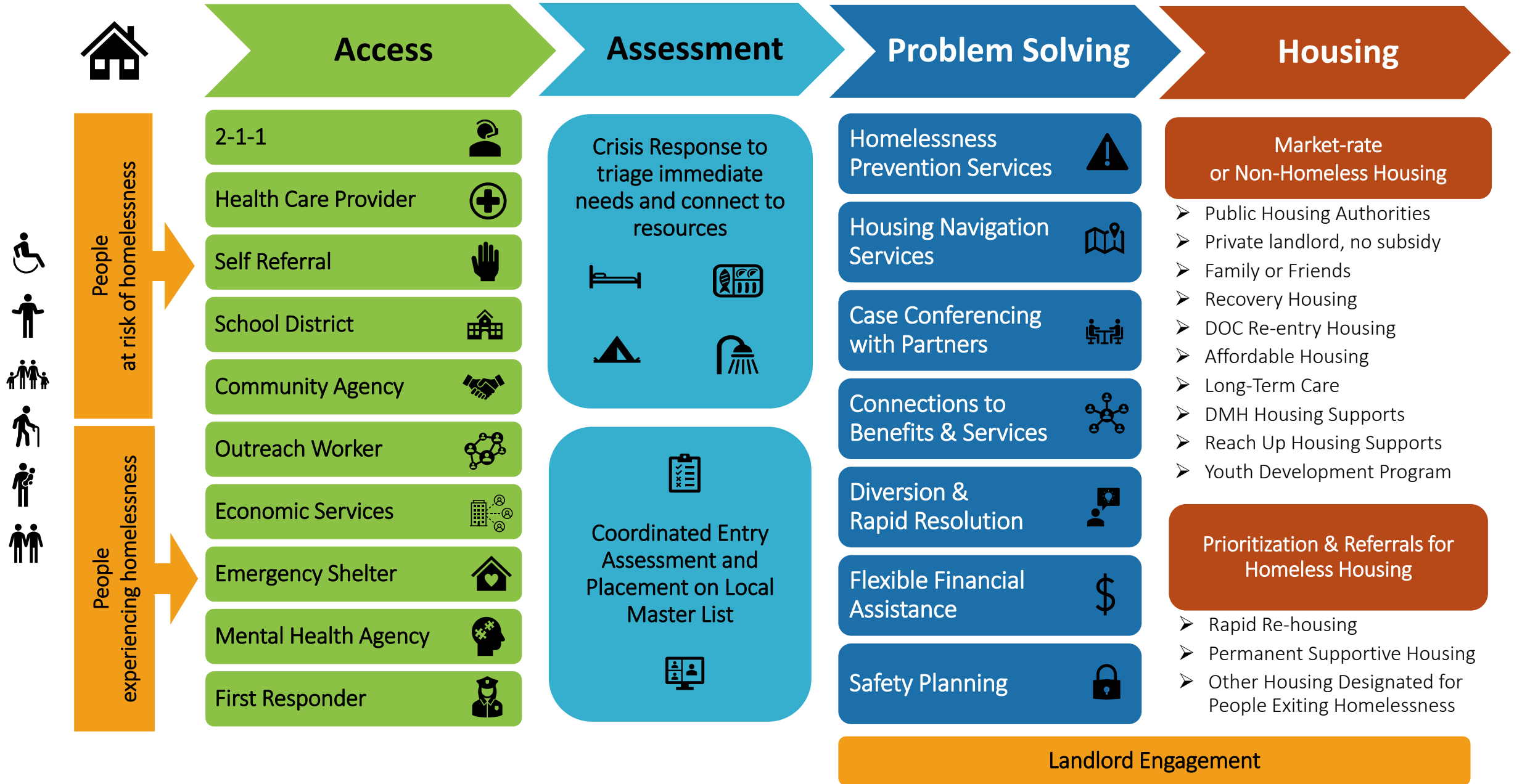
## ***Before Coordinated Entry:***

- Should we accept this client into our program?
- Client has to find services & housing. 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

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



**Get  
Connected  
to Housing  
Help –  
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**

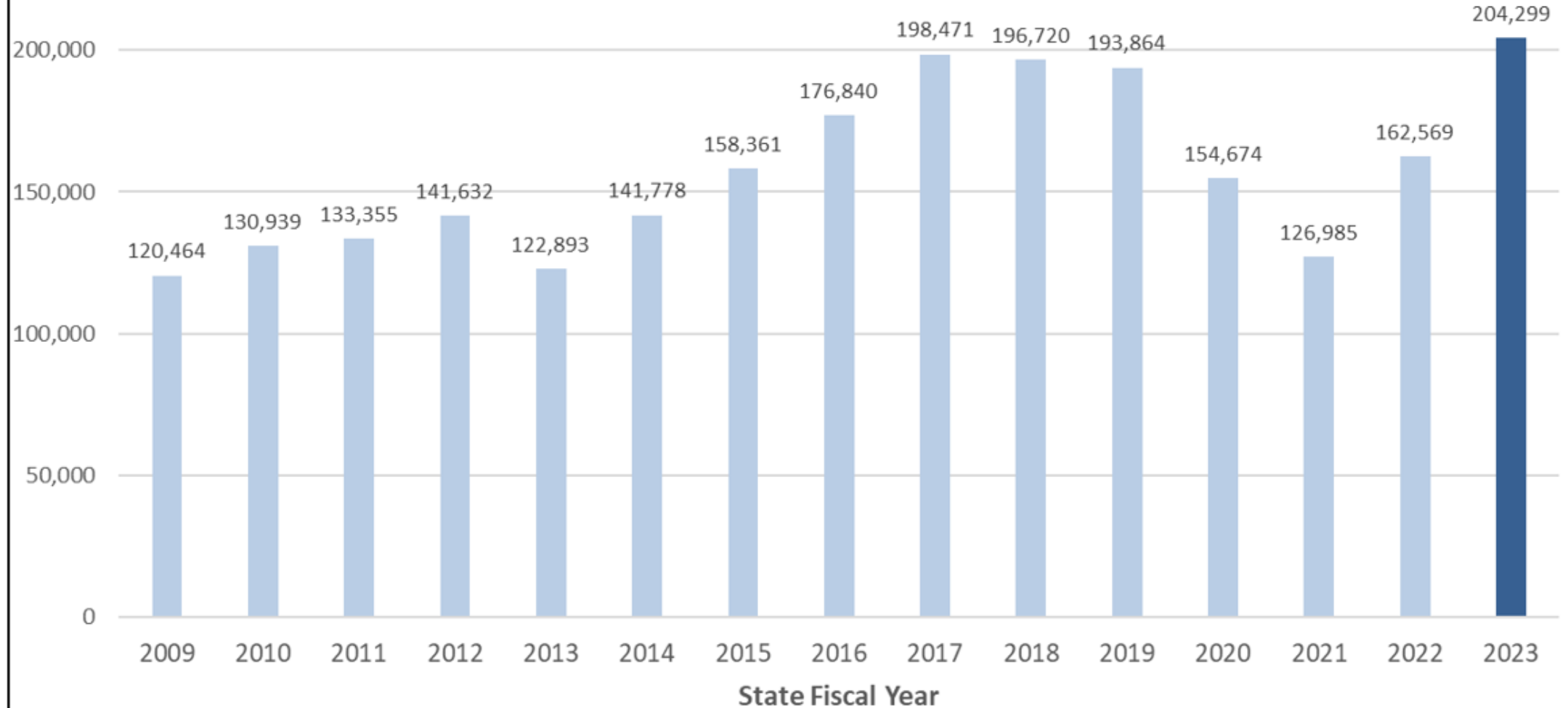
# Emergency Shelter/Housing Capacity

## Emergency Shelter Network

- Emergency shelters, emergency apartments, DV motel overflow
- ~563 household capacity (only 45 seasonal)
  - Pre-covid: 562 household capacity (180 seasonal)
  - May 2020: 160 household capacity



## Shelter Bednights: Vermont's Publicly Funded Homeless Shelters



# Preserve & Expand Emergency Shelters

- New base funding prioritized:
  - Emergency shelter expansion
  - Expanding staffing at shelters to address safety concerns
  - Addressing inflationary cost increases to preserve projects
  - Preserving projects where loss of funding would have reduced capacity
- Expanding Emergency Shelter Capacity:
  - 2 seasonal shelters shifted to year-round operations (Burlington, Morrisville)
  - New and expanded projects (Barre, Brattleboro, Burlington, Rutland, Springfield, St. Johnsbury)
  - Under consideration/In development: 3 potential projects could add about 100 HH capacity (Brattleboro, Hartford, Rutland)



# Additional Housing Opportunity Grant Program Investments

- Flexible Client Financial Assistance to help homeless or at-risk households stabilize in housing (e.g. security deposits, rental arrears, transportation, fees, etc.)
  - \$3.6 m total with \$2.5 m from one-time funding, a \$1.2 m increase over SFY23 (also supported in part by one-time funding)
- Day shelter expansion to address unsheltered homelessness, including food
- Staffing to expand housing navigation services
- Expanding rapid re-housing

The [Annual HOP Award Summary](#) is available online:

<https://dcf.vermont.gov/oeo/resources/awards>

# Family Supportive Housing Expansion

- Supportive housing for families with complex needs experiencing homelessness

	Start of SFY24	January 2024
<b>Districts Served</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>11 (Lamoille Valley in progress)</b>
<b>Service Coordinator Capacity</b>	<b>18 Positions</b>	<b>31 Positions</b>
<b>Caseload Range</b>	<b>216-270</b>	<b>372-465</b>

- Program components:
  - Permanent housing (MOU with housing providers)
  - Intensive, home-based services (small caseloads)
  - Financial empowerment services (banking, credit, spending, savings)

# Additional Investments

- HOME Family Housing Voucher Project launched in January 2023 to help families with children exit homelessness. As of 12/29/23 82 families with children have exited homelessness and moved into an apartment with a HOME voucher.
- Landlord Relief Program launching February 2023 (statewide “risk” pool)
- Homeless Health Care Capacity Building Projects
- ERAP HSS capacity continues – legal services, mediation, landlord liaisons, supplemental housing navigation and retention services



# Contact Information

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