Homeless Assistance

Office of Economic Opportunity

VERMONT

DEPARTMENT FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
Agency of Human Services

Homeless Assistance – How it All Works

State Programs & Resources

- Housing Opportunity Grant Program

- DCF Transitional Housing Program

- General Assistance Emergency Housing (Motel Vouchers)

- Family Supportive Housing

- Vermont Rental Subsidy

- Other State-funded/AHS housing and services (not homeless specific)
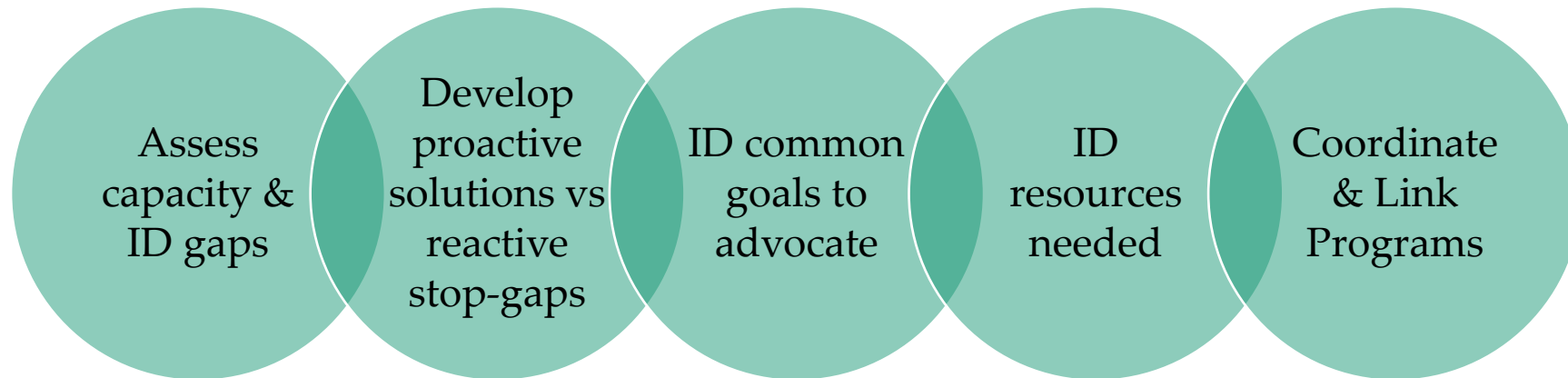
Structure & Process

- 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 homeless coalitions

➢ Chittenden Homeless Alliance, http://www.cchavt.org/

LOCAL PLANNING AND COLLABORATION

2022 Point-In-Time Count

A one-night, unduplicated count of people experiencing homelessness
2041 Households – 2,780 People

45 persons were Unsheltered (2% of total persons)

1767 Single Adults (64% of total persons)

481 Children (17% of total persons)

272 Families with Children (13% of total persons)

221 Young Adults (ages 18-24) (8% of persons)
2 Unaccompanied Minors
59 Parenting Youth HH (22% of all families)

16% Chronically Homeless

3% Veterans

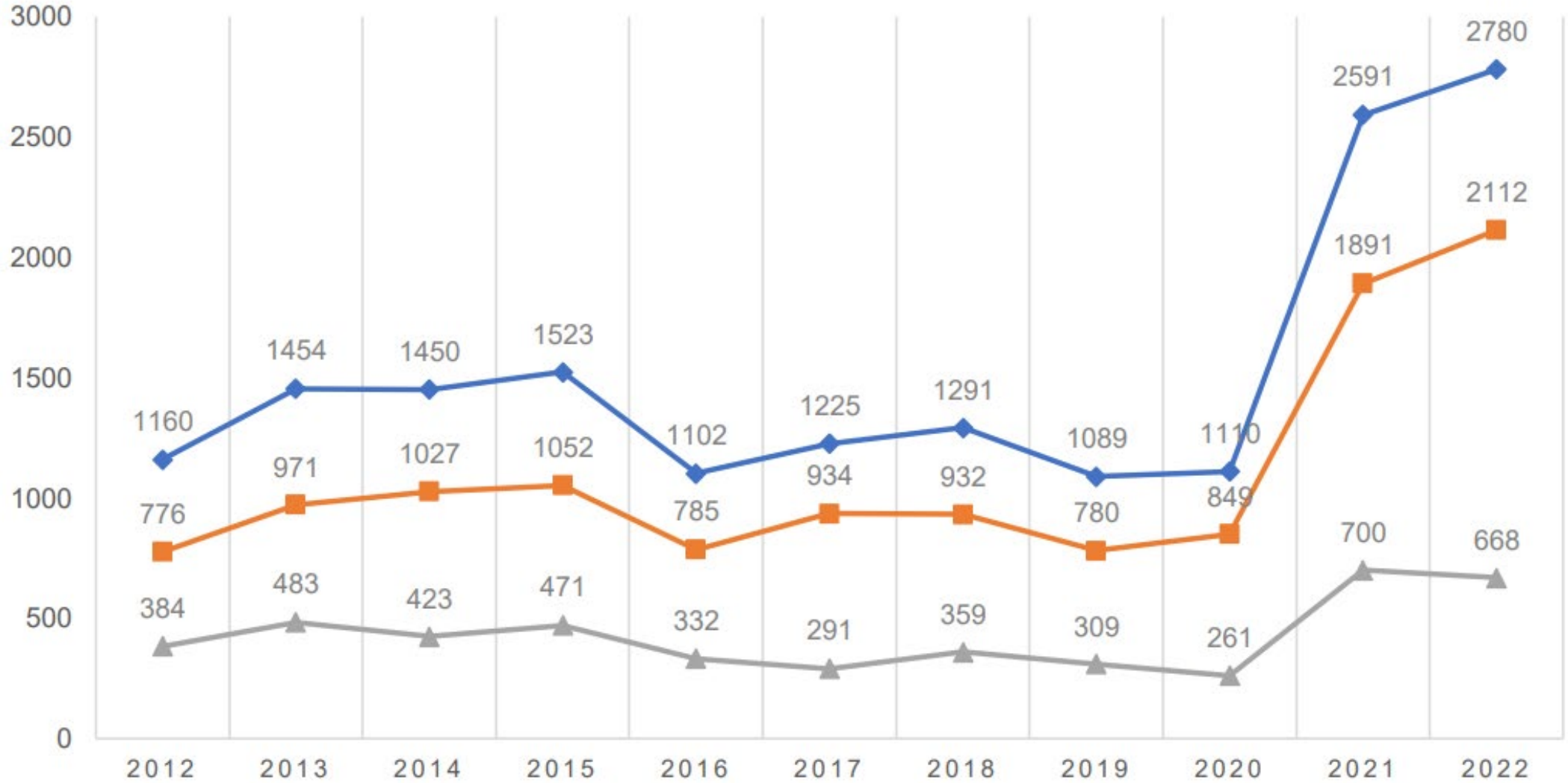10% Fleeing Domestic or Sexual Violence

12% BIPOC

44% Female, 56% Male
1% Transgender or Gender Non-conforming

TOTAL PERSONS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

Legend: ◆ Statewide ■ BoS CoC ▲ CCHA CoC

*BoS: Balance of State Continuum of Care; CCHA: Chittenden County Homeless Alliance

Year	Statewide	BoS CoC	CCHA CoC
2012	1160	776	384
2013	1454	971	483
2014	1450	1027	423
2015	1523	1052	471
2016	1102	785	332
2017	1225	934	291
2018	1291	932	359
2019	1089	780	309
2020	1110	849	261
2021	2591	1891	700
2022	2780	2112	668

What about right now?

January 13, 2023	Households
DCF Transitional Housing Program (occupancy agreements or provisionally housed)	1,317
General Assistance (GA) Emergency Housing	494
Emergency Shelters (all types, incl motels through Domestic Violence Shelters)	Approx 500
Unsheltered (estimate based on local unofficial counts)	At least 150

COVID 19 Homelessness Response

Expanded "motel voucher" program to provide "non-congregate shelter" to meet COVID needs

Alternative COVID 19 Isolation/Quarantine Housing for Vermonters without a suitable home environment

Reinforcement for the Shelter network
- Public Health Guidance, 1:1 technical assistance, training, supplies, funding, rapid response, testing and vaccination strategies for people experiencing homelessness

DCF Transitional Housing Program

Funded by Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP)

No new applications (as of 10/1)

Participants have an occupancy agreement with a participating lodging establishment

Recertify eligibility every 90 days and must participate in coordinated entry

Up to 18 months, but limited by funding and planned to end March 31, 2023

Emergency Shelter/Housing Capacity

Emergency Shelter Network

- 28 emergency shelters, 23 emergency apartments, DV motel overflow
- ~525 household capacity (only 22 seasonal)
  - Pre-covid: 562 household capacity (180 seasonal)
  - May 2020: 160 household capacity

General Assistance Emergency Housing ("motel voucher")

- Provides emergency housing in a hotel/motel when no alternative shelter is available
- Eligibility/access through Economic Services or 2-1-1 (after hours)
  - "Catastrophic" or "Vulnerable", up to 28 or 84 days depending on eligibility
  - Adverse Weather Conditions during winter months

Preserve & Expand Emergency Shelters

➢ Significant investments to increase staffing capacity and raise wages to retain staff (including to expand sites to 24/7 and year-round)

➢ Fund shelter renovations

➢ Expanded # of emergency apartments in three communities (for families)

➢ Expanded DV Shelter capacity and DV motel overflow

➢ SFY 23: new shelter project in Burlington (Elmwood) & new seasonal shelter

Housing Opportunity Grant Program

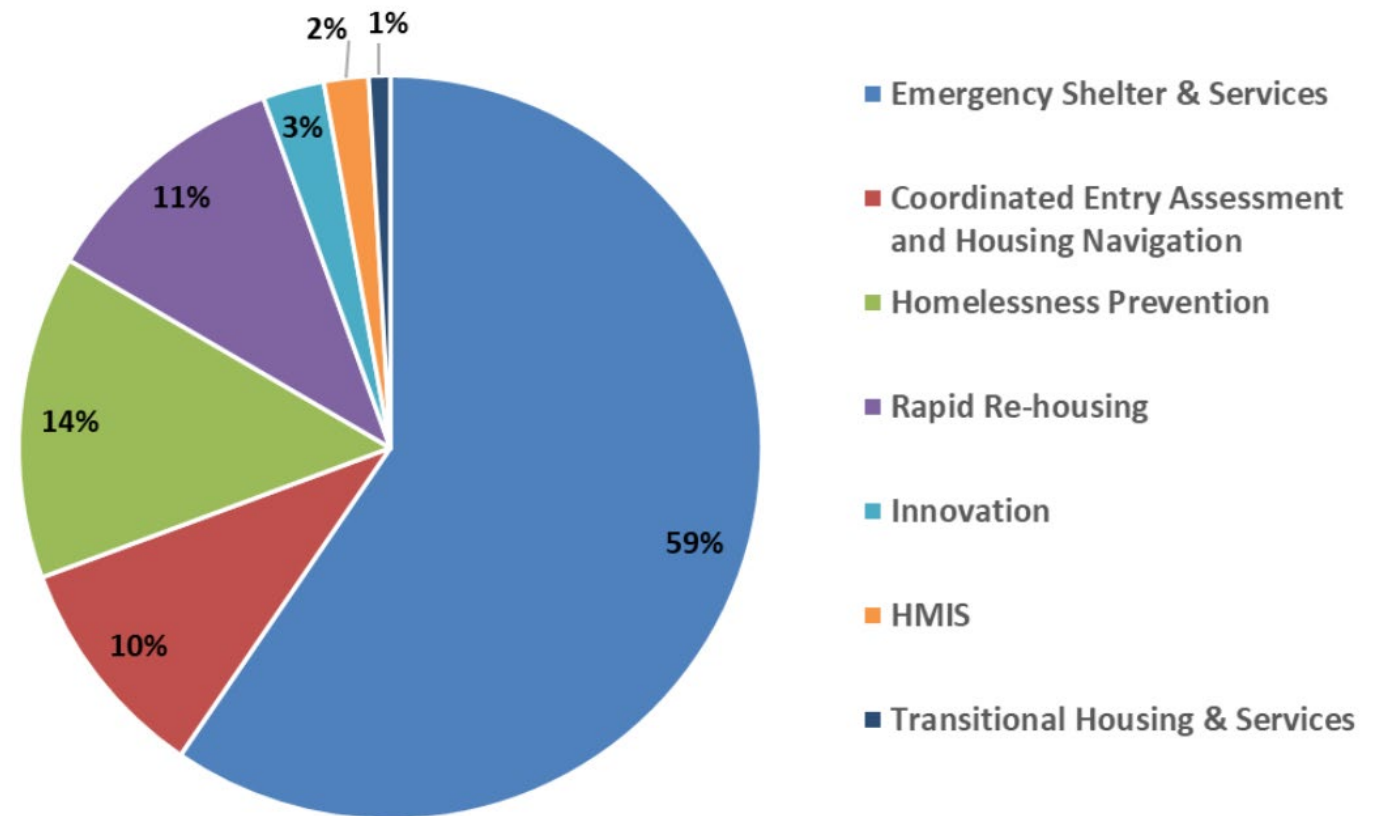Blends ~$14.3m in federal and state funding for 35 community organizations to support housing crisis interventions

SFY 2023 Awards

https://outside.vermont.gov/dept/DCF/Shared%20Documents/OEO/HOP/HOP-Awards-SFY2023.pdf

SFY 2022
Annual Report

https://outside.vermont.gov/dept/DCF/Shared%20Documents/OEO/HOP/HOP-AR-2022.pdf

Pie chart showing:
- Emergency Shelter & Services — 59%
- Coordinated Entry Assessment and Housing Navigation — 10%
- Homelessness Prevention — 14%
- Rapid Re-housing — 11%
- Innovation — 3%
- HMIS — 2%
- Transitional Housing & Services — 1%

Types of Housing Interventions

Homelessness Prevention	Emergency Shelter/ Housing	Rapid Re-housing	Permanent Supportive Housing	Affordable Housing
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	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.	Intervention that rapidly connects families and individuals experiencing homelessness to permanent housing through a time-limited rental assistance and targeted supportive services	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	Housing for which the occupant(s) is/are paying now more than 30 percent of their income for gross housing costs, including utilities

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

Access

Assessment

Prioritization

Referrals

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: BROC
Lamoille County: Capstone	Newport Area: NEKCA	Chittenden: CVOEO

Coordinated Entry – System-wide Homeless Data

State Fiscal Year 2022:

4,302 households experienced or at imminent risk of homelessness (excludes DV agencies)

Year	Average Length of Time People Experience Homelessness*
2018	79 days
2019	54 days
2020	No data
2021	152 days
2022	252 days

*using Balance of State CoC CE data as a proxy

COVID-era Investments to Address Homelessness

Supplemental Funding for Shelters (CRF, GF) for COVID related needs, for expansion of hours/staffing, etc.

Capital Funds for Shelter Improvement, Expansion (CRF, ARPA, GF)

Capital Funds for New Permanent Housing, some dedicated to re-house homeless (CRF, ARPA, GF, CDBG-CV)

Expansion of GA Emergency Housing to provide non-congregate shelter (FEMA)

Temporary Transitional Housing Program to provide stability to households continuing in motels (ERAP)

Expansion of Motel-based Services, including Housing Navigation Services (CRF, FEMA, ERAP, GF)

Rental & Utility Assistance/Arrears for low-income Vermonters (CRF, ERAP)

Expansion of Family Supportive Housing (Medicaid, GF)

Court-based eviction prevention (ERAP)

Expanded housing support services (navigation, application, retention, legal services) (ERAP)

Rehab offline private-market units, designated to re-house homeless (CRF, ARPA)

Health and Safety Repairs support for landlords (ERAP)

Flexible financial assistance for households at-risk/homeless (CRF, GF)

One-time payments to support transition out of motels (CRF)

Rapid Re-housing rental assistance and services for households who are homeless (ESG-CV, CRF)

"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

Housing Recovery Highlights (DCF)

Rapid Resolution Housing Initiative – Flexible $ to help people exit motels into safe housing

- Summer 2020 – June 2022
- 1,151 households assisted
- e.g., debt relief, transportation, move-in costs, security deposits

CARES Housing Voucher – Rapid Re-housing for Homeless Families

- Ended July 2022
- 272 households re-housed with a temporary voucher, which transitioned to a permanent voucher

Reach Up Emergency Rental Assistance helps households pay their rent

- Up to 18 months of assistance, through June 2023
- Security deposits, rental arrears, rental assistance
- Since April 2021, 2,342 households received $17.8m in RUERA

Successes

Onsite motel-based services really matter

- AHS Care Coordination Transitional Housing Resource Teams (SFY23 BAA)

Local collaboration and coordination

- Homeless Health Care Capacity Building Projects
- Coordinated Entry

Statewide collaboration and coordination

- Housing Recovery Group

Major increase in housing retention services and rental assistance

Successes, cont.

Creating & Expanding Access to Units

- Vermont Housing Improvement Program – Up to $50,000 per unit for repairs to bring vacant rental units up to code or add new ADUs. Maintain FMR prices and fills units through coordinated entry
- Landlord Liaisons (ERAP, HOP-GF) – Community positions providing landlord outreach and engagement
- Landlord-Tenant Mediation Program (ERAP) provided by Vermont Landlords Association to prevent court-based eviction
- VHCB grants and loans for affordable housing - $119m ARPA, $32m CRF, and Supplemental GF (>$100m)

October 2022: Community Engagement

[Link to Summary](#)

DCF hosting meetings with local homeless coalitions to talk about "what's next" to inform winddown of federal funding:

- 14 meetings (12 local and 2 statewide)
- 96 community organizations, along with AHS district staff
- More than 300 attendees

Looking Forward

Prevent Homelessness

Added funding to Housing Opportunity Grant Program for rental arrears ($500,000)

Temporary expansion of the Vermont Rental Subsidy program for Reach Up families ($1.5M)

Rapidly Re-house Families

HOME Family Housing Voucher Project launched in January 2023 to help 100 families exit homelessness. $3M SFY23 BAA request to expand to another 150 families with children

Expand Access to Units

Landlord Relief Program launching February 2023 (statewide "risk" pool)

Address zoning & permitting barriers to emergency shelters