

Vermont Legal Aid

Testimony on H.91

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Vermont is in the midst of an eviction crisis, with pervasive and destabilizing impacts on low-income Vermonters.

**LEGAL SERVICES VERMONT
AND
VERMONT LEGAL AID**

STATEWIDE LEGAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT

DECEMBER 4, 2024



Availability and eligibility recommendations

- Remove fixed room cap
- Transparent method to determine availability
- Maintain current eligibility standards

Concerns about barriers to access

Barriers our clients are reporting:

- Needing to call, sit on hold, day after day
- Inability to get an appointment with a medical provider to sign a disability variance form
- Hotels that will not take service animals
- Do Not Rent lists
- Written award letters not issued, confusion and errors resulting

Housing Authorization PDF

The authorization should be saved as a PDF and emailed to the hotel for the approved application



Emergency Housing Authorization and Billing Form

The State of Vermont, Economic Services Division (ESD) will process payment upon the bottom portion of this form is completed and returned. The state or state agency must complete and return the form within 30 days of the check-out date. ESD will not process payment for forms received more than 60 days after the check-out date. If there are changes in the number of nights provided or the client does not arrive as planned, please notify:

To be completed by Motel Reservationist, ESD/211 – Please provide all information down to the double line**

Motel Name: Riviera Ski Motel

Motel Address: 2627 Shelburne Road

Shelburne, VT 05482

Fax #: _____ Telephone #: _____

Authorization #: REB2024

Type of Authorization: Category Eligibility Adverse Weather Conditions Only

Kind of Household (HH) name: Catholicism GA HH DOR: 03/01/2000

Name of other adults in the household/room: _____

HHUID: 2010 TH 270

HH phone number: 802-5511111 # Adults in HH: 1 # Children in HH: 0

Room Number: 121 Check-in date: 04/10/2024 Check-out date: 04/24/2024

Total # nights: 14 Total Cost of Stay: 1120.00

Rate: \$ 80.00 Weeknight \$ 80.00 Weekend: \$ 80.00

Staff person authorizing stay: Christopher O'Connell Date: 04/10/2024

Motel contact (for questions): _____

Phone #: _____ E-mail address: _____

Motel Billing address: _____

For guest(s)/room: Check-in date: _____ Check-out date: _____

Rate per week night: \$ _____ Rate per weekend night: \$ _____ Total amount due: \$ _____

The State of Vermont is tax exempt. The State of VT Tax ID number is **03-6003294**.

Bill should be invoiced to: ecs.dcf@mvdhfs.org or ecs@vermont.gov

Other submission methods include fax or mail: Application and Document Processing Center
281 Main Drive
Waitsburg, VT 05371-1500
Fax # (802) 241-0074

What is a reasonable accommodation?

To ensure equal access for people with disabilities, the law requires the government to make reasonable accommodations to assure equal access for people with disabilities. A reasonable accommodation is “a change, exception, or adjustment to a rule, policy, practice, or service that may be necessary for a person with a disability to have an equal opportunity to use and enjoy a dwelling.”

Joint Statement of the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Department of Justice, FAQ 7, available at <https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/FHEO/documents/huddojstatement.pdf>

Expedited appeals

Appeals for emergency housing should be resolved quickly.

The biggest delay we are seeing is in access to the records.

Returns to homelessness, compiled from DCF Housing Reports

	Total entering coordinated entry	Number returning to homelessness after exiting to permanent housing	Number returning to homeless after exiting to non-permanent placements	Total percent return to homelessness after exiting homelessness
December, 2024	565	178 (31.5%)	91 (16%)	47.5%
November, 2024	403	115 (28.5%)	79 (19.6%)	48.1%
October, 2024	532	110 (20.67%)	122 (23%)	43.67 %
September, 2024	495	132 (26.66%)	93 (18%)	44.66%

January report on December <https://legislature.vermont.gov/assets/Legislative-Reports/Act-113-Monthly-Housing-Report-01.31.2025.pdf>; December report on November <https://legislature.vermont.gov/assets/Legislative-Reports/Act-113-Monthly-Housing-Reporting-12.31.2024.pdf>; November report on October numbers <https://legislature.vermont.gov/assets/Legislative-Reports/Act-113-DCF-Housing-Report-11.30.2024.pdf> ; October report, on September data <https://legislature.vermont.gov/assets/Legislative-Reports/Act-113-DCF-Housing-Report-10.31.2024.pdf>

HOW DO WE STOP IT?

To reverse rising levels of homelessness, we need to reduce housing and financial insecurity until no one is driven into homelessness.

