



Virginia's Homeless Programs 2019-2020 Program Year

**A Report to the
House Appropriations
and
Senate Finance Committees**



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Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	3
IMPACT OF COVID-19.....	5
WHAT THE DATA SHOWS.....	6
HOMELESS DATA INTEGRATION PROJECT.....	9
HOMELESS PROGRAMS.....	9
Virginia Homeless Solutions Program.....	10
Housing Opportunities for Persons with HIV/AIDS.....	19
Virginia Housing Trust Fund.....	21
PILOT PROJECTS TO STABLY HOUSE YOUTH.....	22
CONCLUSIONS.....	24

This report serves as a means to report overall conditions and progress made related to the administration of the State’s homeless programs in compliance with HB 5002, Budget Item 105 B of Virginia Acts of Assembly, 2018 Chapter 2.

B. The department shall report to the Chairmen of the Senate Finance, the House Appropriations Committees, and the Director, Department of Planning and Budget, by November 4 of each year on the state's homeless programs, including, but not limited to, the number of (i) emergency shelter beds, (ii) transitional housing units, (iii) single room occupancy dwellings, (iv) homeless intervention programs, (v) homeless prevention programs, and (vi) the number of homeless individuals supported by the permanent housing state funding on a locality and statewide basis and the accomplishments achieved by the additional state funding provided to the program in the first year. The report shall also include the number of Virginians served by these programs, the costs of the programs, and the financial and in-kind support provided by localities and nonprofit groups in these programs. In preparing the report, the department shall consult with localities and community-based groups.

Executive Summary

Virginia is a recognized national leader in ending homelessness. The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) plays an integral role in Virginia's response to homelessness by focusing resources to ensure every community in the commonwealth has the capacity to:

1. Quickly identify and engage people at risk of and experiencing homelessness;
2. Intervene to prevent people from losing their housing and divert people from entering the homeless services system;
3. Provide people with immediate access to shelter and crisis services without barriers to entry if homelessness does occur;
4. Quickly connect people experiencing homelessness to housing assistance and services tailored to their unique needs and strengths to help them achieve and maintain stable housing; and
5. Use data to make program and system decisions to increase positive permanent housing outcomes.

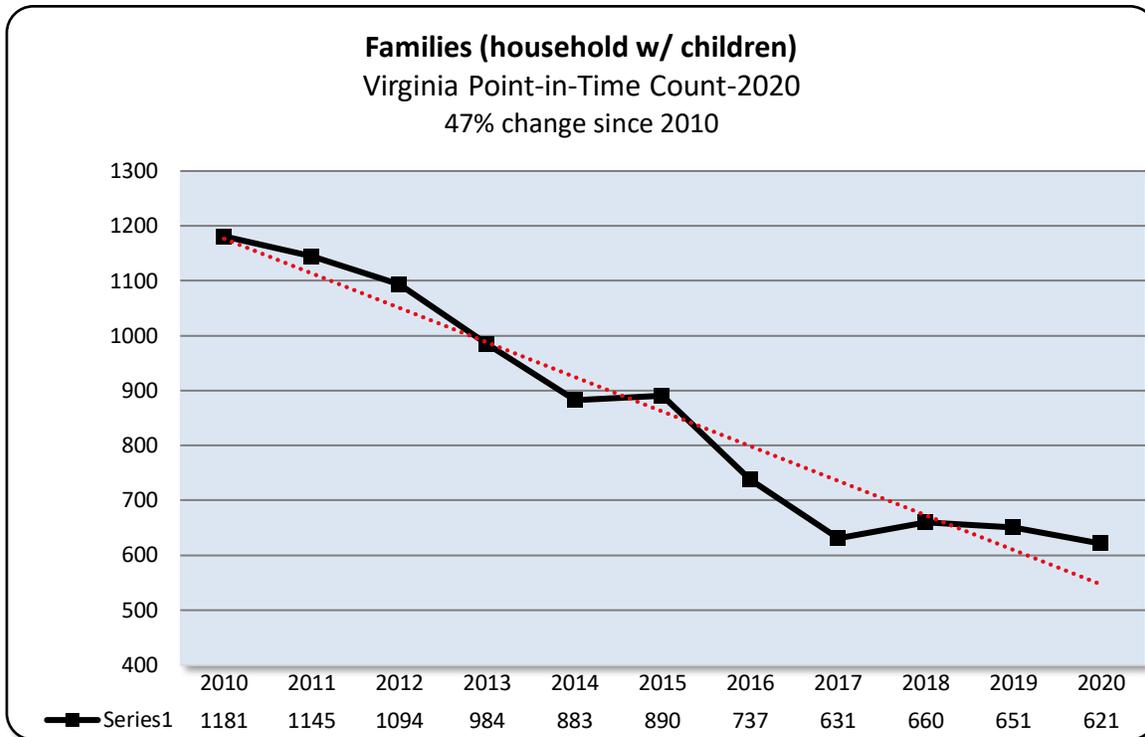
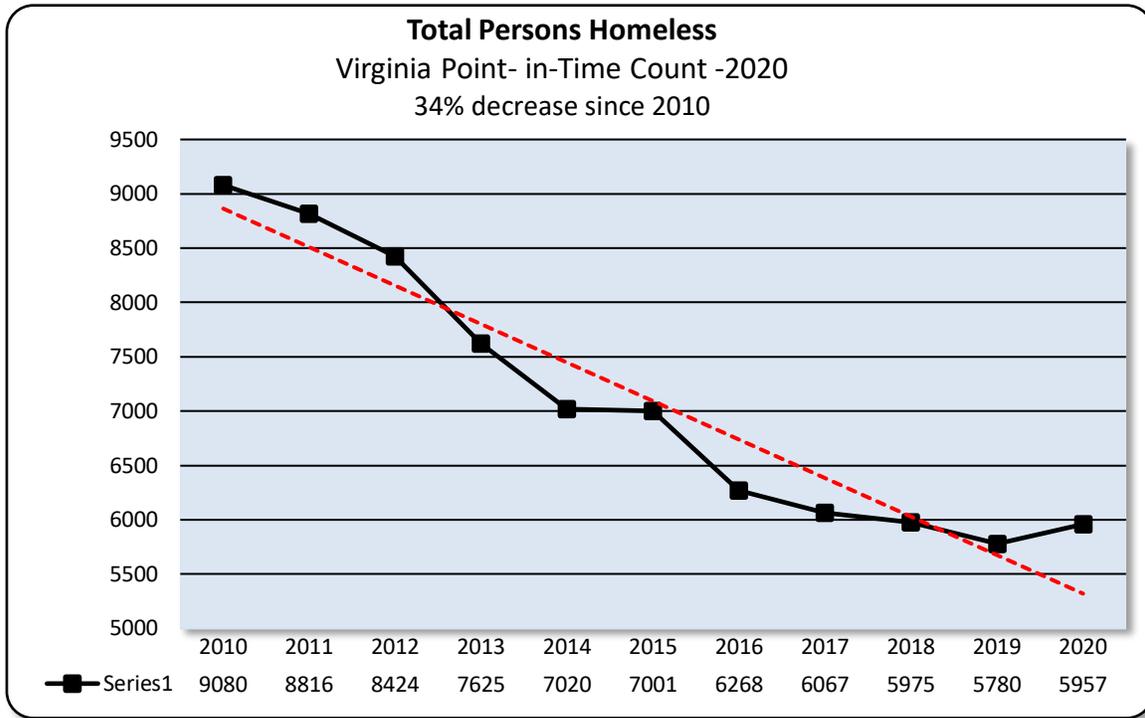
DHCD administers the Commonwealth of Virginia's homeless assistance resources. These resources include approximately \$16 million annually in state and federal funding. In the spring of 2019, DHCD released a renewal grant application that combined state and federal funding sources (HUD's Emergency Solutions Grant and Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS/HIV along with State General Funds for homeless assistance and homeless prevention). In order to apply and receive these funds, communities were required to submit community-based applications that demonstrate an effective crisis response system designed to make homelessness, rare, brief, and non-recurring.

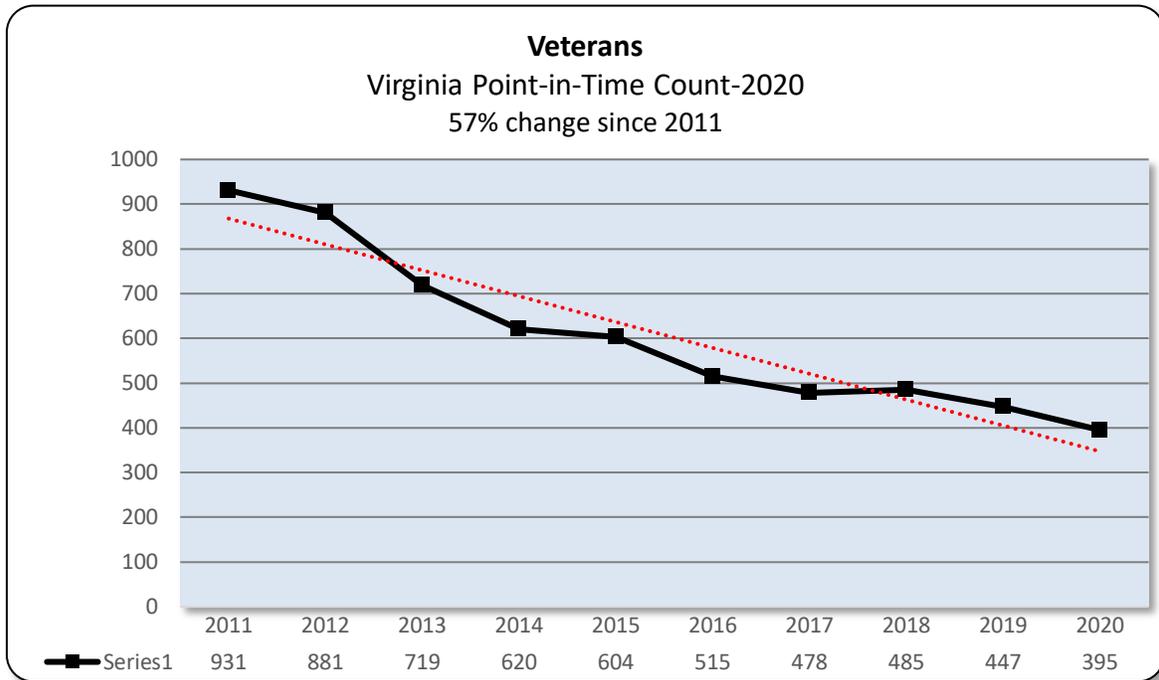
DHCD's strategies continue to show measured success. Currently, the rate of homelessness per 100,000 on average in Virginia is 70, the fourth lowest in the nation. This is compared with a national average of 156.

Each year during the last ten days in January, Virginia participates in a national point-in-time (PIT) count to identify the number of individuals who are sheltered and unsheltered. This count provides a 24-hour snapshot of those who are experiencing homelessness in Virginia. DHCD collects, aggregates, and analyzes state-level PIT data to inform grant-making decisions, best practices, and trends across the commonwealth. *The 2020 numbers reported here are preliminary, as HUD has not released the official PIT numbers upon the writing of this report.*

Although the 2020 PIT data show a slight uptick in the number of persons who are experiencing homelessness, since 2010, there has been a 34 percent decrease. Also since 2010 there has been a 47 percent decrease in households with children and a 48 percent decrease in chronic homeless identified during the point-in-time count. Between 2019-2020, Virginia saw a 5% decrease in persons who are chronically homeless, and a 68% decrease in families who are chronically homeless. In addition, since 2011, there has been

a 57 percent decrease in veteran homelessness with a 55 percent decrease in unsheltered veterans.





As excited as DHCD is to report continued annual progress, this year has been like no other. Beginning in March 2020, so much changed. COVID-19 has had a significant impact on available services (especially congregate emergency shelters), funding, required safety protocols, and responsiveness to serve residents experiencing homelessness in Virginia. The great news is communities have stepped up, and new partners have rallied to meet multiple community needs.

One of the most innovative partnerships was an effort to provide food services to individuals experiencing homelessness living in non-congregate hotel/motel shelters. Through an effort between DHCD’s Homeless and Special Needs Housing unit and DHCD’s Community Revitalization Office, local restaurants worked in conjunction with homeless assistance organizations to provide food to individuals receiving shelter services. This was a perfect partnership. Homeless service providers received funding for residents’ meals and needed a consistent means of delivering food to multiple hotels and motels, and local restaurants needed revenue to continue to stay in business.

Impact of COVID-19

When Governor Northam enacted Executive Order fifty-five, Temporary Stay at Home Order due to Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19), DHCD’s Homeless and Special Needs Housing unit quickly moved to focus on people who were unsheltered and those staying in congregate homeless shelters. Because of the initial establishment of a state-wide funded homeless services system, funding was quickly distributed to ensure resources were available to providers across the commonwealth. This quick deployment of resources was acknowledged by nation-wide organizations and Nichele Carver, Associate Director of Homeless and Special Needs Housing, presented Virginia’s process to the Council of State Community Development Agencies and the National Alliance to End Homelessness.

The Leadership

On April 3, 2020 Governor Ralph Northam announced \$2.5 million in emergency funding to shelter Virginia's statewide homeless population during the COVID-19 pandemic. The emergency funding was distributed through the same process DHCD uses to distribute funds to address homelessness across the state. This funding was used for hotel and motel vouchers, case management, food, cleaning supplies, and medical transportation. Along with the funding from the commonwealth, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) agreed to reimburse non-congregate sheltering support to individuals and families experiencing homelessness who were 65 and older, with other pre-existing conditions, and have tested positive for COVID-19. In addition to the initial funding provided, DHCD received \$6.3 million in funding to continue to assist the vulnerable populations described. The total \$8.8 million is part of the CARES Act COVID Relief Fund allocated to the Commonwealth of Virginia.

DHCD's Homeless and Special Needs Housing Unit

At the onset of the pandemic, DHCD's Homeless and Special Needs Housing (HSNH) team contacted every funded agency, community partner, and the leaders of the Continuum of Care and local planning groups to determine immediate needs to address the health and safety of persons in their programs, staff, and volunteers. Short and long term plans were created to ensure the emergency funding would focus on assisting three priority groups: 1. Persons who were currently experiencing unsheltered homelessness; 2. Persons who were in shelters that required them to be outside during the day; and 3. Persons who needed to be isolated because social distancing at the shelter was difficult and they were at greater risk which included being age 65+, having underlying health conditions, testing positive for COVID-19 or symptomatic, or having contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19.

The Homeless Service Partners

Homeless Service Providers quickly pivoted to focus on the aforementioned priority groups. Providers strengthened relationships with local hotel/motel providers, initiated new partnerships and worked with restaurants to ensure that meals would be provided to persons in the non-congregate shelters. The restaurant partnerships assisted locally owned businesses during the economic downturn due to the pandemic and ensured persons received hot meals while following stay at home orders.

What the Data Shows

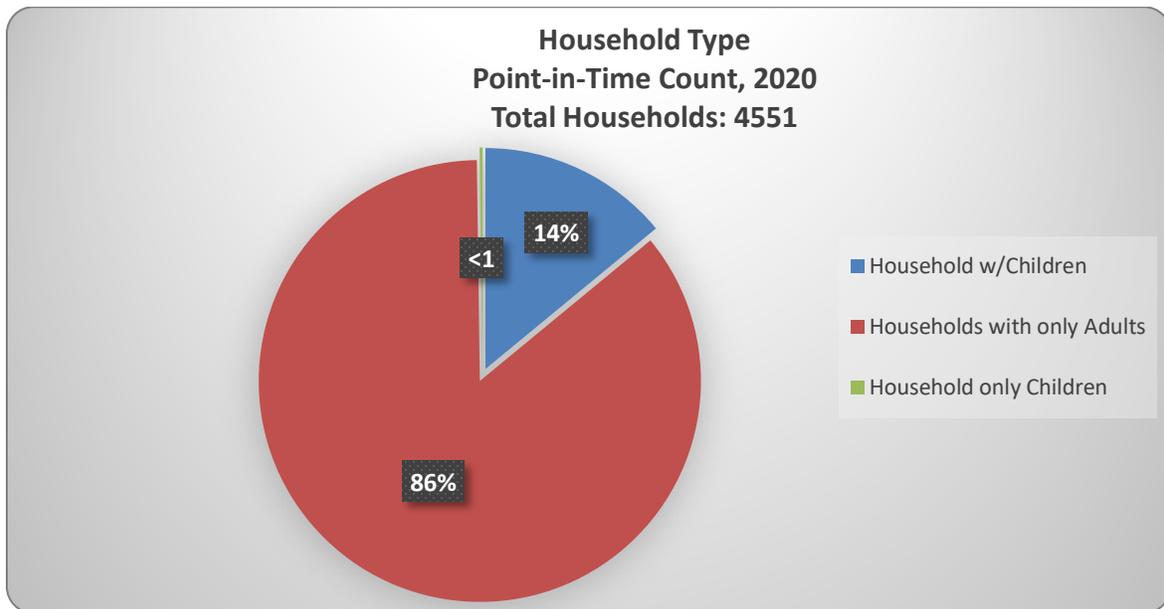
General data on the number of persons homeless and the outcomes of the CoC's systems across the commonwealth are primarily derived from data prior to the impact of COVID-19.

Every year each Continuum of Care (CoC) across the state participates in the annual point-in-time count of sheltered and unsheltered persons experiencing homelessness. Sheltered persons are individuals (including children and unaccompanied youth) sleeping in emergency shelters, transitional housing, or using a hotel/motel voucher paid for by an organization. Unsheltered individuals (including children and unaccompanied youth) are

sleeping in a place not meant for human habitation, such as cars, parks, sidewalks, abandoned buildings, or on the street.

The January 2019, point-in-time count identified 5,957 individuals (4,551 households) as experiencing homelessness (1). Approximately, 72 percent of these individuals were in emergency shelters, 11 percent were in transitional housing programs, one percent were in safe haven shelters, and 16 percent were unsheltered at the time of the count.

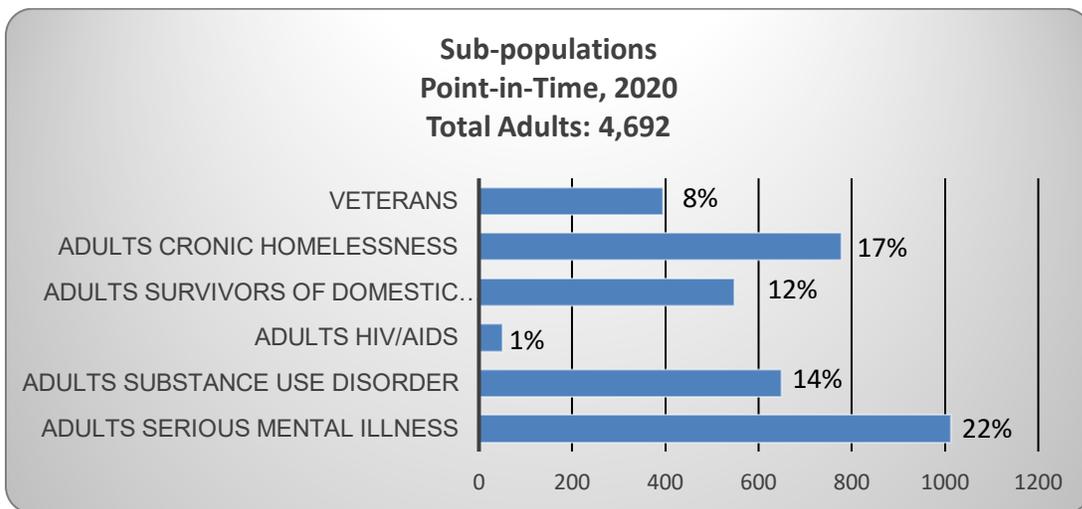
Approximately 14 percent of households experiencing homelessness identified during the point-in-time count included households with dependent children.



Based on data reported from the 2020 point-in-time count, 17 percent (778) of adults were chronically homeless. This is based on the HUD definition of chronic homelessness published in December 2015 as, “a homeless individual with a disabling condition or family where the head of household has a disabling condition and who has either been continuously homeless for a year or more, or has had at least four episodes of homelessness that equal a year’s time in the past three years.”

Notably, eight percent of adults who are experiencing homelessness in Virginia were reportedly veterans, and 12 percent were victims of domestic violence. Beginning in 2018, HUD required a new definition for domestic violence as – actively fleeing domestic violence or sexual assault. In addition, 22 percent of those experiencing homelessness have serious mental illness and 14 percent were reported as experiencing substance use disorder. Individuals may fall into multiple subpopulations. For example, an individual may be a veteran who also experiences serious mental illness.

(1) 2020 PIT count numbers are preliminary



System Performance Measures

DHCD promotes the importance of homeless services being a coordinated system as opposed to homeless assistance programs that operate independently. To facilitate this perspective HUD and DHCD now require communities to measure performance as a coordinated system. Below are the aggregated outcomes for Virginia from October, 2018 through October, 2019.

1. Length of Time Homeless (from point of entry to move-in date) – The average number of days a household stays homeless in Virginia is 94.5 days. This is an increase of less than one percent (.93) increase from the previous year.
2. Returns to Homelessness (after 2 years) – Of the 10,495 persons who exited homelessness to permanent housing, 2,099 (20%) returned to homelessness over a two-year period.
3. Annual Homeless Count - There were 19,051 individuals who entered into the homeless services system. This is less than a one percent increase from the previous year.
4. First Time Homeless -There were 15,128 individuals who were experiencing homelessness for the first-time, which is a two and a half percent decrease from the previous year. Of all individuals who entered into the homeless services system, 80 percent were experiencing homelessness for the first time.
5. Exits to Permanent Housing – Of all the individuals who exited the homeless services system, 40 percent exited to a permanent housing solution. This is a three percent decrease from the previous year.

Homeless Data Integration Project (HDIP)

In July of 2019, DHCD’s Homeless and Special Needs Housing unit hired a homeless data integration project coordinator. Driven by the need for statewide data and analytics on Virginia’s homeless services system, DHCD worked to procure Green River’s Open Path software application (procured upon the writing of this report) as the tool to be used for data analytics, care coordination, and multi-system data integration and matching. With the addition of the new position, the unit has made significant progress in the advancement of this state initiative.

Since July 2019, the following milestones have been met towards the implementation of the HDIP: establishment of a Homeless Data Integaraion Advisory Council; identification of eight pilot CoCs; creation of pilot data sharing agreement, participation agreement, and user agreement; pilot CoCs have signed agreements and uploaded data into Open Path; and the creation of additional operating procedures to advance the project to the remaining CoCs.

With the assistance of the National Alliance to End Homelessness there was a virtual gathering of Massachusetts DHCD staff, Texas Homeless Network Executive Director, Amazon Web Services, and the Actionable Intellignce for Social Policy (AISP) lead researcher (Dr. Dennis Culhane) who are working on data integration projects. The work of this group has led to receiving additional support from AISP on organizing the on-going governance structure that will upate final data sharing policies, privacy notifications, data use agreements, etc. to ensure the HDIP meets both legal and ethical standards for statewide implementation.

Homeless Programs

DHCD administers approximately \$16.5 million annually for homeless assistance programs. This includes approximately \$12.5 million in state general funds that leverage approximately \$3.8 million in federal funds to address the issues and needs of those experiencing homelessness in Virginia.

DHCD received \$2.8 million in federal funding from HUD’s Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) program and approximately \$1.0 million in Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) program. The federal ESG program is leveraged along with the State General Funds to support the homeless services system across the commonwealth through the Virginia Homeless Solutions Program (VHSP). The HOPWA program prevents homelessness among low-income individuals with HIV/AIDS and their families.

DHCD - Administered Homeless Programs 2019-2020 Program Year Allocation		
Program	Source	2019-2020 Allocation
Virginia Homeless Solutions Program (VHSP)	Federal- HUD and State- General Funds	\$15,437,211

• <i>General Homeless Service Funds</i>	<i>State</i>	<i>\$8,501,820</i>
• <i>General Homeless Prevention Funds</i>	<i>State</i>	<i>\$4,050,000</i>
• <i>Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG)</i>	<i>Federal -HUD</i>	<i>\$2,885,391</i>
Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA)	Federal -HUD	\$1,087,223

Virginia Homeless Solutions Program

The Virginia Homeless Solutions Program (VHSP) is approximately \$15.4 million, a combination of state and federal funding for shelter operations, rapid re-housing and housing stabilization, homeless prevention, coordinated assessment/entry, community planning costs, Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) costs and administration. VHSP funds require a 25 percent match.

Service Provider	Location	Award
Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission	Accomack	\$27,109.00
ACTS - Action In Community Through Service	Prince William	\$160,882.00
ACTS - Action In Community Through Service (Smaller Grant)	Prince William	\$13,218.69
AIDS Response Effort, Inc.	Winchester	\$105,434.00
ARCH Roanoke	Gate City	\$53,269.00
Arlington County Government	Arlington	\$224,596.00
Arlington Street Peoples Assistance Network, Inc	Arlington	\$235,752.00
Bay Aging	Urbanna	\$60,322.00
Bridges to Independence	Arlington	\$75,000.00
CARITAS	Richmond	\$153,450.00
Carpenter's Shelter	Alexandria	\$565,183.00
Choices, Council on Domestic Violence for Page Co., Inc.	Luray	\$72,807.00
City of Alexandria, a municipal corporation of Virginia	Alexandria	\$424,000.00
City of Charlottesville	Charlottesville	\$484,785.00

City of Hampton	Hampton	\$1,047,754.00
City of Roanoke	Roanoke	\$93,984.00
Clinch Valley Community Action, Inc.	Tazewell	\$30,785.00
Commonwealth Catholic Charities	Norfolk	\$245,916.00
Commonwealth Catholic Charities	Petersburg	\$36,140.00
Cornerstones (formerly Reston Interfaith)	Reston	\$229,414.00
Council of Community Services	Roanoke	\$365,362.00
County of Loudoun	Loudoun	\$299,820.00
Culpeper Community Development Corp.	Culpeper	\$52,860.00
Doorways for Women and Families	Arlington	\$212,947.00
Eastern Shore of Virginia Housing Alliance	Accomack	\$179,688.00
Empowerhouse (formerly RCDV)	Fredericksburg	\$164,217.00
ESCADV	Accomack	\$34,831.00
Family Crisis Support Services, Inc.	Norton	\$253,615.00
Family Resource Center, Inc.	Wytheville	\$80,135.00
First Step: A Response to Domestic Violence	Harrisonburg	\$38,226.00
ForKids,inc	Norfolk	\$20,000.00
ForKids,inc	Portsmouth	\$720,042.00
George Washington Regional Commission	Fredericksburg	\$50,000.00
Gloucester United Emergency Shelter Team	Gloucester	\$18,974.00
Hanover Safe Place	Hanover	\$177,278.00
Harrisonburg Redevelopment and Housing Authority	Harrisonburg	\$80,265.00
Help and Emergency Response, Inc.	Portsmouth	\$173,848.00
Helping Overcome Poverty's Existence, Inc.	Wytheville	\$315,784.00
HomeAgain	Richmond	\$241,229.00
Homeward	Richmond	\$264,075.00
Housing Families First	Richmond	\$203,484.00

Judeo-Christian Outreach Center	Virginia Beach	\$121,406.00
LGBT Life Center	Norfolk	\$114,756.00
LGBT Life Center	Virginia Beach	\$83,126.00
Lynchburg Community Action Group, Inc.	Lynchburg	\$194,534.00
Mercy House, Inc.	Harrisonburg	\$364,668.00
Micah Ecumenical Ministries	Fredericksburg	\$335,554.00
Miriam's House	Lynchburg	\$124,911.00
New Hope Housing, inc.	Fairfax	\$226,830.00
New River Community Action, Inc.	Radford	\$287,512.00
New River Family Shelter	Christiansburg	\$43,813.00
Northern Virginia Family Service	Prince William	\$343,699.00
Northern Virginia Family Service	Fairfax	\$178,313.00
Operation Renewed Hope Foundation	Prince William	\$62,965.00
People Incorporated of Virginia	Abingdon	\$216,122.00
People Incorporated of Virginia	Culpeper	\$277,483.00
Portsmouth Volunteers for the Homeless, Inc.	Portsmouth	\$44,211.00
Project Horizon	Lexington	\$25,000.00
PWC DSS Homeless Services	Prince William	\$157,793.00
Quin Rivers, Inc.	New Kent	\$99,058.00
Rappahannock Refuge, Inc. dba Hope House	Fredericksburg	\$366,280.00
Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Commission	Culpeper	\$84,501.00
Samaritan House, Inc	Virginia Beach	\$198,726.00
Shelter House, Inc	Fairfax	\$191,982.00
Shenandoah Alliance for Shelter	Shenandoah	\$184,680.00
Southside Survivor Response Center, Inc.	Martinsville	\$43,745.00
St. Joseph's Villa	Petersburg	\$300,000.00
St. Joseph's Villa	Richmond	\$122,833.00

STEP, Inc.	Rocky Mount	\$158,964.00
STEPS, Inc.	Farmville	\$134,387.00
StreetLight Community Outreach Ministries	Woodbridge	\$54,045.00
The Daily Planet	Richmond	\$37,200.00
The Healing Place	Richmond	\$130,200.00
The Improvement Association	Emporia	\$52,324.00
The Laurel Center	Winchester	\$63,672.00
The Planning Council	Norfolk	\$71,492.00
The Salvation Army of Central VA	Richmond	\$46,500.00
Thurman Brisben Center	Fredericksburg	\$91,386.00
Tri-County Community Action Agency	South Boston	\$101,844.00
Valley Community Services Board	Staunton	\$24,213.00
Virginia Supportive Housing	Norfolk	\$56,160.00
Volunteers Of America Chesapeake	Loudoun	\$185,232.00
Women's Resource Center of the New River Valley	Radford	\$166,144.00
YWCA Central Virginia	Lynchburg	\$25,750.00
YWCA Richmond	Richmond	\$93,900.00
YWCA South Hampton Roads	Norfolk	\$111,457.00
*Total does not include admin allocated to DHCD		\$14,685,851.69

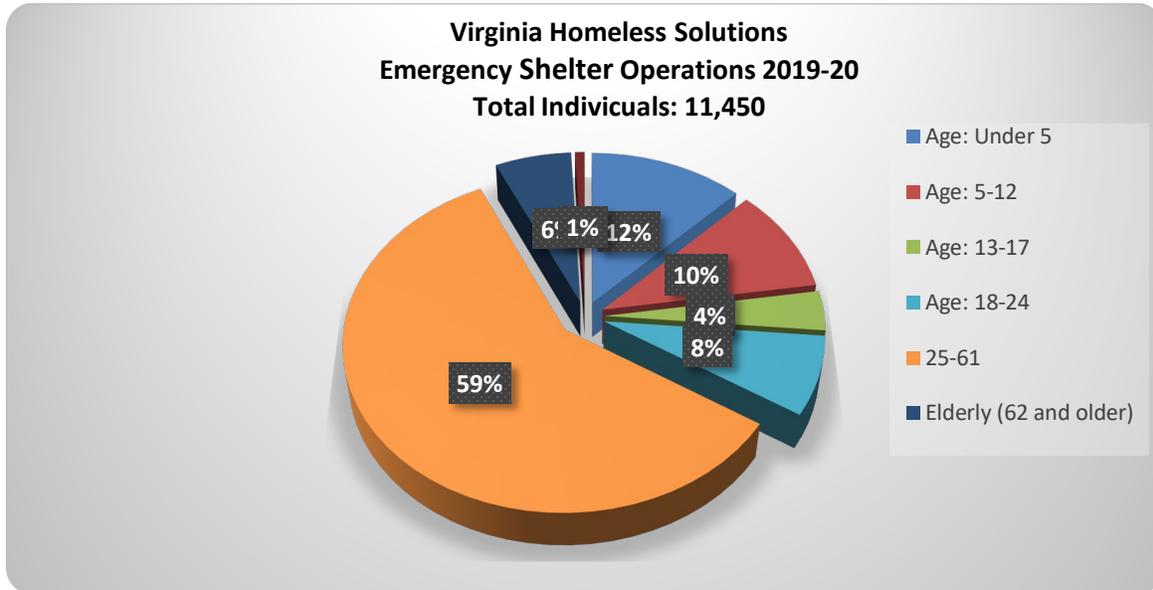
Emergency Shelter

Funding for emergency shelter totaled \$2.4 million through the VHSP renewal application process.

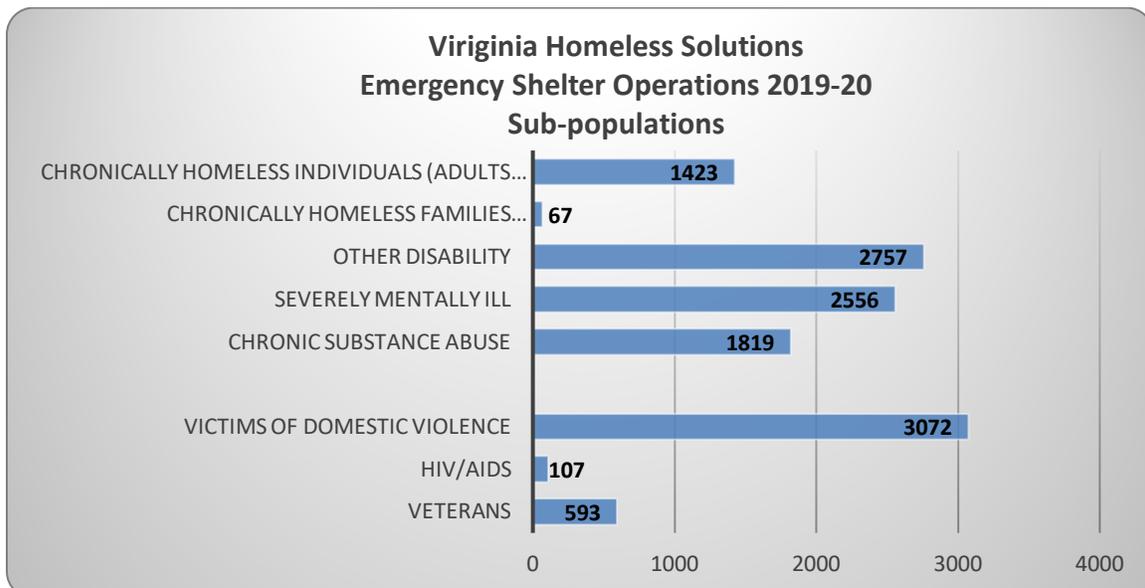
During 2019-20 program year, emergency shelter providers receiving VHSP served 11,450 persons (8,093, households) through emergency and seasonal shelters. Of the 8,093 households, 19 percent or 1,565 were households with children and 81 percent or 6,528 were households with only adults.

The table and charts below provide additional details on the populations served by emergency shelters.

Twenty-six percent (3,021) of persons in emergency shelter were children under the age of 18.

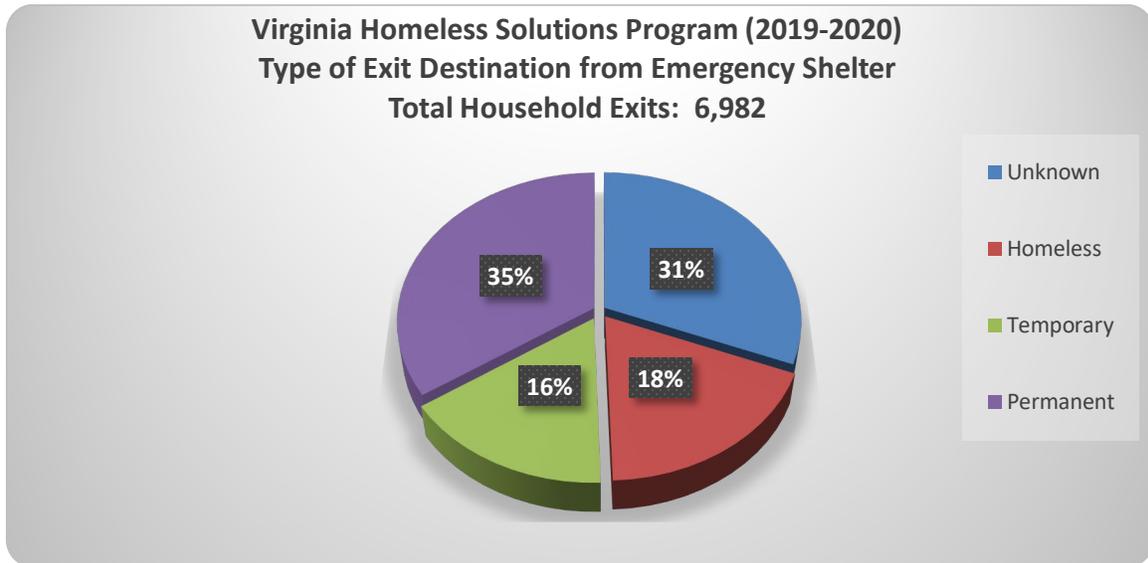


Seven percent of adult individuals receiving VHSP-funded shelter services report veteran status. Thirty-six percent of adults are victims of domestic violence. Other significant challenges and barriers to housing include serious mental illness (30%), chronic substance abuse (22%), and other disabilities (33%), which are self reported unless used as a documented disability for permanent supportive housing or other permanent housing that requires disability documentation. Of the households without children who were served in emergency shelter, twenty-one percent were chronically homeless. And of the total individuals in households w/children, one percent are chronically homeless (family chronic homelessness includes adults and children).



**Note sub-populations only include adults (except chronically homeless families) and are not unduplicated. An adult may be in one or more categories.*

Of households that exited shelter, 35 percent exited to a permanent destination (market rate rental, Section 8, supportive housing, permanent placement with family and friends). Sixteen percent exited to a temporary destination (jail/prison, institution, or to temporary housing provided by family/friends). Eighteen percent exited to another homeless location, and thirty-one percent exited to an unknown destination.



Rapid Re-housing

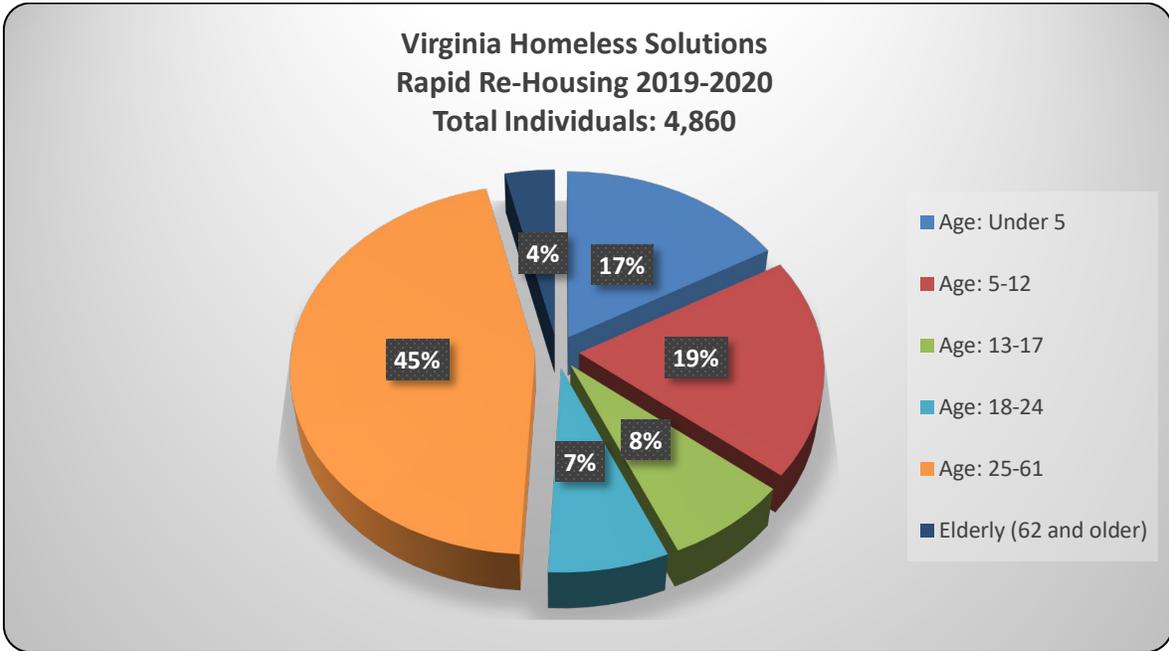
Funding for rapid re-housing totaled \$6.7 million through the VHSP application process. Rapid re-housing continues to be a solution to homelessness designed to help individuals and families to quickly exit homelessness and return to permanent housing. It is offered without preconditions (such as employment, income, absence of criminal record, or sobriety) and the resources and services provided are tailored to the unique needs of the household.

DHCD continues to promote rapid re-housing as an effective means to ending homelessness. By providing resources for the core components of rapid re-housing, such as housing identification, move-in and rent assistance up to 24 months, and stabilization case management and services, 81 percent of households exit to permanent housing including 66 percent without any on-going subsidy.

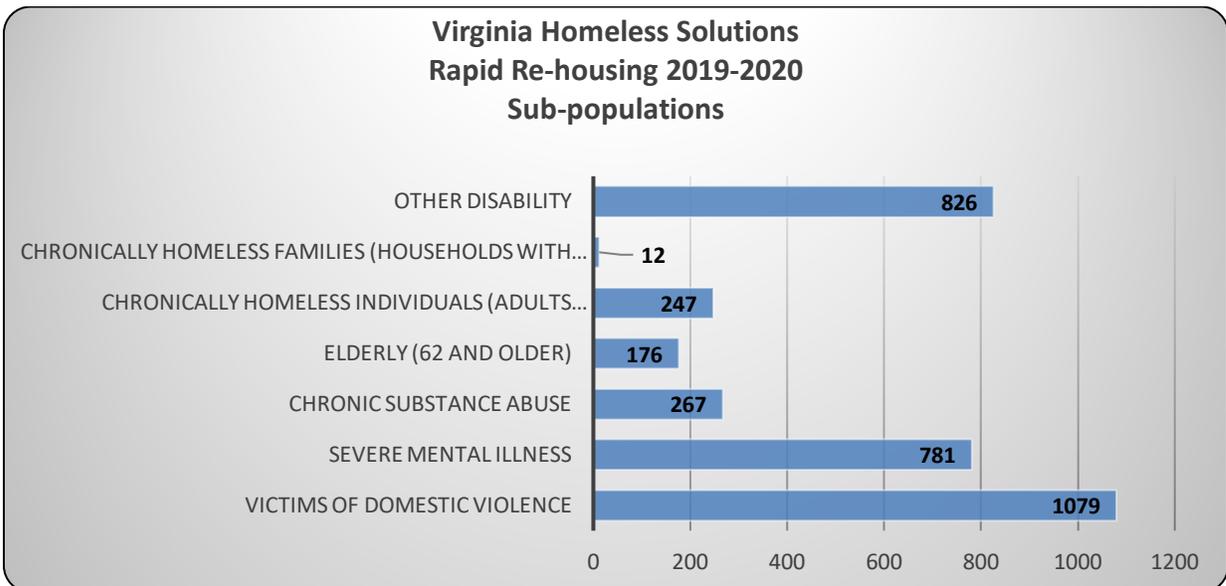
Sixty-four percent of households during fiscal year 2019-2020 received up to three months of financial assistance. Another 22 percent received between four and nine months of financial assistance and three percent needed and received more than ten months of financial assistance. Eleven percent only needed and received case management. Case management is an integral part of rapid re-housing. All households receive case management at least monthly and may continue to receive case management after financial assistance is no longer necessary. Fifty-four percent received

case management up to 3 months while, five percent needed and received case management for longer than one-year.

Forty-four percent of those who were rapidly re-housed were children under the age of 18.



Thirty-seven percent of adults served by rapid re-housing programs are victims of domestic violence. Twenty-seven percent are affected by serious mental illness, nine percent by chronic substance abuse, and 28 percent by other disabilities, which are self reported unless used as a documented disability for permanent supportive housing or other permanent housing that requires disability documentation.



**Note sub-populations only include adults (except chronically homeless families) and are not unduplicated. An adult may be in one or more categories.*

Of households who exited rapid re-housing, 81 percent exited to a permanent destination (market rate rental, Section 8, supportive housing, permanent placement with family and friends). Seven percent exited to a temporary destination ((jail/prison, institution, or to temporary housing provided by family/friends). Six percent exited to a homeless destination (other shelter or place not meant for human habitation) and six percent exited to an unknown destination.



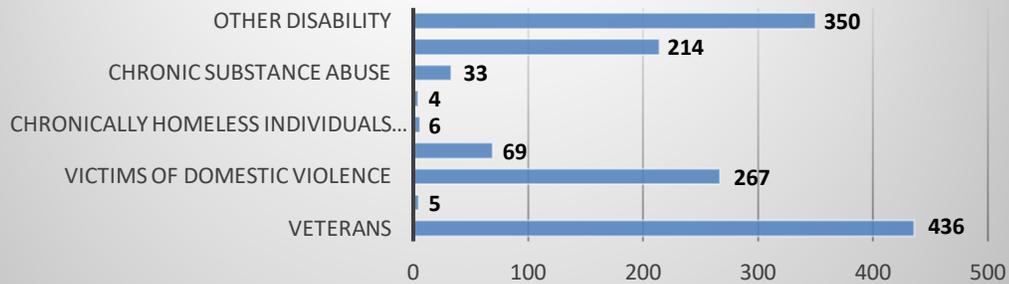
Homeless Prevention

The purpose of VHSP’s prevention funding is to prevent homelessness by targeting resources to those households who will imminently (within 14 days) lose their primary nighttime residence and have incomes below 30 percent area median income. Eligible homeless prevention activities include rent and housing stabilization financial assistance, housing search and placement, stabilization case management and services, and mediation.

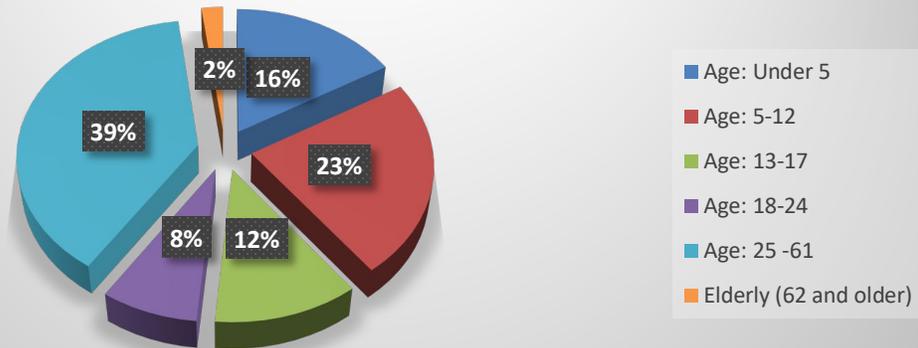
Through VHSP, \$4 million in state funds were distributed across the commonwealth for homeless prevention activities. During the 2019-20 program year, prevention funding provided assistance to 3,285 individuals (1,196 households). Nine hundred and eighty-eight exited prevention services and of those, over 99.4% were prevented from homelessness.

Fifty-one percent of those who received homeless prevention services were children under the age of 18. Eleven percent had a serious mental illness and 22% were veterans.

**Virginia Homeless Solutions
Prevention 2019-2020
Subpopulations**



**Virginia Homeless Solutions Program
Prevention 2019-2020
Total Individuals: 3,285**



**Note sub-populations only include adults (except chronically homeless families) and are not unduplicated. An adult may be in one or more categories.*

Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS/HIV (HOPWA)

HOPWA funds are available to meet needed housing assistance for moderate to low income individuals with HIV/AIDS in Virginia’s non-entitlement metropolitan statistical areas (EMSAs). The funds through this program were focused on direct housing assistance and include supportive services for the individuals receiving housing assistance through the HOPWA program.

DHCD awards HOPWA funds to eligible project sponsors (that operate outside the state’s EMSAs) following a renewal application process. Currently, the state HOPWA programs encompass 31,749 square miles.

HOPWA Project Sponsors 2019-2020				
Sub-grantee (Project Sponsor)	Service Area(S)	Housing Activities	Support Services	Funded Amount

AIDS Response Effort, Inc.	Page, Shenandoah, Winchester	Short term rent. Tenant based rental assistance	Case management/ Food bank	\$104,032.00
City of Charlottesville	Roanoke	Tenant based rental assistance, Short term rent, Support services, Permanent Housing Placement	Case management	\$240,642.00
Commonwealth Catholic Charities	Norton	Tenant based rental assistance, Short term rent, Support services	Case management	\$100,876.00
Council of Community Services	Roanoke, Covington, Salem, Clifton Forge, Vinton	Tenant based rental assistance, Short term rent, Support services, Permanent Housing Placement	Case management	\$240,754.00
Fredericksburg Area HIV/AIDS Support Services	Fredericksburg	Tenant based rental assistance, Short term rent, Support services, Permanent Housing Placement	Case management/ Transportation	\$134,157.00
Harrisonburg Community Health Center Care Management	Page, Rockbridge, Rockingham, Shenandoah, Buena Vista, Lexington, Staunton, Waynesboro	Tenant based rental assistance, Short term rent, Support services, Permanent Housing Placement,	Case management	\$72,972.00

		Housing information Services		
Lynchburg Community Action Group, Inc.	Lynchburg	Short term rent. Tenant based rental assistance, support services	Case management, Transportation, Food/Foodbank, Support Group	\$91,256.00
Pittsylvania Community Action Inc	Pittsylvania	Tenant based rental assistance, Short term rent, Support services, Permanent Housing Placement	Case management	\$129,917.00
				\$1,114,606.00

DHCD administered a federal allocation of \$1,114,606 in HOPWA funds through eight project sponsors across the Commonwealth of Virginia. The project sponsors served a total of 227 unduplicated households with housing assistance. The services they received included:

- Short-term rent, mortgage, and utility assistance (STRMU) - 177 households
- Tenant-based rental assistance (TBRA) - 59 households
- Supportive services - 209 households

An additional 114 family members, of whom twelve, also had HIV/AIDS benefited from HOPWA housing assistance.

Of those eligible households that received HOPWA assistance, 75 percent had extremely low incomes (0-30% AMI), 16 percent had very low incomes (31-50% AMI), and nine percent had low incomes (51-80% AMI).

Housing Trust Fund - Homeless Reduction Grant

In addition to VHSP funding, DHCD also administered approximately \$2.2 million for the Virginia Housing Trust Fund (HTF) Homeless Reduction grants during calendar year 2020. The program achieves the goal of reducing homelessness by providing assistance in the form of grants to projects that address service gaps and support state housing policy. Eligible project types include:

- Rapid re-housing programs
- Permanent supportive housing (housing stabilization services in PSH for the chronically homeless)

- Predevelopment (permanent supportive housing for chronically homeless)

Calendar Year 2020 Housing Trust Fund- Homeless Reduction Grants

Organization	Project/Activity	Award
ACTS - Action In Community Through Service	ACTS - Housing Trust Fund Homeless Reduction Grant 2019	\$41,525.00
Arlington Street Peoples Assistance Network, Inc	The A-SPAN Supportive Housing Project	\$35,000.00
City of Chesapeake	Homeless Youth Rapid Rehousing Project	\$100,000.00
City of Hampton	Youth Homelessness	\$100,000.00
Cornerstones (formerly Reston Interfaith)	Rapid Re-housing Plus	\$100,000.00
Council of Community Services	Housing Trust Fund Rapid Re-housing Project	\$35,000.00
Doorways for Women and Families	Doorways for Women and Families HTF FY19	\$25,000.00
ForKids,inc	ForKids Bridge RRH 2019	\$50,000.00
HomeAgain	Single Individuals Rapid Rehousing Initiative	\$100,000.00
Mercy House, Inc.	Mercy House RRH Program	\$100,000.00
Micah Ecumenical Ministries	FrCoC Permanent Supportive Housing Program (Micah)	\$51,500.00
Micah Ecumenical Ministries	FrCoC Rapid Re-housing Program (Micah)	\$77,250.00
Miriam's House	Community First	\$100,000.00
New Hope Housing, inc.	Alexandria Housing First Apartments Program	\$55,000.00
New Hope Housing, inc.	Fairfax County Housing First PSH Program	\$55,000.00
New Hope Housing, inc.	Arlington Permanent Supportive Housing Program	\$100,000.00
Northern Virginia Family Service	Northern Virginia Family Service Greater Prince William Rapid Rehousing and Housing Stabilization Services	\$100,000.00
People Incorporated of Virginia	King's Mountain Housing Trust Fund	\$10,000.00
People Incorporated of Virginia	Hope Center	\$91,410.00
Samaritan House, Inc	SHI Housing Trust Fund Homeless Reduction Grant 18-19	\$100,000.00
Shelter House, Inc	Shelter House Rapid Re-Housing 2019	\$100,000.00
St. Joseph's Villa	HTF Pilot Project 12360 FY19	\$86,837.00
St. Joseph's Villa	FY19 SJV HTF 12364	\$55,000.00
STEPS, Inc.	Heartland Local Planning Group/STEPS Inc.	\$13,590.00

Virginia Supportive Housing	Cool Lane Apartments	\$100,000.00
Virginia Supportive Housing	2019 Gosnold and Church Street Station - Norfolk	\$100,000.00
Virginia Supportive Housing	2019 Cloverleaf and Crescent Square - Virginia Beach	\$100,000.00
Virginia Supportive Housing	2019 Heron's Landing - Chesapeake	\$60,000.00
Virginia Supportive Housing	2019 New Clay and South Richmond Studios - Richmond	\$100,000.00
Virginia Supportive Housing	2019 The Crossings - Charlottesville	\$82,000.00
		\$2,224,112.00

HTF Rapid Re-housing

The Virginia Housing Trust Fund is able to fill gaps in communities where rapid re-housing dollars are not adequate to meet the needs of individuals and families. Rapid re-housing is the primary solution for households experiencing homelessness who are not able to self-resolve through their own support systems. As a cost effective and client-focused approach, rapid re-housing effectively ends homelessness for individuals and families at a quicker rate than either traditional emergency shelters or transitional housing.

HTF Permanent Supportive Housing

While most permanent supportive housing (PSH) units have a long-term subsidy attached through HUD or the Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services, the supportive services funding is often limited. Virginia Housing Trust Fund is a means to enhance supportive services for those households with the greatest vulnerabilities and those who have been chronically homeless.

Pilot Projects to Stably House Youth

Petersburg Youth and Family Housing Stabilization

DHCD has partnered with the City of Petersburg, Petersburg City Public Schools, and St. Joseph's Villa to implement a pilot project as part of the Challenged School Initiative. This project began by targeting students experiencing homelessness (and their families) who are enrolled in Petersburg City High School and who are chronically absent from school. Due to COVID-19 the pilot project has adjusted to include Vernon Johns Middle School along with Petersburg High School and Blandford Academy. The pilot project connects youth and their families to permanent housing with the goal of increasing school attendance, improving student performance and chances of graduation once they achieve housing stability.

During 2019-2020 grant year, 73 individuals were served and 50 exited the program to permanent housing. One hundred percent of exits were to permanent housing destinations. On average, it took 37 days for households to secure permanent housing. Thirty-five percent of those who exited retained or increased income from program entry to exit. Additionally, of the 73 individuals who were served 85 percent were connected to health care services.

Moving From Foster Care to Adulthood

In 2016, the Virginia General Assembly established the Fostering Futures program to provide extended foster care supports for up to three years for those aging out of foster care. While transitioning to adulthood, in addition to other supports, participants in the Fostering Futures program receive \$720/month to cover basic living expenses. Program participants may choose to remain in the foster family home or live independently while working on school/employment goals. In 2019, DHCD established Moving from Foster Care to Adulthood Rental Assistance Pilot to provide up to three years of tenant based rental assistance (TBRA) to Fostering Futures program participants. This pilot was implemented in two high cost markets (Richmond city and Charlottesville/Albemarle) to help stabilize housing options for participants during this critical transition period.

In Charlottesville, the Department of Social Services and The Haven partnered to administer the Moving from Foster Care to Adulthood pilot. A Fostering Futures participant communicated to her case manager that she felt ready to move into her own apartment before reaching the age of 21. The Haven was extremely responsive and encouraging about the process to find a one-bedroom place in the city. Within a week, the participant was able to begin looking and applying for apartments and had a lease signed within two months. The participant shared that she felt supported through this process of becoming independent and managing her own apartment, while still receiving assistance through Social Services and the grant. Having her own apartment and rental assistance over the last couple months has allowed her to focus on her employment and work towards obtaining her cosmetology license. It also benefited her immensely, as she had a medical procedure which resulted in her being unable to work for a month. The support she received allowed her to maintain her housing during this difficult time.

Conclusion

DHCD's Homeless and Special Needs Housing unit continues to work to make homelessness rare, brief, and non-recurring. To that end, the unit administers state- and federally-funded homeless service programs to address housing and stabilization services for individuals and families at-risk of or experiencing homelessness in the commonwealth. To administer these funds, partnerships are maintained with communities and an array of service providers including nonprofits, units of local government, and housing authorities. It is paramount for ensuring comprehensive homeless services are provided effectively and efficiently in accordance with best-practice models to maximize limited resources.

These efforts have been successful. Since 2010, the increased focus on ending homelessness in the Commonwealth of Virginia has achieved significant results:

- ✓ Overall homelessness decreased by 34 percent
- ✓ Unsheltered homelessness decreased by 47 percent
- ✓ Family homelessness decreased by 47 percent
- ✓ Youth homelessness decreased by 57 percent (since 2013)
- ✓ Veterans homelessness decreased by 57 percent (since 2011)

✓ Chronic homelessness decreased by 48 percent

With continued state leadership, willingness, innovation, and funding, ending homelessness is possible in Virginia. DHCD and its partners across the commonwealth stepped up when COVID-19 impacted businesses and residents around the state. Due to the existing relationships and homeless crisis response system structure around the state, DHCD was able to get additional funding out quickly and a means to communicate health and safety measures needed to increase the safety of the residence who did not have a place to be able to meet the “Stay and Home” or “Stay Safer at Home” Governor’s orders.

Moving into FY 21, DHCD is establishing a blueprint to end homelessness and looks forward to publishing the strategies and activities while unprecedented funding is available to truly make a difference in the lives of Virginia’s residents who are experiencing homelessness.