

Vermont State Housing Authority
CoC Program Report: RAPID REHOUSING

The Vermont State Housing Authority (VSHA) operates two HUD Continuum of Care Programs:

- **Permanent Supportive Housing** (“Shelter+Care”) serves households which meet the HUD definition of chronic homelessness (disabling condition + long-term literal homeless) with long-term rental assistance and robust services from local S+C providers.
- **Rapid Rehousing** (RRH) serves households experiencing literal homelessness, who have varying levels of service needs, with medium-term rental assistance (up to 24 months). RRH providers either deliver direct services or coordinate them with local partners.

Both CoC Programs operate with low barrier entry and implement housing first practices.

Eligible RRH households must: need assistance; not exceed 50% Area Median Income; meet HUD CoC-RRH homeless definition; agree to sign/comply with a one-year lease; and contribute 30% of their household’s adjusted gross income towards rent.

All households must be prioritized & referred by the VT Balance of State CoC - Coordinated Entry. RRH may serve households who have medium-term or **long-term needs** (with a housing stability plan and access to long-term services).

Care coordination is comprised of an initial housing needs assessment, minimum monthly visits (more as needed), and individualized service plans tailored to the needs of each household to at least: search/secure/retain housing, access mainstream resources, and increase income.

VSHA RRH serves the entire VT BoS CoC geographic area (all VT counties, except Chittenden).

ALL Household Types may be served: Individuals, Youth (18-24), and Families

ALL Subpopulations may be served: persons fleeing domestic/sexual violence/human trafficking, persons with health conditions (mental health, substance use disorder, HIV/AIDS, physical health, etc.), Veterans ineligible for or averse to VA services, LGBTQ, etc.

Homeless Eligibility Criteria: persons currently experiencing literal homelessness

- Staying on the streets or other places not meant for human habitation
- Residing in a shelter (emergency shelter, DV shelter, AHS GA motel, motel paid by a charitable organization, overflow shelter, etc.)
- Persons fleeing domestic and other violence AND staying on the streets/in shelter
- *A new VSHA RRH-DV grant may serve persons fleeing DV not on streets/in shelter*

Subject to funding availability, eligible VSHA RRH households in need of long-term rental assistance may apply for a VSHA Sect. 8 Housing Choice Voucher with a preference.

ADMINISTRATION

Grant Recipient: VSHA must oversee & monitor the activities of each grant/RRH Lead Agency to ensure compliance (to both HUD & VT BoS CoC), including –

- Develop project in partnership with RRH providers, local CoCs, State, and others
- Submit proposal for each CoC project to VCEH & HUD for review and approval
- Conducts all communications and execute each grant with HUD (Issues & Conditions, Environmental Review, Match Letters, Grant Agreement, Close-Out)
- Develop and enter into agreements with each Lead Agency and ongoing support
- Maintain each grant budget, financial record keeping, eLOCCS reimbursement, determine funds available for subsidy allocation (monthly/bi-monthly), etc.
- Adherence to HUD CoC Program Regulations/Interim Rule; Notices; State & Federal laws; CoC Policies & Procedures; etc.
- Ensure HMIS data entry/quality/completeness of each Annual Performance Report
- Review & address performance measure outcomes
- Conduct VSHA site visits/findings/correction action steps & CoC reporting

Program Administrator: In operation of the RRH Program (multiple grants), VSHA -

- Develops program policies & protocols
- Provides trainings & extensive technical assistance
- Conducts strategic planning (internal, state, local CoCs, providers, VCEH, etc.)
- Addresses issues & complaints
- Supports coordination & implementation at various levels (multiple staff at 8 RRH provider agencies, multiple partners; 10 Coordinated Entry staff; 11 local CoCs; VCEH & committees; multiple coalitions; State/Federal Agencies; and between VSHA staff)

Rental Assistance Administrator: VSHA staff –

- Answer eligibility and other inquiries, accepts & processes applications
- Communicates with RRH providers, other providers, households, landlords, other VSHA staff, employers/benefits programs, State employees, etc.
- Conducts HQS unit inspections, completes lease contracts (with household, RRH provider and landlord), addresses tenant-landlord issues, etc.
- Processes & sends monthly Housing Assistance Payments to landlords (including security deposits & vacancy costs), calculates income & household changes

RRH Lead Agencies: enter into VSHA provider agreements, provide match letters, develop agreements & coordinate with local partners, conduct make referrals to/receive from local Coordinated Entry, conduct HMIS data entry & quality, assist households with RRH applications and housing search & retention, provide case management to support households in the development & follow-thru on Individual Service Plans (service coordination with other providers, tenant-landlord issues, access mainstream resources, housing stability).

HOUSEHOLDS SERVED (FFY2016 * 10/1/17-9/30/18)

RRH Statewide

Households/Units Funded: 70
Households/Units Served: 57.25 (average per quarter)

Persons/Beds Funded: 126
Persons/Beds Served: 142 (average per quarter)

RRH5 (Addison)

Households/Units Funded: 8
Households/Units Served: 1.75 (average per quarter)

Persons/Beds Funded: 12
Persons/Beds Served: 2 (average per quarter)

HOUSEHOLDS SERVED/UNITS FUNDED TO DATE (FFY2017 * 10/1/18-3/31/19)

RRH Statewide

Households/Units Served (October):	48	\$802 average HAP
Households/Units Served (November):	43	\$639 average HAP
Households/Units Served (December):	46 (+27 released)	\$704 average HAP
Households/Units Served (January):	45 (+31 released)	\$672 average HAP
Households/Units Served (February):	40 (+42 released)	\$798 average HAP
Households/Units Served (March):	40 (+50 released)	\$782 average HAP

RRH5 (Addison/Rutland)

Households/Units Served (October):	3	\$1,167 average HAP
Households/Units Served (November):	3	\$703 average HAP
Households/Units Served (December):	3	\$703 average HAP
Households/Units Served (January):	3 (+6 released)	\$703 average HAP
Households/Units Served (February):	5 (+6 released)	\$1,202 average HAP
Households/Units Served (March):	4 (+7 released)	\$835 average HAP

TYPES OF PERSONS/HOUSEHOLDS SERVED (FFY2016 * 10/1/17-9/30/18)

RRH Statewide and RRH5 (Addison) – combined APR data

Number of Adults (age 18 years and over): 109
Number of Children (under age 18): 105
Number of Veterans: 0
Number of Chronically Homeless Persons: 14
Number of Youth (under age 25): 13
Number of Parenting Youth (under age 18 with children): 11

Number of Adults by Gender: **Male = 40; Female = 54; Other = 0**
Age: **<18 = 105; 18-24 = 19; 25-54 = 85; 55+ = 5**
Race: **White = 193; Black = 9; Multiple Races = 12**
Ethnicity: **Non-Hispanic/Non-Latino = 203; Hispanic/Latino = 11**

Health Conditions (at program start):

- **Mental Health** = 39
- **Alcohol and/or Drugs** = 15
- **Chronic Health** = 4
- **Developmental** = 7
- **Physical** = 4

Number of Health Conditions (at program start): **None = 156; 1 = 41; 2 = 12; 3+ = 5**

Persons with Domestic Violence History: **Yes = 45; No = 60**
Persons Fleeing Domestic Violence (at program start): **Yes = 16; No = 29**

Homeless Situation (at application submission):

- **Emergency Shelter** (or equivalent) = 83
- **Places Not Meant for Habitation** = 21
- **Other Literal Homelessness** (HMIS data entry errors) = 5

Number of Adults at Annual Assessment (Stayers) or at Exit (Leavers) with an Income Source:

- Total = 105 (**1+ Income Source** = 74; **Assessment not required yet** = 17; **No Income** = 14)
- **Gained or Increased Income** = 33 out of 88 Adults (38%)

of Non-Cash Benefit Sources (SNAP/WIC/TANF) at Exit: **1+ Source(s)** = 39; **No Sources** = 6

Health Insurance at Exit: **1+ Source(s)** = 2; **1 Source** = 82; **No Sources** = 3

Destination at Program Exit: **Permanent** = 79; **Temporary** = 3; **Institution** = 1; **Other** = 4

- Successful exit to permanent housing = 93%

FFY2016 COC PROGRAM FUNDS – AWARDED and EXPENDED (10/1/17-9/30/18)

RRH Statewide - Awarded

Rental Assistance:	\$775,788
Services:	\$13,766 (\$3,029/HPC and \$10,737/GWC)
Project Administration:	\$52,486
Total:	\$842,040

RRH Statewide - Expended

Rental Assistance:	\$555,381.70
Services:	\$0
Project Administration:	\$52,486 (includes \$11,165/HPC and \$6,081.56/GWC)
Services Match (non-HUD):	\$190,000 reported to HUD (31%); \$363,790 actual (66%)
Total:	\$607,867.70 (72%)

RRH5 (Addison)

Rental Assistance:	\$85,212 (\$7,700 expended)
Project Administration:	\$6,673 (100%)
Services Match (non-HUD):	\$5,975 (41%)
Total:	\$91,885 (\$14,373 expended * 16%)

FFY2017 COC RRH FUNDS – AWARDED & EXPENDED TO DATE (October 2018-March 2019)

RRH Statewide

Rental Assistance:	\$811,716 (\$225,353 expended to date)
Project Administration:	\$52,486
Total:	\$864,202

RRH5 (Addison)

Rental Assistance:	\$85,212 (\$22,894 expended to date)
Project Administration:	\$6,673
Total:	\$91,885

GROWING PAINS

Challenges: Although this project attained high unit utilization rates, the circumstances that led HUD to recapture some FFY2016 unused funds are due to slow lease-ups of approved program participants as a result of:

- Limited & strained service & program administration capacity of RRH Lead Agencies, service providers, local CoCs, Coordinated Entry, VSHA staff, others
- Historical challenges with the lack of available, affordable, and habitable housing stock in a state with 2% rental vacancy rates
- Participants of CoC Programs (low barrier/housing first) are in competition to access limited housing with Vermonters who have better credit/housing/criminal backgrounds
- Uncertain per unit costs for a new program that primarily serves larger households
- High turnover (successful) rates due to VSHA Sect. 8 HCV preference for RRH households

Solutions:

- CoC RRH Program review conducted by the Technical Assistance Collaborative
- Added a RRH provider to RRH5 grant and consolidated RRH5 into RRH Statewide grant
- Implemented new, formal quarterly meetings with RRH Lead Agencies
- Collaborated with state partners, providers, and AHS to identify service capacity
- Increased coordination and time of VSHA staff to increase program capacity (e.g. development of new VSHA CoC Program Policies & Procedures for both Rapid Rehousing and Shelter+Care)
- Supported increased housing options (e.g. Housing Bond, Landlord Liaisons, etc.)
- Increased analysis of monthly budget to support over-disbursement of RRH subsidies
- Conducted planning and outreach to change and expand RRH provider portfolio, including in preparation for new RRH-Domestic Violence grant and potential proposal for a YHDP RRH-Youth project
- Support RRH Lead Agencies to strength partnerships (including CE), with local providers to improve service coordination and to be eligible for use as a HUD match
- Other innovative ideas: Rapid Rehousing to Shelter+Care transition in place, RRH households accessing other PHAs, utilizing other existing services/funds for RRH