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-CH (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.*

**Chronic Homelessness (CH)**

As a HUD CoC Program, Permanent Supportive Housing is intended as the primary resource to address general chronic homelessness in communities (VASH is also available to exclusively serve VA-eligible CH Veterans). After making significant headway in the past, *former S+C Bonus grants supported an initial 65% CH decrease in Rutland County, January Point-in-Time count data shows a steady increase of CH persons within the entire VT BoS CoC during the past few years (2015=65; 2016=59; 2017=83; 2018=118; 2019=116). If not for a massive push (50+ subsidies) to utilize unspent S+C funds in the spring/summer of 2018, the number of persons experiencing chronic homelessness would have inevitably been much higher in 2019.*

In response to these unsettling trends, VSHA has implemented new VT BoS CoC strategies to address chronic homelessness:

- Effective 6/1/19, VSHA Shelter+Care Programs will only serve households where at least one member meets the HUD definition of Chronic Homelessness-DedicatedPLUS (CH+), see handout for details. Prior to this change, VSHA S+C subsidies were “prioritized”.
- Ongoing service capacity challenges necessitated VSHA to voluntarily reallocate (reduce) the S+C Statewide grant in order to add case management funding. The result is a recently awarded new S+C WWW (Washington/Windsor/Windham) grant, in partnership with Pathways VT, to serve counties with the highest number of CH persons.
- As a result of last year’s effective campaign to utilize S+C grant funds (reduce recapture by HUD), VSHA will continue the practice of **over-issuing subsidies**.
- In preparation for the upcoming FY19 CoC NOFA competition, VSHA (as an eligible project applicant) is considering the submission of a **new S+C project proposal**, for consideration by VCEH & HUD, to further reduce the number of persons experiencing chronic homelessness in Washington/Windsor/Windham; as well as Franklin & Addison.
Program Information
Eligible S+C households must: need assistance; not exceed 50% Area Median Income; meet HUD CoC-Permanent Supportive Housing 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 BoS CoC - Coordinated Entry.

All participating households are connected to a Shelter+Care Provider who assists with care coordination, which is comprised of: 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.

The VSHA S+C Statewide grant serves the entire VT BoS CoC area (all VT counties, except Chittenden). The VSHA S+C WWW grant serves Washington, Windsor and Windham counties.

VSHA S+C Programs may serve any type of household & subpopulation, as long as at least one member of the household meets the CH+ definition (disability of long duration and 12+ months of literal homelessness), including, but not limited to: Individuals, Families, and Youth (eligible to sign a lease); 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.

Subject to funding availability, VSHA maintains a move-on strategy preference for eligible VSHA S+C households who need or want to transition to a Sect. 8 Housing Choice Voucher after receiving 36 months of rental assistance.

Challenges & Opportunities
Although VSHA’s S+C projects have always served more households than required, the circumstances that led HUD to recapture some FFY2016 (as well as previous years) unused funds are primarily due to slow lease-ups of approved program participants as a result of:

- The VSHA S+C Program and CoC Coordinated Entry target and prioritize first serving households with extremely high needs and significant housing barriers.
- Participants of CoC Programs (low barrier/housing first) are in competition to access limited housing (<2% vacancy rates; poor housing stock; unaffordable/ineligible rent amounts) with Vermonters who have better credit/housing/criminal backgrounds.
- Due to service capacity & siloed funding, the majority of VSHA S+C Providers are limited to only serving persons with specific disabling conditions.

S+C Providers must access other (non-CoC) sources as match to support all or the majority of service provision and local program administration. The parameters and administrative burdens of the S+C Program may not be a good fit in all rural areas (i.e. fewer number of CH persons/shelters; long distances; fewer providers/funding/capacity; some towns/landlords unwilling to serve people in need).
Recently, two provider agencies have chosen to transition out of VSHA Shelter+Care:

- **VT CARES** clients rarely meet CH status so they chose to be a new VSHA RRH Provider.
- After several years of declining program participants served, new leadership at **NE Kingdom Human Services** evaluated organizational priorities in light of limited funds and voluntarily decided to transition out of the VSHA S+C Program. VSHA agrees with, and fully supports & respects, the decision of NKHS which remains actively involved in NE Kingdom strategic planning & partnerships to reduce homelessness.

To complement our recent efforts to reinvigorate the Rapid Rehousing Program, VSHA is evaluating the operation of our Shelter+Care Program to maximize limited resources and address service & program capacity issues of our dedicated & compassionate providers:

- Collaborated with providers, state partners and AHS to address service capacity issues
- Met with VT Legislators about lost voucher funds (CoC & Sect. 8), limited & restricted service capacity and low vacancy rates/poor housing stock
- Developing new VSHA CoC Program Policies & Procedures for both Shelter+Care & RRH
- Begin quarterly group meetings with S+C Providers
- Supported increased housing options (e.g. Housing Bond, Landlord Liaisons, Shared Housing, Sober Housing/Recovery Residences, etc.)
- Increased analysis of monthly budget to support over-issuance of S+C subsidies
- Developed/Awarded new S+C Pathways VT grant (Washington, Windsor, Windham)
- Continued support of S+C Providers to improve tenant retention, strengthen local partnerships (including CE), and improve service coordination
- Other improvements: RRH-CH participant eligibility for S+C; inquiries with local hospitals to understand non-CoC service funds (i.e. Blueprint for Health); evaluating S+C regulations

**CoC-PSH (“Shelter+Care Statewide”) - FFY2016 Funds (6/1/17-5/31/18)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rental Assistance:</th>
<th>$1,563,600 ($1,228,259 expended = $1,178,386/HAP + $49,872/VSHA RA)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Services:</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Admin:</td>
<td>$101,030 (6.5% of RA budget)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Awarded:</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,664,630</strong> (expended $1,329,289/80%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services Match (non-HUD):</td>
<td>$450,000 reported to HUD (27%); $1,622,616 actual (97%)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**CoC-PSH (“Shelter+Care Statewide”) - FFY2018 Funds (6/1/19-5/31/20)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rental Assistance:</th>
<th>$1,462,548</th>
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<tr>
<td>Services:</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Admin:</td>
<td>$104,210 (7% of RA budget)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Awarded:</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,566,758</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**NEW CoC-PSH (“Shelter+Care WWW”) – FFY2018 Funds (6/1/19-5/31/20)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rental Assistance:</th>
<th>$128,064 <em>(includes VSHA RA Admin costs)</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Services:</td>
<td>$58,102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Administration:</td>
<td>$18,306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Awarded:</strong></td>
<td><strong>$204,472</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
VSHA COC PROGRAM – PSH: “Shelter+Care Statewide” (as of 5.17.19)

Addison (33):
- Counseling Service of Addison County (19)
- Helping to Overcome Poverty’s Effects (5)
- Pathways Vermont (9)

Bennington (10):
- Bennington County Coalition for the Homeless (3)
- United Counseling Services (7)

Caledonia (5):
- Lamoille County Mental Health (1)
- NE Kingdom Human Services (4)

Franklin/Grand Isle (22):
- NW Counseling & Support Services (10)
- Pathways Vermont (7)
- Samaritan House (5)

Lamoille (14):
- Lamoille County Mental Health (14)

Orange (14):
- Clara Martin Center (14)

Orleans (2):
- NE Kingdom Human Services (1)
- Vermont CARES (1)

Rutland (20):
- Homeless Prevention Center (15)
- Rutland Mental Health Services (5)

Washington (21):
- Pathways Vermont (12)
- Vermont CARES (1)
- Washington County Mental Health (8)

Windham (15):
- Health Care & Rehabilitation Services (2)
- Pathways Vermont (13)

*Brattleboro Housing Authority S+C: GroundWorks & HCRS (23-28)

Windsor (29):
- Clara Martin Center (1)
- Health Care & Rehabilitation Services (8)
- Pathways Vermont (11)
- Upper Valley Haven (9) – *service area includes Orange County*
HOUSEHOLDS SERVED - current
FFY2017 S+C SW grant: 6/1/18-5/31/19

Active Lease or Pending Lease (as of 5.17.19): 185*

FFY2018 S+C Statewide grant term: 6/1/19-5/31/20
Units Funded at 100% of Fair Market Rent Value: FFY2018 = 133
*139% subsidy utilization rate effective start of FFY2018 grant

HOUSEHOLDS SERVED - past
FFY2016 S+C SW grant: 6/1/17-5/31/18

Households/Units Funded: 148
Households/Units Served: 205 (average 171 households per quarter)

Persons/Beds Funded: 180
Total Persons/Beds Served: 238 (average 197 persons per quarter)

Average HAP = $582 per month/per household
*Housing Assistance Payment amount includes security deposits, property damage reimbursement and vacancy costs

TYPES OF PERSONS SERVED

| Number of Adults (age 18 years and over): | 219 |
| Number of Children (under age 18): | 19 |
| Number of Veterans: | 13 |
| Number of Chronically Homeless Persons: | 113 |
| Number of Youth (under age 25): | 4 |
| Number of Parenting Youth (under age 18 with children): | 0 |

Number of Adults by Gender: Male = 99; Female = 117; Other = 3
Number of Children by Gender: Male = 10; Female = 9; Other = 0

Age: <18 = 19; 18-24 = 9; 25-54 = 153; 55+ = 57

Race: White = 213; Black = 6; Other = 19
Ethnicity: Non-Hispanic/Non-Latino = 234; Hispanic/Latino = 4
Number of Health Conditions (at program start):  
None = 20; 1 = 123; 2 = 52; 3+ = 43

Health Conditions (at program start):
- Mental Health = 202
- Alcohol Abuse = 21
- Drug Abuse = 24
- Chronic Health = 21
- HIV/AIDS = 9
- Developmental = 21
- Physical = 30

Persons Fleeing Domestic Violence (at program start):  
Yes = 18; No = 51

Persons with Domestic Violence History:  
Yes = 69; No = 150

Homeless Situation (at application submission):
- Places Not Meant for Habitation = 68
- Emergency Shelter (or equivalent) = 98
- Safe Haven = 9
- Transitional Housing for Homeless Persons = 23
- Other = 22*
  *Psychiatric Facility, RRH/Other PSH, Family/Friends, Subsidized/Non-Subsidized Housing

Adults at Annual Assessment (Stayers) or at Exit (Leavers) by Income Source:
Total Number of Adults = 219
- Only Earned Income (i.e. Employment, etc.) = 11
- Only Other Income (i.e. SSA, SSDI/SSI, VA, Pension, TANF/GA, etc.) = 152
- Both Earned and Other Income = 14
- Assessment Not Yet Required = 33
- No Income (at Assessment or Exit) = 9

Gained or Increased Income = 125 out of 186 Adults at Assessment/Exit (67%)
- Had income at start & did not have income at Assessment/Exit = 0
- Retained income but had less at Assessment/Exit = 11
- Retained income and had same at Assessment/Exit = 41
- Retained and increased income = 93
- Did not have income at start but gained income at Assessment/Exit = 32
- Did not have income at start or Assessment/Exit = 9

Non-Cash Benefit Sources (SNAP/WIC/TANF) at Exit: 1+ Source = 161; No Source = 24

Health Insurance (at Assessment/Exit): 1+ Source = 56; 1 Source = 144; No Source = 0

Destination (at Program Exit): Permanent = 17; Temporary = 8; Institution = 2; Other = 7
- Successful exit to permanent housing = 68%
ADMINISTRATION

Grant Recipient: VSHA must oversee & monitor the activities of each grant/S+C Provider 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 S+C 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 16 S+C 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 S+C 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

S+C Providers: enter into VSHA provider agreements, provide match letters, develop agreements & coordinate with local partners, conduct make referrals to/receive from local Coordinated Entry, ensure HMIS data entry & quality, assist households with S+C 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).