

Orientation to the Homeless Prevention Center's Services

Welcome! We are committed to working with you and your family to quickly return you to housing that is safe and affordable or to prevent you from losing your current housing. In order to accomplish this mission, we must work together.

Our Process

We will first meet with you to complete a housing assessment and release of information to ensure that we are able to match you with the appropriate housing resources.

If you have not heard from the Homeless Prevention Center within 3 days of your housing assessment contact Jessica Makela at 775-9286. She will provide you with some direction, which may include meeting with a housing specialist or attending available dates for application assistance.

How do I prepare for my first appointment?

Please complete the attached 5 year housing history and character reference form before your first appointment or visit for application assistance.

What documents will I need for applications?

- Birth Certificates for All Household Members
- Social Security Cards for All Household Members
- Documentation of Income (paystubs, benefit letters, etc.)
- You can be completing housing searches and locating housing on your own, when you find a lead, please give us a call to update us on your progress.

How can I improve my rental applications?

Rental 101 This is a four-week, 2 hours per week, class that will cover Vermont landlord-tenant rights and responsibilities, managing a household budget, being a good tenant and neighbor and working through common conflicts in housing. At the completion of this course you will receive a **Certificate of Completion** which you can add as a reference on your housing applications.

Be Alert to the Bed Bug Epidemic! Avoid discarded furnishings, second-hand clothing (yes, even if it comes from a second-hand store!), including electronics, which can harbor these very tiny (size of a sesame seed) pests that are experts at staying hidden! A good preventative measure is to place items of fabric in a dryer and run for 45 minutes on **the highest setting possible.**

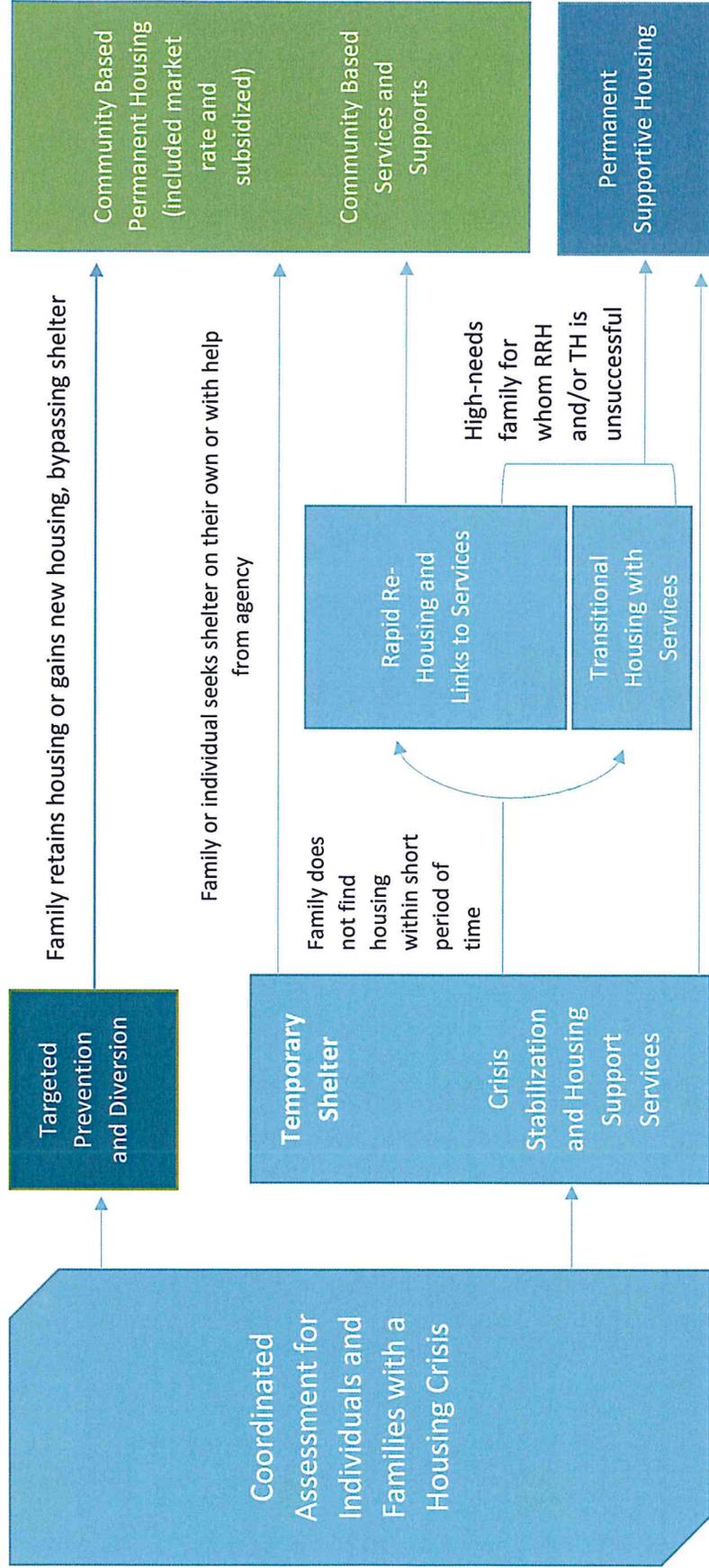
HPC prohibits our employees, agents, subcontractors, sub-grantee and other service providers from discrimination, on the basis of age under the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, on the basis of handicap under section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, on the basis of sex under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and on the basis of race, color or national origin under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. HPC shall not refuse, withhold from or deny to any person the benefit of services, facilities, goods, privileges, advantages, or benefits of public accommodation on the basis of disability, race, creed, color, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation or gender identity as provided by Title 9 V.S.A. Chapter 139. No person shall on the grounds of religion or sex (including, on the grounds that a woman is pregnant), be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination, to include sexual harassment, under any program or activity.

HPC further shall comply with the non-discrimination requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 USC Section 2000d, et seq., and with the federal guidelines promulgated pursuant to Executive Order 13166 of 2000, requiring that contractors and subcontractors receiving federal funds assure that persons with limited English proficiency can meaningfully access services. To the extent HPC provides assistance to individuals with limited English proficiency through the use of oral or written translation or interpretive services, such individuals cannot be required to pay for such services.

Standard Procedure for Coordinated Entry Screening, Assessment & Referrals

1. Screen for eligibility.
 - a. Complete a Housing Crisis Referral.
 - b. If they come into the office in person, explain what coordinated entry is and ask them to sign the ROI on second page, give them a copy of the ROI.
 - c. If they are eligible and have supporting paperwork (unless literally homeless) schedule them for an assessment or do it immediately if possible.
 - i. If they are couch surfing and do not have notice from the landlord that they have to leave, they are not eligible. If there are special circumstances to their situation or they are in an unsafe situation, bring to the eligibility specialist, supervisor or the daily staff meeting to elaborate.
 - ii. If not eligible, make appropriate referrals, suggest saving their money while they aren't paying rent, offer to send list of places to apply, etc.
 - d. Write case notes on the interaction and save the Housing Crisis Referral into electronic file.
 - e. If they have ever served in the military, complete the housing screen and scan it to email to Dan Thompson at the Dept. of Veterans Affairs at Daniel.Thompson@va.gov. He will screen them for veteran's services and make appropriate referrals from there.
2. If eligible, complete the assessment.
 - a. Collect and make copies of any documents brought to the appointment.
 - b. Make any other appropriate referrals if needed and track them in the referral database.
 - c. Ensure that both ROI's are signed, on the screening sheet and in the assessment if they completed the assessment in person.
 - d. If the household is literally homeless, complete a Permanent Supportive Housing Barriers checklist to generate a score.
 - e. After the assessment, enter the client's information into the "4PM Meeting" spreadsheet (Files > Forms > Waitlist > 4PM MEETING).
3. The client will be discussed at the daily staff meeting and either assigned to a housing support specialist or tabled if more information is needed. Give the assessment and any other documents given to the assigned person.

Coordinated Entry Flow-Chart



Daily Prioritization Meeting

To ensure that people with the most severe service needs and levels of vulnerability are prioritized for housing and homeless assistance, the staff meet daily to discuss all new assessments completed that day for prioritization and triage services.

This process will prioritize households where it can be reasonably determined that they will become homeless **but for** this assistance; or are likely to remain literally homeless **but for** this assistance. Such comparisons include: households who are literally homeless versus at-risk; households that are at-risk but have a safe place to stay for a few weeks; households that just received a termination of tenancy notice versus households with an upcoming court date for an eviction.

In addition to prioritizing people who will remain or become homeless without assistance, this meeting prioritizes people who are more likely to need some form of assistance to end their homelessness or who are more vulnerable to the effects of homelessness. When discussing and prioritizing households, the following factors are considered:

- Significant health or behavioral health challenges or functional impairment which require significant level of support in order to maintain permanent housing;
- High utilization of crisis or emergency services, including emergency rooms, jails, and psychiatric facility, to meet basic needs;
- The extent to which people, especially youth and children, are unsheltered
- Vulnerability to illness or death
- Risk of continued homelessness
- What resources does this household have that can be used?
- Who are this household's family/social supports?
- What other service providers are supporting this household?

Homeless Prevention Center

Services Provided

The Homeless Prevention Center (HPC) is a non-profit agency whose mission is to provide services to prevent or re-house those experiencing homelessness by offering hope one person and one family at a time.

HPC provides screening for homeless program eligibility through a brief in person or over the phone assessment. HPC also provides information and referrals to the general public in areas of affordable housing, low-income resources, and other requested information.

Eligibility Criteria for Homeless Services: HPC is grant-funded to serve the homeless and at-risk population in Rutland County. 'Homeless or At-Risk' includes:

- Emergency Shelter (including motels/hotel vouchers)
- Places not meant for human habitation (cars, parks, abandoned buildings, camp, streets)
- Hospital or other institution for 90 days or less & previously in shelter or on street
- Fleeing domestic violence
- Renting a house /apartment and facing eviction
- Currently in subsidized housing or any subsidy (VRS, FUP, Sect. 8, S+C) and facing eviction
- Staying with friends or family and facing eviction/unsafe situation
- Motel/hotel without a voucher
- Hospital or other institution & no place to go (>90 days or not previously homeless)
- Facing foreclosure in owner-occupied property
- Renting or staying with friends or family in a stable situation

Our services include:

- Service Coordination and Referrals
- Advocacy for housing opportunities
- Assisting applying for all available housing subsidies and housing programs
- Assistance with appeals for housing denials
- Housing search and landlord negotiation
- Landlord and tenant mediation
- Financial Assistance to include: security deposits, rental subsidies, back rent assistance, and utility payments in certain circumstances
- Determining housing affordability and household budget
- Limited transitional housing opportunities
- Street and Facility Outreach
- Individualized goal setting and support
- Renter's education program
- Home visits and housing habitability inspections

Homeless Prevention Center Case Management and LLP Workflow

Assessment

Assessment and Release Completed and saved electronically
Housing Profile Completed
Triage Unmet Urgent Needs
Referrals documented

Prioritization and Assignment @ 4pm Meeting

Bring housing profiles to meeting for determination

Clients assigned to you require follow-up! Add to your client list and initiate scheduling

Housing Profile will be assigned to LLP who will conduct an eviction record check and review the references provided. LLP will document their findings in case notes.

Preparation

Review assessments, old records, prepare with questions, areas for clarification

You should have a 'sketch' of the ISP direction based on housing assessment Note any documentation you may need (additional releases, proof of income, etc.)

Using the completed Housing Profile, check the LLP apartment listings and prepare the applications the clients will need to complete-always be ready for the common application to be completed at first/second meeting

Case Management Meeting

Complete Service Agreement and FULL HPC release

Complete Common App. save electronically in file and give hard copy to LLP

LLP is responsible for sending (mail or otherwise) all housing applications and following up on their status-after completing said housing applications give to LLP

Review what documentation the client needs to collect for housing applications (providing technical assistance as needed)

Your expectations-how can I help you?

My expectations-this is how HPC provides services (partnership) addressing those areas you identified as affecting housing

Start ISP, follow the template! Copy of ISP to client

Identify and introduce yourself to other team members working with your household.

Follow Up

LLP will follow-up on housing app. status and communicate with Housing Specialist on newly available units and document all follow-up in the case note

Housing Specialist will continue to follow-up on ISP progression

All housing specialists are required to maintain their client list on the server for administration to determine workloads

Housing specialists are responsible for enrolling and exiting in Service Point

Provide a paper copy of any signed funding sheets to LLP for tracking

Homeless Prevention Center Program Eligibility

Emergency Apartment	Rapid Re-Housing	Homelessness Prevention	P.A.T.H. Program
<p>Individuals and Families defined as Homeless under the following categories (at least 1 category):</p> <p>Category 1-Literally Homeless</p> <p>Category 2-Imminent Risk of Homeless</p> <p>Category 3-Homeless Under Other Federal Statutes</p> <p>Category 4-Fleeing/Attempting to Flee DV</p>	<p>Individuals and Families defined as Homeless under the following categories (at least 1 category):</p> <p>Category 1-Literally Homeless</p> <p>Category 4-Fleeing/Attempting to Flee DV (where criteria is also met for Category 1)</p>	<p>Individuals and Families defined as Homeless under the following categories (at least 1 category):</p> <p>Category 2-Imminent Risk of Homeless</p> <p>Category 3-Homeless Under Other Federal Statutes</p> <p>Category 4-Fleeing/Attempting to Flee DV</p> <p>Other-Individuals and Families who are defined as At Risk of Homelessness (See Attachment B Definition of At-Risk of Homelessness)</p>	<p>Individuals that lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence that is: (1) supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations (including welfare hotels, congregate shelters, and transitional housing for the mentally ill); (2) an institution that provides temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized; or (3) a public or private place not ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.</p>
<p>Household must agree to sign the housing contract</p>	<p>Household must sign a Services Agreement</p>	<p>Household must sign a Services Agreement</p>	<p>Household must sign a Services Agreement</p>
<p>Household must agree to sign the housing contract</p>	<p>Household must sign a Services Agreement</p>	<p>Household must sign a Services Agreement</p>	<p>Household must sign a Services Agreement</p> <p>Individual must have mental illness and/or Mental Illness and Co-Occurring Substance Use Disorder</p>
<p>Family Supportive Housing Program</p> <p>Household must be a family (having at least 1 child under age of 18); and Household must meet the AHS/HUD Definition of Homelessness</p>	<p>VSHA CoC Rapid Rehousing Program</p> <p>Individuals and Families defined as Homeless under the following category: Category 1-Literally Homeless</p>	<p>VSHA Shelter-Plus Care Program</p> <p>Individuals and Families defined as Homeless under the following category: Category 1-Literally Homeless</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> First Priority: head of household meets HUD Chronic Homelessness definition Second Priority: head of household has less than 12 months of literal homelessness Third Priority: Rapid Rehousing with CH status prior to entry or Transitional Housing-Dedicated to Homeless 	<p>Re-Entry/ Transitional Housing Program</p> <p>Individuals eligible for release from incarceration under some form of supervision by the Vermont Department of Corrections; Individuals under supervision in the community that are at-risk of being (re)incarcerated due to lack of appropriate and stable housing</p>
<p>Other Participation</p> <p>The parent(s) must want to participate in the program, set goals, and actively work towards them</p>	<p>Household must agree to actively work with a case manager for the duration of the subsidy</p>	<p>Household must sign a 1 year lease</p> <p>1 adult member of household must have a disability</p>	<p>Household must sign the housing contract</p>

*See Attachment A for Homeless Category Definitions

Homeless Prevention Center

Menu of Housing Support Options Based on Assessment

Rapid Re-Housing/Prevention

Minimal Challenges
 Identified also known as 'situationally' homeless
 Service Coordination may be needed
 Rapid re-housing if current housing cannot be saved or family is homeless, rehouse as quickly as possible
 One-time financial assistance to prevent eviction
 Some housing support services to locate affordable housing

Transitional Housing

Participant households must save 30% of their monthly income into an account and provide documentation of savings while in the unit
 Participant meets weekly with a housing specialist
 Participant and housing specialist work on Individual Service Plan
 Great option for households that are highly motivated to seek employment and permanent housing

Short-Term Rental Assistance

Household requires more than one-time financial assistance to stabilize their housing
 Household has a plan in place to assume responsibility for full rent costs after 3-5 months of short-term rental assistance
 This is an option to help families who have had an interruption in income through a job loss, major expense, etc.
 Rental 101 tenancy education to address poor or incomplete rental references

Medium Term Rental Assistance

Household provided more intensive interaction and services for those with barriers identified that are deemed unlikely to resolve their housing crisis with short-term assistance alone
 This household may have high barriers but are highly motivated and engaged in services to increase self-sufficiency
 Households are required to pay a subsidized portion of their rent while maintaining a savings account
 Rental 101 tenancy education to address poor or incomplete rental references

Family Supportive Housing

Priority is given to household with DCF involvement and/or experiencing domestic violence
 Household agrees to in-home services for up to 24 months
 Program includes participating in financial futures education including a matched-savings program
 This is a great option for families who are interested in receiving longer-term supports and education after housing crisis stabilized

Shelter Plus Care & Department of Mental Health Subsidy+Care

For very high barrier households who are not appropriate candidates for short-term assistance
 Households that need intensive in-home supports to maintain housing stability
 Household must agree to service commitment up to five years
 Applicants are prioritized as follows:
First Priority: head of household meets HUD Chronic Homelessness definition
Second Priority: head of household has less than 12 months of literal homelessness
Third Priority: Rapid Rehousing or Transitional Housing-Dedicated to Homeless (literal homeless prior to entry)

Dept of Mental Health Subsidy + Care
 For individuals currently hospitalized in a psychiatric facility with a history of psychiatric hospitalization and lack of permanent housing.

Landlord Liaison Program

How has this made a
difference in our community?

What's in it for me as a landlord?

- Get empty units filled
- House homeless families/individuals who are eager to be successful tenants
- Rapid response to concerns by the Landlord Liaison
- Coordinated supportive services and home visits for folks housed
- Monthly check in during the tenants first year by the Landlord Liaison

Robust Services!

- Our primary goal is to **prevent** households from losing housing.
- Help tenants create budgets to prioritize their rental obligations **first**
- Help tenants plan for and budget for unexpected expenses
- Help tenants and landlords create repayment agreements for rental arrears
- Providing direct back rent assistance to landlords to stabilize housing
- Facilitate mediation between tenants and landlords to address behavior(s) that affect housing stability
- Help tenants improve their communication skills

What have participants in the LLP said?

“It’s nice to have one person to call if there is a question or concern regarding a tenant that has been placed with us. It makes the process much more user friendly”

-Rutland property manager

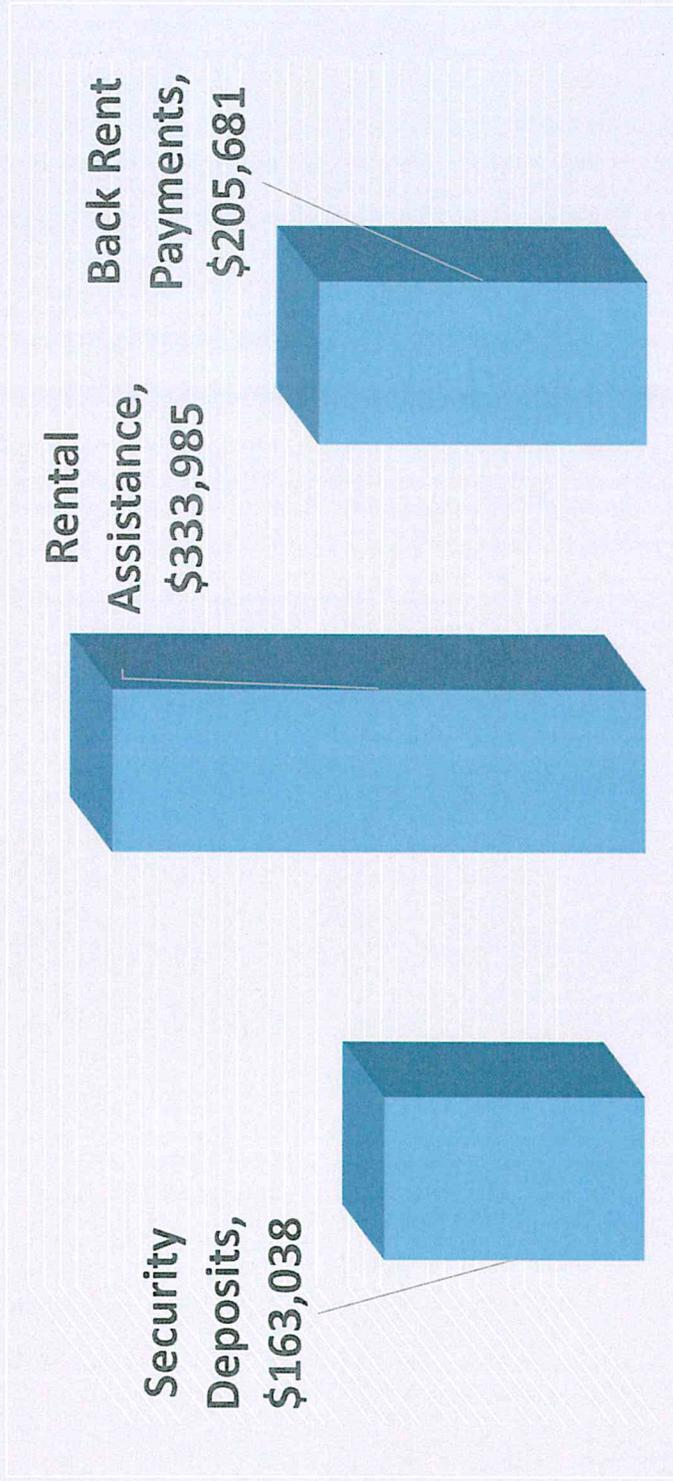
“HPC provides more than financial assistance. As a landlord, I appreciate the personal accountability they require of their clients”

-Denise Scarborough property manager, Summit Properties

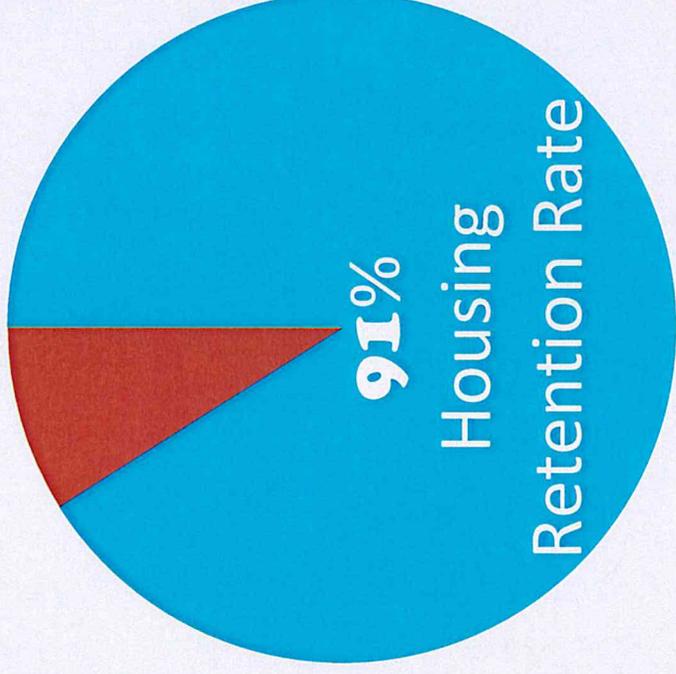
How do I become a partner in the
LLP program?

That's easy...Talk to me!!

HPC Financial Assistance Provided to Landlords on behalf of tenants since 2012



Housing Retention at 12 months since 2015



- Out of 197 unique households stabilized, 16 were evicted despite HPC's intervention efforts. This equates to a .08% loss of housing.
- The remaining 181 households successfully maintained their housing.