



Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-housing Program (HPRP): Our Once-In-A-Lifetime Opportunity

The Commonwealth of Virginia and several local governments in Virginia will soon receive a total of \$25 million in federal funds for homelessness prevention and rapid re-housing.¹ This presents us with a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to:

1. Set a standard for *HOUSING STABILITY OUTCOMES*.

VCEH recommends adopting a goal that a high percentage of clients receiving assistance with HPRP dollars will remain in permanent housing six months to one year later.

WHY: We know that prevention and rapid re-housing are effective strategies to reduce the number of families and individuals who experience homelessness. Current programs and strategies that are in place in Virginia are working, but we must have data to prove it. We must ensure that we are meeting the needs of clients and serving clients to the best of our ability so that they do not experience homelessness at all or again.

HOW: Evidence exists that it is possible to meet a goal that 85-90% of clients remain in permanent housing after receiving assistance. Virginia Supportive Housing provides permanent housing plus wrap around services to a population with high housing barriers - those who experience homelessness, have severe disabilities, and have often experienced homelessness for long periods of time. Over 90 percent of VSH clients remain in permanent housing one year later.

Tabor Community Services in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, operates a rapid re-housing program similar to the purposes of HPRP. Over 86 percent of clients remain in permanent housing without a housing subsidy.

2. Implement or strengthen a *COMMUNITY RESPONSE*.

VCEH recommends using these new HPRP funds as an opportunity to strengthen or build a community response and system to preventing and ending homelessness.

¹ HR 1 - the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 - was signed by President Obama on February 17, 2009, and included \$1.5 billion for the Homelessness Prevention Fund (name changed to Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-housing Program.) Based on a formula allocation, the Commonwealth of Virginia as well as the following local governments Arlington County, Alexandria, Chesapeake, Chesterfield County, Fairfax County, Henrico County, Newport News, Norfolk, Prince William County, Portsmouth, Richmond, Roanoke, and Virginia Beach will receive allocations totaling approximately \$25 million. The purpose of the HPRP is to provide homelessness prevention assistance to households who would otherwise become homeless and to provide assistance to rapidly re-house persons who experience homelessness as defined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Best practices in prevention and rapid re-housing can be found at www.vceh.org

WHY: One organization or agency cannot prevent and end homelessness alone. It is the community's response and the coordination of resources and strategies that create a streamlined system that decreases the chance that an individual or family will fall through the cracks and experience homelessness. Coordination and collaboration equals increased effectiveness and efficiency which equals increased resources to serve those who experience homelessness and those at risk.

*The adoption of the above two goals will set the stage for **SUSTAINABILITY**.*

HPRP will infuse a significant amount of funding into the homeless prevention and assistance system but HPRP funds will not last forever. If communities set goals for housing stability and evaluate those results, we will have statewide data demonstrating that prevention and re-housing strategies work to prevent and end homelessness in Virginia. It is data that makes the strongest argument for increased resources.

Resources and Tools

Available from the Virginia Coalition to End Homelessness at www.vceh.org

- * HPRP Amendment Recommendations (Suggestions for Implementation of the Above 3 Recommendations and the Substantial Amendment to the 2008 Consolidated Plan)
- * VCEH Audio Conference Recording and Powerpoint Presentation on the Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-housing Program (HPRP) - March 24, 2009
- * VCEH Analysis of HUD's Notice for the HPRP
- * Best Practice in Virginia - Housing Barrier Assessment, Virginia Supportive Housing
- * Best Practice in Virginia - Outreach to Landlords, The Planning Council's Housing Broker Team
- * More Best Practices will be available on the VCEH website

Available from National Experts and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

- * HUD's Homelessness Resource Exchange at www.hudhre.info includes information on HPRP, the Substantial Amendment Form, the Notice for HPRP, and best practice information
- * National Alliance to End Homelessness at www.endhomelessness.org includes audio conferences and recordings of past audio conferences, tools to assist communities develop the Consolidated Plan Substantial Amendment, additional program details, and information on best practices in prevention and rapid re-housing