



Community COVID Housing Program (CCHP)

The Way Home Continuum of Care (CoC) knows that **the most effective public health response to reduce community spread of COVID-19** among people experiencing homelessness **will be to ensure that all people experiencing homelessness have a safe, permanent home**. Rapidly expanding access to housing will also **improve healthcare outcomes and reduce reliance on expensive emergency services** like hospital visits, thus decreasing the burden on the healthcare system and **reducing costs**.

Used wisely, the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (**CARES**) Act funding from the **US Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD)** gives **Harris County and the City of Houston an unprecedented opportunity** to transform the homeless response system and get ahead of future demand for crisis housing services due to the expected economic impact of COVID-19.

By immediately accelerating access to permanent housing and maintaining that surge over the next 24 months, **our local homeless response system will be better able to respond to future demand. We expect the following outcomes** throughout our region:

- housing approximately 5,000 people over the next two years
- ending chronic homelessness
- reducing encampments
- expanding targeted outreach to unincorporated areas
- creating approximately 150 jobs
- reducing high-cost emergency services for people experiencing homelessness
- increasing housing options for people recently released from incarceration
- expanding crisis housing resources
- reducing length of time experiencing homelessness for all persons experiencing a housing crisis
- setting a path to making homelessness in our community rare, brief, and non-recurring

Proposed Strategy & Estimated Impact:

Rapid Re-housing (RRH)

Provide rental assistance for approximately 1,700 newly homeless people who do not require intensive case management

A "Bridge" to Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)

House approximately 1,000 people experiencing homelessness (primarily those living unsheltered and/or in encampments) while they await a PSH unit

Estimated Need: \$65M

Proposed Sources of Funding:

\$38M investment from City of Houston • \$18M investment from Harris County • \$8M investment from private philanthropy

Long-Term Financial Benefit:

- Prior to the pandemic, the annual estimated taxpayer cost of someone living unsheltered was \$41,000 per year.
- The cost is likely to rise because those living unsheltered are uniquely vulnerable to COVID and will need to access emergency services.
- Putting people in housing results in better health outcomes for them and the surrounding community and is far more cost effective at approximately \$17,000 per year.

The CCHP represents an unprecedented, coordinated effort between the City of Houston, Harris County, the Coalition for the Homeless and partners of The Way Home to address homelessness in our community.