

JOHS ramps up progress on housing, homelessness prevention and supportive services

August 2022 update

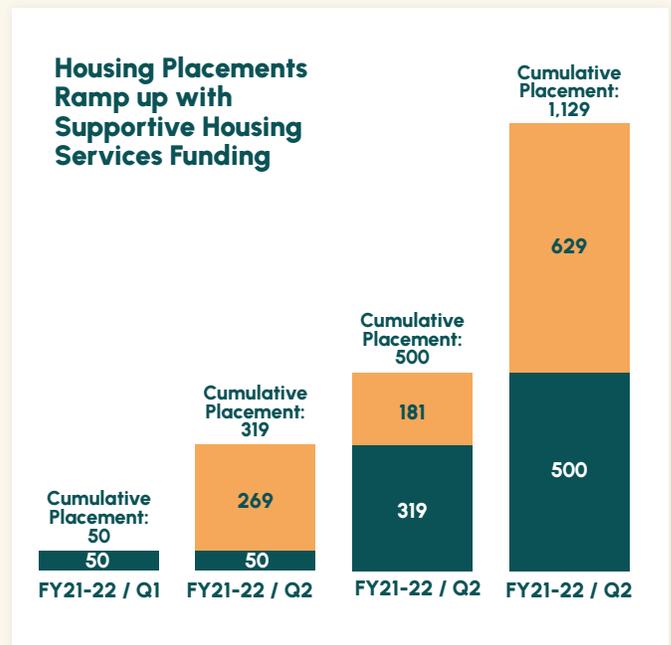
Over 4,500 people moved out of homelessness and into permanent housing in year one of voter-approved Supportive Housing Services measure

Multnomah County, along with communities across Oregon and around the country, is experiencing a homelessness crisis that predates the COVID-19 pandemic and continues to disproportionately impact certain groups, including people affected by historic and ongoing racial oppression, as well as veterans and people who are disabled. In Spring 2020, voters in Multnomah, Clackamas, and Washington Counties responded to the crisis with the first-ever regional tax to support homeless services.

Since July 2021, the Joint Office of Homeless Services (JOHS), with a long list of partners, has implemented the Metro Supportive Housing Services (SHS) Measure in a way that centers racial equity and offers the wide range of supports and services that people of different identities and backgrounds need to remain in or move into safe, stable housing.

IN THE FIRST YEAR OF SHS IMPLEMENTATION:

- 357 people were served in shelter
- 1,129 people moved into housing
- 9,156 people avoided becoming homeless with the help of eviction prevention services
- 10 additional emergency shelters were funded
- JOHS expanded or launched 31 programs



The number of people receiving housing and support has grown at a rapid pace, all while JOHS simultaneously builds the infrastructure required to reduce chronic and episodic homelessness over time.

This accelerated progress brought the total placements for FY 2021-22 to 1,129—just shy of the ambitious goal of 1,300 placements set at the beginning of the fiscal year. In the face of an ongoing pandemic and the corresponding economic crisis, JOHS has ended homelessness for thousands of people by moving them into safe, supportive housing, and helped to prevent thousands more from experiencing homelessness in the first place.

Expanding Behavioral Health Services Through Partnerships

In creating its community-led plan for deploying Supportive Housing Services funding in Multnomah County, JOHS committed to expanding behavioral health services in alignment with outreach, shelter and housing while coordinating access to services across the health and criminal justice systems.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS:

- JOHS partnered with Multnomah County's Behavioral Health Division, Central City Concern and Related NW to create 40 supportive housing apartments at Cedar Commons to serve people with significant behavioral health needs
- JOHS worked with Multnomah County's Department of Community Justice and Central City Concern to create 15 supportive housing apartments at the Henry Building for people exiting the criminal justice system.

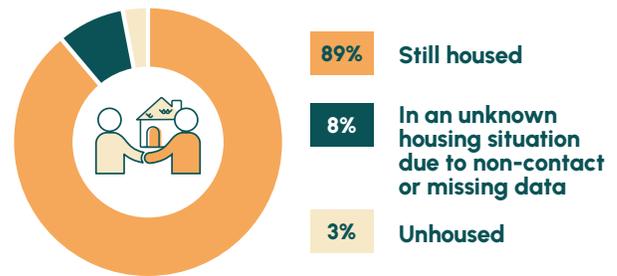


People Receiving Eviction Prevention Assistance Are Avoiding Homelessness

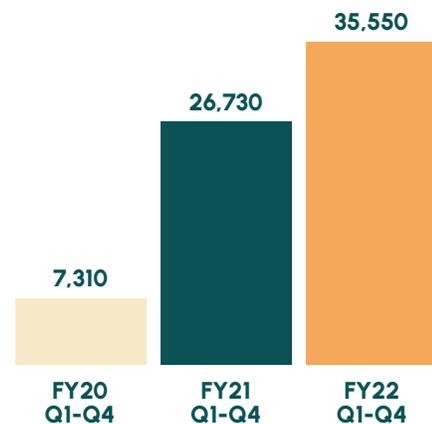
One of the keys to preventing homelessness is ensuring people can afford to stay in their homes.

The number of people receiving eviction prevention assistance in Multnomah County grew by 8,820 to 35,550 in FY 2021-2022. During that same period, we saw that nearly all people who receive eviction prevention assistance remain housed, even a year after subsidies end. While thousands of people in our region are just one missed rent check away from being evicted, homelessness is not inevitable for them. A rent subsidy at just the right time can help people keep their jobs, help children stay in school and help strengthen our community for the benefit of us all.

People who retained housing 12 months after ending Homelessness Prevention Subsidy



35,550 households receiving rent assistance to prevent homelessness



Establishing the Regional Long-Term Rent Assistance (RLRA) Program

One of the landmark innovations of the SHS program is the creation of the Regional Long-Term Rent Assistance (RLRA) program. The JOHS worked closely with Home Forward, Metro, and Clackamas and Washington Counties to build a regional framework for locally funded, long-term rent assistance to ensure consistency for landlords, service providers and participants.

Multnomah County is using RLRA to support 7 affordable housing projects that include supportive housing apartments. Two are Portland Housing Bond projects (Crescent Court and the Ellington) and one is a Metro Housing Bond project (Findley Commons). This initial work has laid a solid foundation for future affordable housing projects in Multnomah County and the Metro region that commit to creating supportive housing units as part of their original design.