

August 21, 2026

Subject: Overview of Vermont Homelessness Response Continuum - Level 4 Hotel Housing

Dear Community Partners,

We are writing about Act 143, a law that changes the current hotel/motel housing program, which goes into effect on September 1, 2026. The Act establishes the Vermont Homelessness Response Continuum (VHRC) which provides an array of services including prevention and intervention, shelters, case management, and hotel placement. This letter is specific to Level 4 Hotel Placements, which has an implementation date of September 1. Information about other levels will be provided as they are phased in.

Differences Between GA Emergency Housing and VHRC Level 4 Services

1. **Annual Limit to Number of Days** - Act 143 reduces the number of days that a household can be housed in a hotel from 80 to 70 in a one-year period.
 - a. Current GA rules require a 12-month look back when calculating the number of nights. Act 143 requires a look ahead from the annual VHRC application date.
 - b. For the transition year, DCF will determine the households "clock reset date" based on when hotel housing was used in SFY26.
 - c. Households housed in SFY26 will not have a reset of their 70-day limit on 9/1/26.
 - d. Hotel stays during cold weather from 12/1 through 3/31 do not count toward the 70-day limit.
2. **Income Contribution** - Act 143 eliminates the requirement for households with income to contribute towards their hotel benefit. As a result, households will no longer be required to complete "self-pay nights" starting on 9/1/26.
 - a. This should allow households to save for costs associated with permanent housing such as first and last month's rent and security deposit
3. **Limit on Number of Rooms** - The number of rooms that can be used statewide has now 700 from April 1–November 30 (down from 1,100) and 1,000 from December 1–March 31 (previously uncapped).
4. **Definition of Child** – Act 143 changes the definition of child from age 19 and under to under age 18.



What To Expect When Households Apply

1. **Application Process** – Applications can be completed over the phone or submitted by filling out a paper application or in partnership with a state eligibility worker in a state district office.
2. **Verification** - Households will need to verify that they are homeless and that they are Vermont residents.
 - a. This can happen through third party verification, observation made by program staff, or self-attestation of the applicant.
 - b. Examples of residency verification include being actively enrolled in a Vermont economic assistance program, childcare assistance programs and associated service plans, family services case plans, health care programs including Medicaid-related care plans, other assistance programs recognized by the Agency that includes participant obligations or engagement requirements.
3. **Notice** – Households will receive a VHRC Notice of Eligibility or Denial Notice. Eligible households will be referred to assessment for Level 4.
 - a. Eligibility for VHRC is for 1-year
 - i. Exception-VHRC eligibility may be made for less than 1-year in SFY27 to align with the date the household accessed housing in SFY26.
4. **Assessment** – Once a household is found eligible for VHRC the eligibility worker will conduct a brief Health Checklist then schedule a time for the household to complete the HOU-SING assessment.
 - a. The HOU-SING assessment contains 7 domains and the results, combined with the household's priority category, will determine the household's risk level.
5. **Risk Levels and Capacity** – The risk level will determine when a household will be housed based on available capacity.
 - a. Households identified as critical risk level will be offered housing immediately when any space is available.
 - b. Households identified as High, Moderate and Mild risk levels will be prioritized and offered housing based on availability.
6. **Waitlist** - Households that cannot be housed due to lack of capacity will be placed on a waitlist. The waitlist will be reviewed each morning, and households will be offered space based on risk level and availability. If a household is placed on the waitlist and cannot be placed within 10 days, a Service Agreement "No Hotel Placement" will be sent to household.



7. **Initial Hotel Placement** - Eligible households will be offered an initial hotel placement of up to 7 days to allow the household an opportunity to develop a housing plan independently or with a case manager.
8. **Subsequent Hotel Placement** - After a housing plan has been established, hotel placement will be made for up to 28 days in accordance with the housing plan.
 - a. Households participate in case management and support services as outlined in the housing plan to remain eligible for VHRC.
9. **Service Agreement-Hotel Placement** –DCF will provide a Service Agreement to the household for each hotel stay. The Service Agreement provides information about the hotel placement, check-in and check-out dates, night counts and how to request additional nights of housing.
10. **Extensions** - Act 143 allows extensions beyond the 70-day limit to be made at the discretion of the Commissioner. Applications for extensions can be submitted with supporting documentation by filling out a form on the DCF website.

[Addressing and Preventing Unsheltered Homelessness | Department for Children and Families](#)

Other Important Information

Notices

The following notices will be provided as appropriate; all notices will include information on the household's appeal rights

- VHRC Notice of Eligibility
- VHRC Denial Notice
- VHRC Termination Notice
- VHRC Reinstatement Notice
- VHRC Annual Review Reminder
- Service Agreement-Hotel Placement
- Service Agreement-No Hotel Placement

Housing Plan/Progress Towards Goals

A Housing Plan is defined as a documented plan, developed collaboratively with an eligible household and a case manager or other supports, that sets forth the actions, supports, and timeframes necessary to secure or maintain safe, stable, and permanent housing.



A DCF online form will be available for case managers to submit progress towards housing goals.

Households without a case manager may provide verification of progress towards goals listed in their housing plan. Verification can be provided through the uploader (instructions located at: <https://dcf.vermont.gov/esd/applicants/uploader>) or by dropping a copy off at a district office.

Verification of Priority Category

Households that self-attest to a priority category will have up to 30 days to provide verification of the priority category. Priority categories are those where any members or the household meet the following criteria:

- Is 65 years of age or older
- Has a disability
- Is a minor child (under age 18)
- Is pregnant
- Is experiencing domestic violence
- Is under a court-ordered or constructive eviction

Households currently housed through a 201G-VR form will be considered verified for the transition period, which ends when the household exhausts their 70-day benefit. If a household exhausts their benefit and reapplies in the future, the household will need to provide verification consistent with the new rules.

There will be a disability verification form that can be submitted if other disability verification under the rules is not available.

Period of Ineligibility

Households will be ineligible for a period of 12 months if terminated for one of the following reasons:

- A member of the household knowingly has provided false, misleading, or incomplete information regarding residency, disability status, household composition, or other eligibility criteria.
- A member of the household has repeatedly refused suitable placements.
- A member of the household has engaged in criminal activity or misconduct.



Department for Children and Families

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Assistance After Hours

All assistance with hotel placements must be made through the call center. The call center is open 8am to 4:30pm Monday through Friday. 211 is unable to assist with hotel placement after hours.

Upcoming Events

DCF will be hosting a community meeting on Monday August 24th at 9am to provide an overview of the Level 4 hotel program. A link to the meeting is posted to the DCF website [Vermont Homelessness Response Continuum \(VHRC\) | Department for Children and Families](#).

Sincerely,
Vermont Department for Children and Families

Agency of Human Services

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