

Economic Services Division and Office of Economic Opportunity –
Community Meeting

Monday, March 17th, 2025

1. Update on the Status of the General Assistance Emergency Housing Program

Current Program Rules

- **80-Day Limit (Non-Adverse Weather Periods)**
 - Households may receive emergency housing assistance in hotels/motels for up to **80 days** during the periods of:
 - **July 1 - November 30, 2024**
 - **April 1 - June 30, 2025**
- **Room Capacity Limits**
 - From **April 1 - June 30, 2025**, there will be a **maximum of 1,100 hotel/motel rooms available per night**.
 - Even if an individual or household qualifies for assistance, placement may not be available if all 1,100 rooms are occupied.

Impact on Households

- Households who have **not yet used all 80 nights** will remain eligible for emergency housing after **April 1, 2025**, and must contact the GA Housing line before their authorization expires to renew.
- Households who have **already used their 80 nights** will **not** be eligible for additional assistance after **April 1, 2025**, unless policy changes occur.
- Individuals seeking information on their eligibility should call **1-800-775-0506**.



Legislative Updates & Potential Changes

- The legislature is currently reviewing potential modifications to the **80-day limit and room cap**.
- Changes must go through the legislative and state budget processes, making the timeline for any adjustments **uncertain**.
- If modifications are approved, additional emergency housing assistance **may** become available to those who have already used 80 nights.
- Until further notice, the **current program rules remain in effect**.

Action for Providers:

- Stay informed about legislative updates that could impact eligibility and availability.
- Prepare to assist clients with alternative housing resources if necessary.

2. ESD's Communication Plan Regarding Potential Legislative Changes

- **ESD will notify community partners of any program updates** via email through the GA program newsletter.
- Providers who are not yet subscribed should sign up here:
<https://dcf.vermont.gov/esd/newsletter>.
- Households will be notified as soon as possible, but implementation timelines may result in short notice.

Action for Providers:

- Sign up for program updates.
- Help disseminate information to clients about any changes.



3. Removal of Administrative Procedure – Effective March 17, 2025

- The administrative procedure that prioritized hotel/motel room distribution for the most vulnerable households **will no longer be in effect** as of **March 17, 2025**.
- Starting **March 17, 2025**, eligible households can apply for emergency housing assistance **at any time**, and placement will be based on **first come, first served** availability.
- Starting **March 17, 2025**, eligible households who are currently receiving assistance may call 10 days in advance of the end date of their current authorizations to renew.
- This change may impact households who were previously subject to prioritization criteria.

Action for Providers:

- Prepare clients for this transition and advise them that they may apply at any time during the day.
- Assist households in exploring alternative shelter options if needed.

4. ESD's Plan to Extend Call Center Hours (March 17 – March 28, 2025)

- The GA Emergency Housing Program phone lines will be available until **6:00 PM**, Monday through Friday, from **March 17 – March 28, 2025**.
- Extended hours are intended to accommodate an expected increase in inquiries related to the program changes.

Action for Providers:

- Inform clients about the extended hours and encourage them to call **1-800-775-0506** for assistance.



5. Removal of the Requirement to Exhaust Resources – Effective April 11, 2025

- Beginning **April 11, 2025**, the requirement for households to exhaust other resources before qualifying for GA Emergency Housing will no longer be in effect.
- Official notifications will be posted in advance of this change.

Action for Providers:

- Educate clients about this change and help them navigate eligibility under the new policy.
- Ensure clients understand that they **will not need to prove exhaustion of other resources** to qualify for assistance after this date.

6. Shelter Update – Office of Economic Opportunity

Objective: Provide an update on the current household shelter capacity across Vermont and highlight upcoming projects to expand shelter availability.

The Office of Economic Opportunity continues to work with partners to expand shelter capacity. Below is the current status of shelter availability by county and ongoing projects:

County	Total Current Household Capacity	Additional Awarded Projects in Progress
Addison	62	
Bennington	31	
Caledonia	35	
Chittenden	192	Shelter anticipated to open in April (young adults) after facing construction delays.
Franklin	32	
Lamoille	28	
Orleans	7	



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County	Total Current Household Capacity	Additional Awarded Projects in Progress
Rutland	24	Additional family shelter emergency apartment capacity anticipated (four additional apartments).
Washington	122	Includes recently added shelter capacity for young adults.
Windham	74	
Windsor	48	
Grand Total	655	

- **DCF continues to work to add shelter capacity.** New projects will be listed as awards are finalized.
- **Community providers should be aware** of these updates as they impact available shelter options for clients.

Action for Providers:

- Stay informed on capacity changes and direct clients to available shelter resources.
- Monitor updates from the Office of Economic Opportunity as additional shelter projects are finalized.

Next Steps & Provider Support

- **Providers are encouraged to share updates with their networks** to ensure that individuals seeking housing assistance are informed.
- Additional provider Q&A sessions may be scheduled as updates become available.
- For questions, concerns, or additional support, providers can contact:
Economic Services Division (GA Program) at 1-800-775-0506.

