VERMONT

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Housing Opportunity Grant Program (HOP)
Annual Report - State Fiscal Year 2025
July 2024 – June 2025

The Vermont Department for Children and Families, Office of Economic Opportunity administers Vermont's Housing Opportunity Grant Program (HOP). The program provides a blend of state and federal[1] funding to support operations, staffing, financial assistance, and medium-term rental assistance at 38 non-profit emergency shelter, transitional housing, housing navigation, rapid re-housing and homelessness prevention organizations serving all regions of the state.

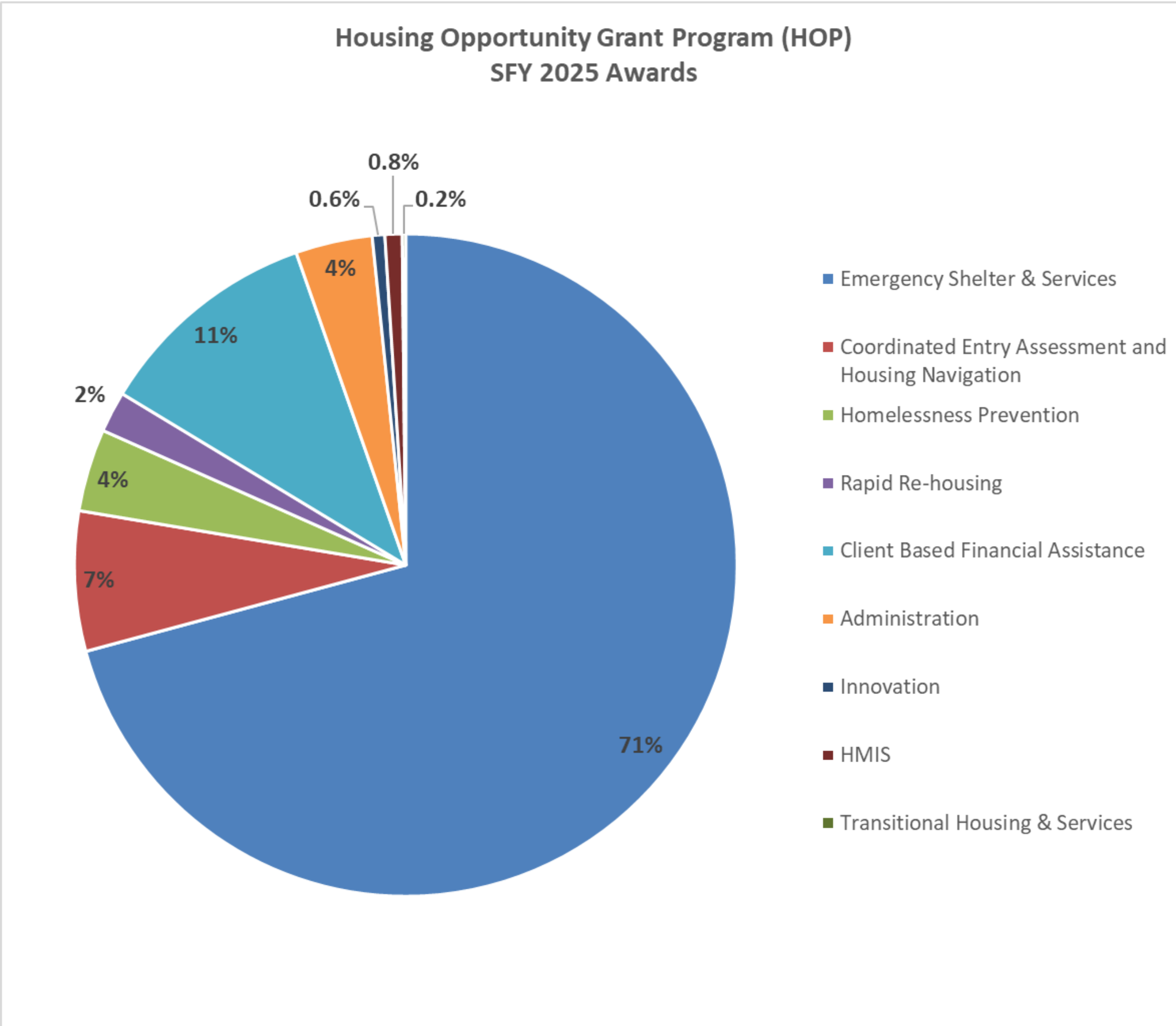
During State Fiscal Year 2025, the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) administered the final year of the Housing Stability Services program, which provided support to households as part of the statewide Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP).

The State Office of Economic Opportunity works in close partnership with both HUD-recognized Homeless Continua of Care, the Chittenden County Homeless Alliance and the Vermont Balance of State., to consult on performance measurement, data management, and developing coordinated entry within both systems of care. This report details the services and shelter provided by publicly funded, privately operated non-profit partners. It provides insight into changes in the population experiencing homelessness in Vermont, as it details the level of service and results achieved by this system of care. It is best understood in tandem with reports from the statewide homeless Point-in-Time Count and the Economic Services Division on the General Assistance Emergency Housing program.

[1] US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Emergency Solutions Grant and Continuum of Care Grant and Global Commitment Investment

Funding & Program Summary

In SFY2025, just under $33.5 million in state and federal funding was awarded under the Housing Opportunity Grant Program.



The Housing Opportunity Grant Program supports basic operations and essential services at 25 organizations operating overnight emergency shelters, including eight shelters for persons fleeing domestic/sexual violence and seven motel overflow pools operated by these agencies. Shelters range in size from a few rooms for families to 42 beds for single adults. Additionally, four organizations provided emergency shelter in 42 scattered site apartments, ranging in size from one to three bedrooms.

Approximately $5.9 million of HOP funds supported direct services staff at emergency shelters, such as case managers or housing specialists. Approximately $11.2 million supported emergency shelter operations, such as utilities, rent, building insurance, non-case management staff, shelter supplies, or routine maintenance. $16,000 supported client-based financial assistance to divert or quickly exit households from emergency shelter. Approximately $8.2 million supported renovation costs to expand shelter capacity across the state.

The Housing Opportunity Grant Program also supports homelessness prevention and rapid re-housing strategies. Both strategies provide housing relocation and stabilization support such as housing search and placement; landlord-tenant mediation; housing case management; follow-up or supportive services to help maintain housing; money management; financial assistance such as security deposits, and up to 24 months of rental assistance. Approximately $1.9 million of HOP funds supported direct service staff in these projects, such as housing navigators, while just over $36,00 supported medium-term client-based rental assistance.

Over $3.8 million in Housing Opportunity Grant Program funds were made available to those experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness in the form of flexible client-based financial assistance. These funds were administered by nine organizations operating as Local Fund Administrators in 11 regions of the state, as well as by the Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence for survivors of domestic and sexual violence statewide. Financial assistance supported short-term rental assistance, security deposits, utility deposits, rental arrears, recovery housing or other non-traditional housing fees, and transportation costs.

Over $2.9 million supported Coordinated Entry to streamline access to homeless assistance resources (intake and assessment services) and to help re-house homeless individuals and families in permanent housing as quickly as possible (housing navigation services). Approximately $542,000 supported the implementation of HMIS, Transitional Housing programs, and innovative projects such as landlord liaisons. Remaining funds were awarded to HOP grantees to support general administration.

Vermonters experiencing homelessness or housing instability face significant challenges. These include the lack of available rentals, the high cost of rent, and very low incomes. These factors impact outcomes across the Housing Opportunity Grant Program and are explored in great detail in the Vermont Housing Needs Assessment[2], a comprehensive analysis that examines factors such as population growth, household demographics, and the availability and affordability of housing. According to the Department of Housing and Community Development, “the report's findings show Vermont's statewide housing crisis is deepening, and housing costs are stretching Vermonters' budgets thin. Vermont has a long-standing, statewide shortage of affordable homes available to lower income households, which became more severe with the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting market shifts. Due in part to a slow pace of home building and elevated construction costs, vacancy rates declined to near record levels, home prices and rents jumped, and homelessness increased dramatically. The report estimates that the pace of home building will need to increase to create the 24,00036,000 additional year-round homes needed in 2025-2029 to meet demand, normalize vacancy rates, house the homeless and replace homes lost from the stock through flooding and other causes.

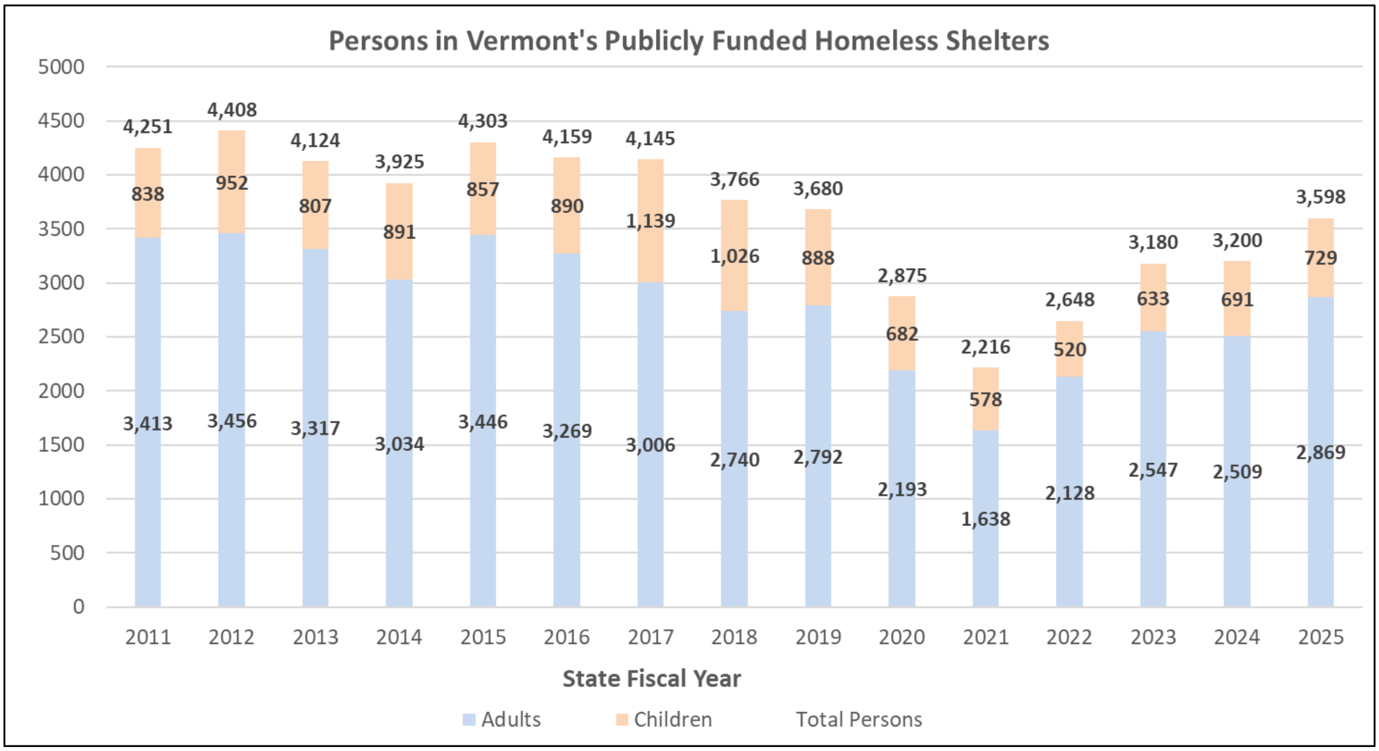
[2] Vermont Housing Needs Assessment (Agency of Commerce and Community Development)

Emergency Shelter
Persons Served, Demographics, Bednights & Length of Stay

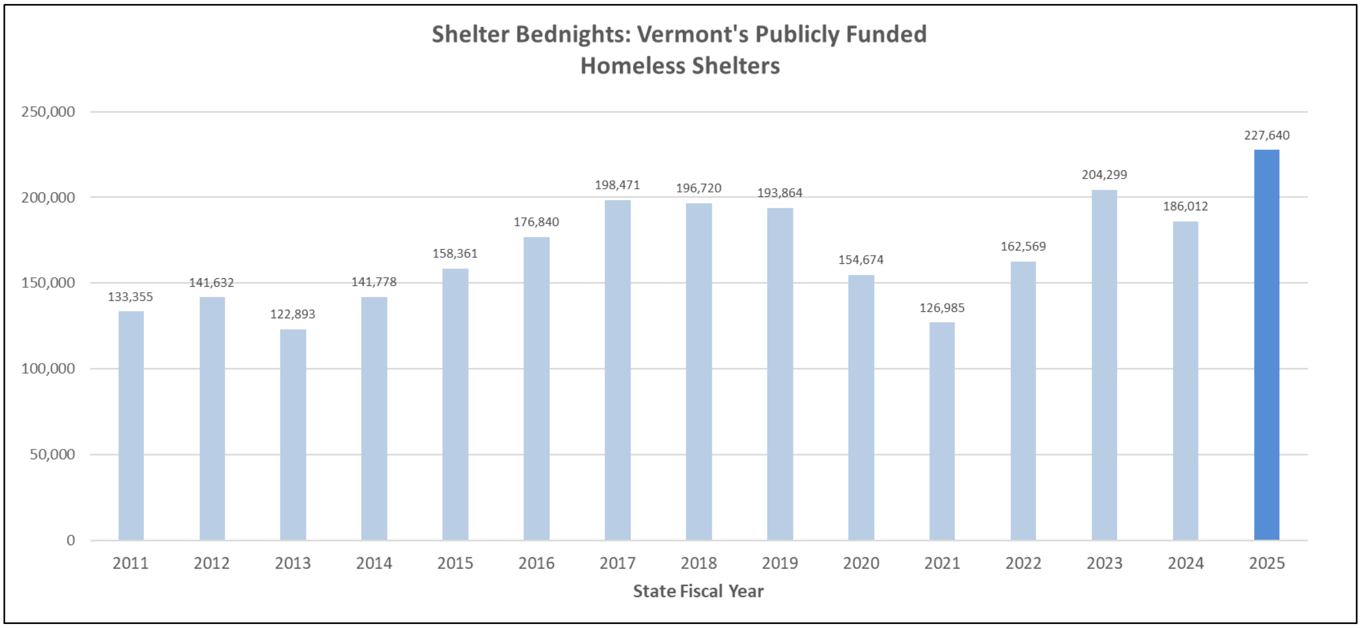
Between July 1, 2024 and June 30, 2025, Vermont's publicly funded emergency shelters, domestic violence shelters, and youth shelters, reported the following:

- **3,598** persons (64% individuals and 37% in families with children) sheltered for a total of **227,640** bednights.[3]
- **2,869** were adults and **729** were children under the age of 18.
- The average length of stay was **63.3** days (an increase from the 54 days in SFY2024).
- Approximately 53%% of sheltered children (390) and 48% of persons in families (617) spent their stay through a domestic/sexual violence shelter.[4]

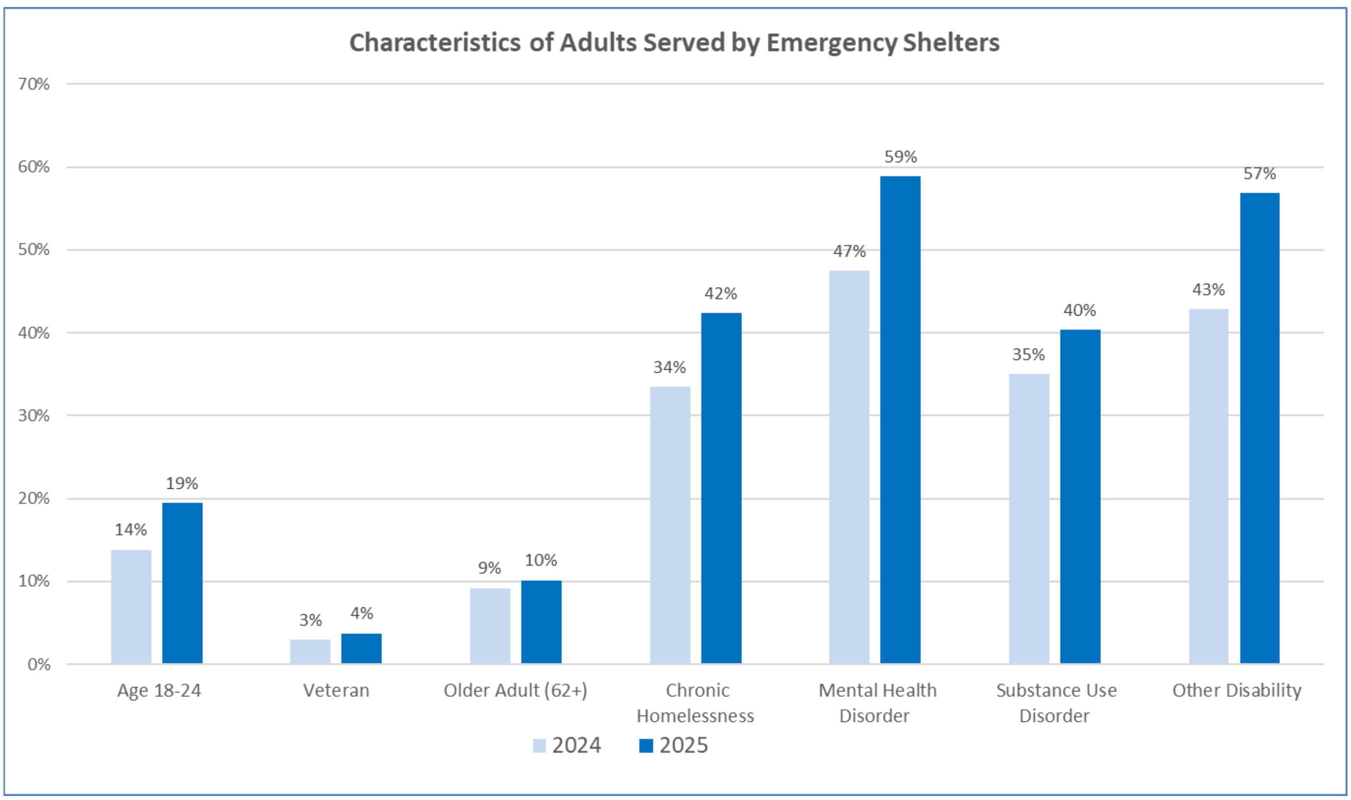
Only four seasonal shelters operated in SFY2025, providing a total of 9,171 bednights.[5] Seasonal shelter capacity continues to be lower than pre-COVID levels, as community providers prioritize the development of year-round shelter capacity.



[3] One bednight = One person sheltered for one night. Total bednights = Number of persons x the number of nights sheltered.
[4] In most AHS districts, DCF partners with domestic violence shelters to directly meet emergency housing needs for all victims fleeing domestic/sexual violence (including through motel vouchers) rather than referrals to the General Assistance Emergency Housing Program. These bednights are included in the total.
[5] Does not include Extreme Cold Weather Shelters.



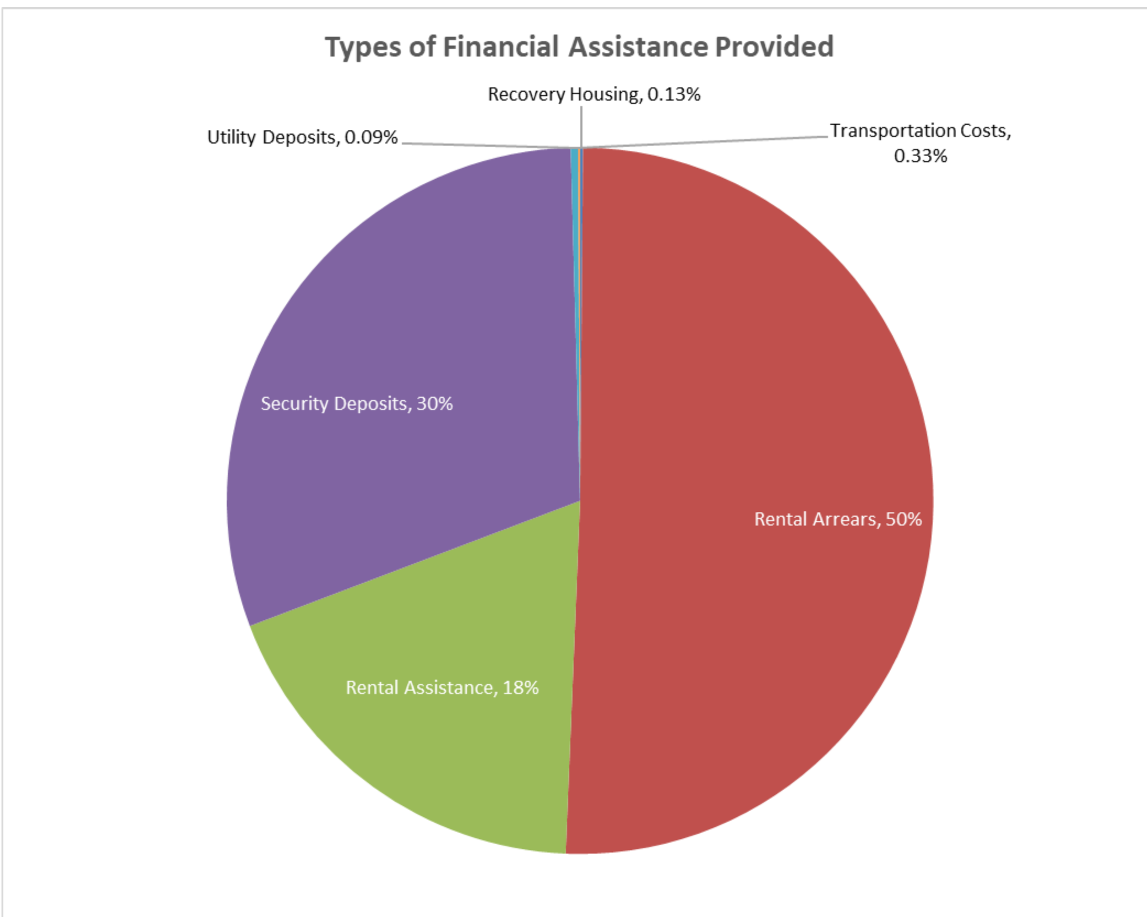
The chart below reflects a sampling of demographics for all adults (2,818) served by emergency shelters. Much of the information captured below is based on self-report and participants may be reflected in more than one category.



Flexible Financial Assistance
Households Assisted, Types of Assistance

Between July 1, 2024 and June 30, 2025, over $3.8 million in flexible financial assistance was provided to stabilize 2,062 households. Sixty-six percent of households assisted were at risk of homelessness, while 34% were experiencing homelessness**.** The overall impact of high costs of rent and inflation on households has been a decreased ability to maintain their rental obligations while covering other household costs (e.g., food, clothing). The Vermont Housing Needs Assessment 2025 found that "over half of renters in Vermont (about 34,000 households) have housing costs greater than 30% of their income – the standard for assessing affordability referred to as 'cost burden' ... 26% of Vermont's renters (about 17,000 households) spent more than half of their income on housing costs." [6]

Ninety-five percent of households secured or maintained safe housing after receiving financial assistance. Of those households with safe housing, the majority were living in rental housing, either with a subsidy/voucher (55%) or without (44%). Other safe exit destinations included Permanent Supportive Housing (<1%), Residential or Halfway House (<1%), and staying or living with family or friends (<1%).



[6] Vermont Housing Needs Assessment 2025-2029 (Agency of Commerce and Community Development)

Housing Opportunity Grant Program Performance

Grantees report on measures tied to the category of funding received: Shelter Operations, Case Management, Homelessness Prevention, Rapid Re-Housing, and Financial Assistance. Performance targets and 2025 performance are included below. By reporting the "% of Grantees Meeting Target", the Office of Economic Opportunity better understands how to provide training and technical assistance. The Office recognizes that some measures and targets may no longer be relevant or appropriate and is undergoing a review with an Advisory Group in State Fiscal Year 2026.

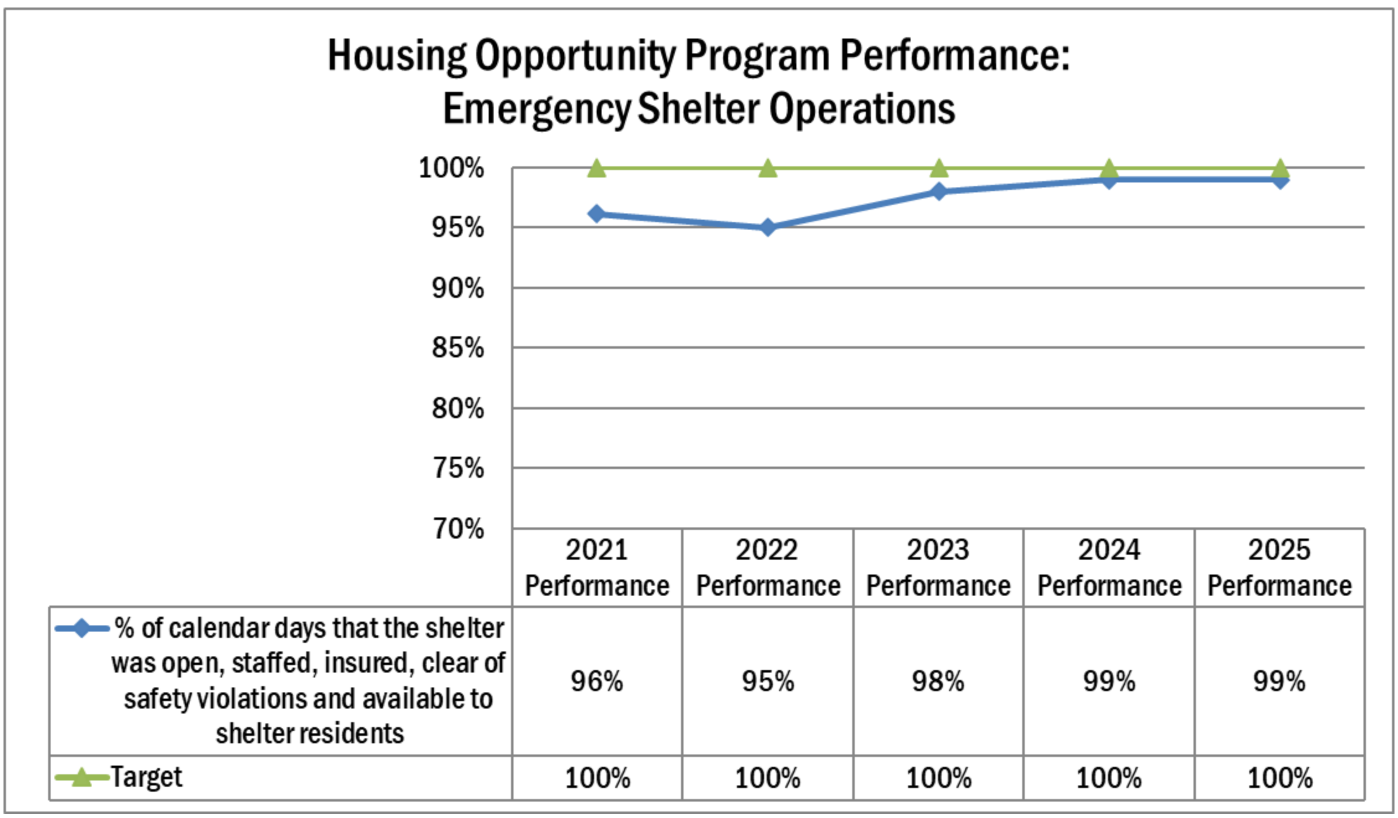
Performance Measures by Activity	Target	State FY25 Performance		% of Grantees Meeting Target
EMERGENCY SHELTER OPERATIONS				
Average # of nights that shelter was open, staffed, insured, and available to shelter the homeless (excludes warming shelters and emergency apartments)	365	364		86%
Shelter households (individuals or families) will have an initial meeting with a case manager (or equivalent) within 3 days of entering the program	90%	Adult	81%	48%
		Youth	92%	60%
Households who exit emergency shelter, exit to stable permanent or transitional housing (excludes motel pool stays)	baseline	25%		n/a
YOUTH SHELTER & SERVICES				
Youth exiting the program will have "safe exits" as defined by one of the following: college, friends, home with family, independent living, job corps, military, relative's home, or residential treatment/rehab	70%	62%		60%
ESSENTIAL SERVICES CASE MANAGEMENT[7]				
Homeless households referred for case management will meet with a case manager within 3 days of the referral	90%	83%		62%
Within 90 days of referral, households receiving case management will have at least 1 adult who is employed, OR enrolled in an educational or training program, OR has qualified for income benefits such as TANF, SSI or GA	70%	35%		23%
Households receiving case management will be stabilized in transitional or permanent housing	70%	24%		4%
Households stabilized or re-housed will continue to be in stable housing at least 90 days following assistance[8]	70%	57%		32%

[7] Only organizations that receive HOP funding for essential services case management report on these performance measures.
[8] Victim service providers have been excluded from this measurement as they are not required to conduct follow up with households.

Performance Measures by Activity	Target	State FY25 Performance	% of Grantees Meeting Target
HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION			
Households at-risk of homelessness will have their housing stabilized or be safely re-housed	70%	89%	80%
Households stabilized or re-housed will continue to be in stable housing at least 90 days following assistance[9]	70%	56%	33%
RAPID RE-HOUSING			
Homeless households will be safely re-housed	70%	65%	67%
Households re-housed will continue to be in stable housing at least 90 days following assistance[10]	70%	77%	67%
FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE			
Households will secure or maintain safe housing	baseline	95%	n/a

Emergency Shelter Operations Performance

During SFY2025, the average percent of calendar days that shelters were open, staffed, insured, clear of safety violations and available to residents was 99%, with 86% of shelters staying open all 365 days during the year. Throughout the year there were some shelters that were closed due to either planned or unplanned renovation projects.

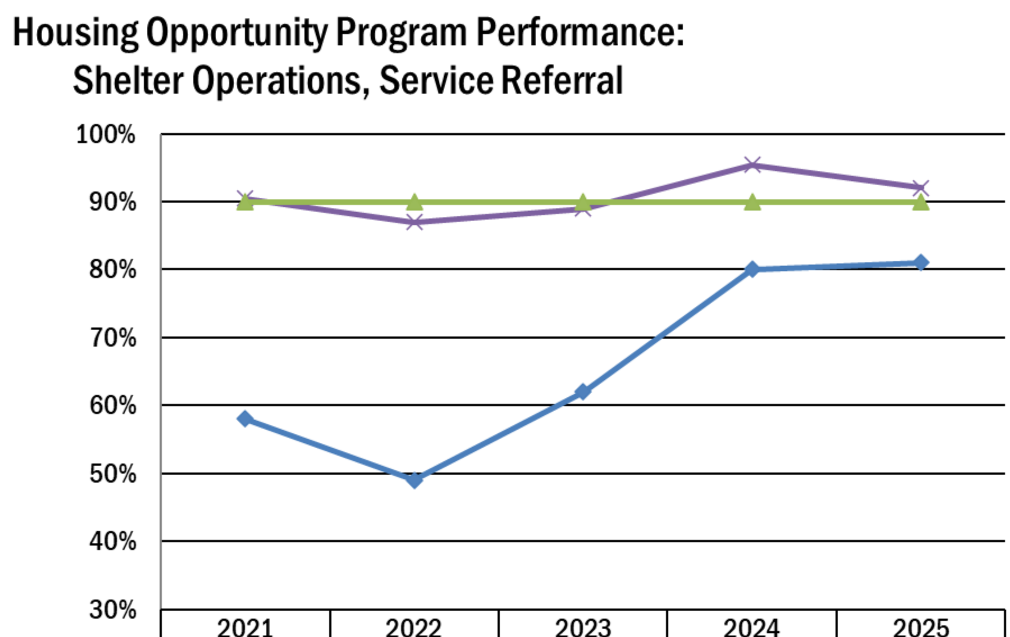


[9] See footnote 6

[10] See footnote 6

Some HOP-funded shelter projects operate with a scattered-site apartment model, with the agency master-leasing the unit to provide shelter to households. Data on the number of calendar days these types of shelters were open and available is not included above, as the model is unique and faces a different set of circumstances that can impact their availability. Some common examples include needing to find available apartments with willing landlords and maintenance often being the responsibility of the landlord (rather than the organization). Given that apartments are often offering more space to households, the time it takes to turn a unit over (clean, repair, refill supplies, etc.) for the next household increases when compared to other shelter models.

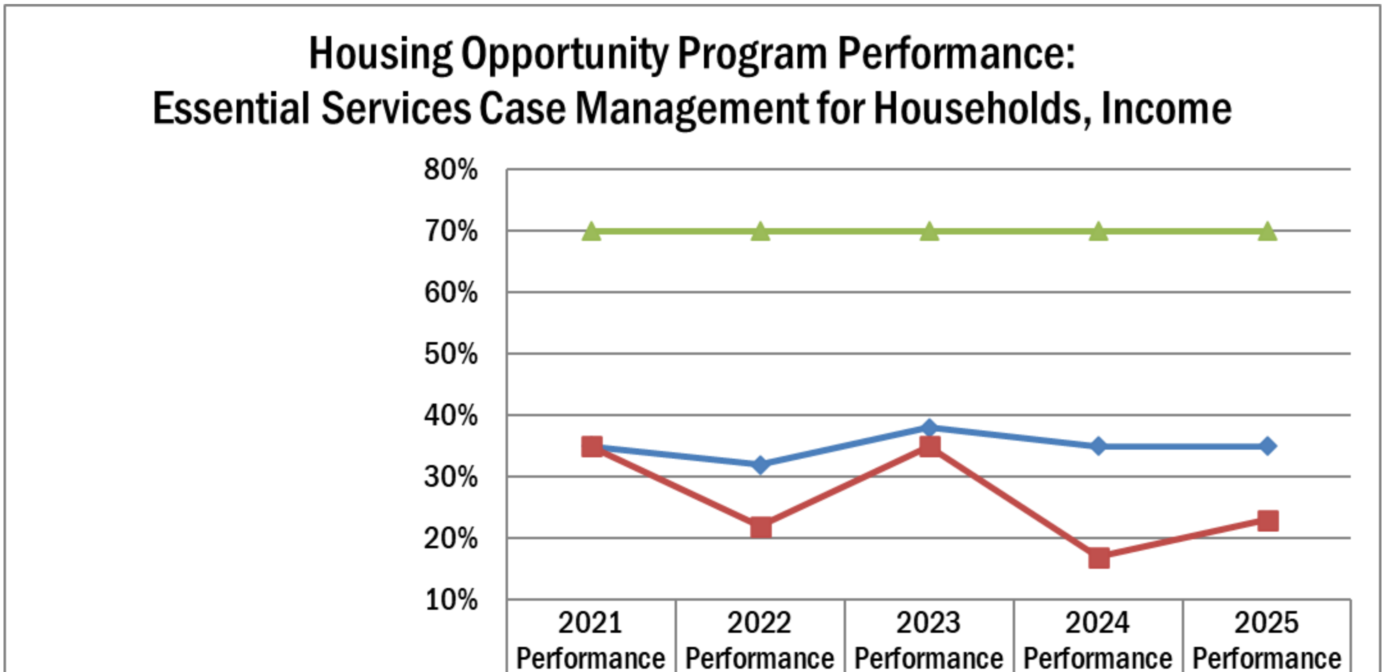
The Housing Opportunity Grant Program aims to ensure all shelter guests can meet with a case manager or advocate quickly after entry into a program (i.e., within 3 days). Quickly connecting to case management helps to meet the basic needs of all guests and connect guests to a permanent housing pathway. Some emergency shelters provide services onsite, while other programs refer guests to another service provider for case management support. Just under 50% of non-youth shelter grantees (48%) and 60% of youth shelter grantees are meeting the target for this measure. Improvement plans and technical assistance for specific agencies struggling with this measure began in SFY2022 and the impact of that work is reflected in the maintained improved performance as shown below.



	2021 Performance	2022 Performance	2023 Performance	2024 Performance	2025 Performance
Emergency Shelter: % of new HH who met with a case manager or advocate within 3 days of entrance	58%	49%	62%	80%	81%
Youth Shelter: % of youth who met with a case manager within 3 days of entrance	90%	87%	89%	95%	92%
Target	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%

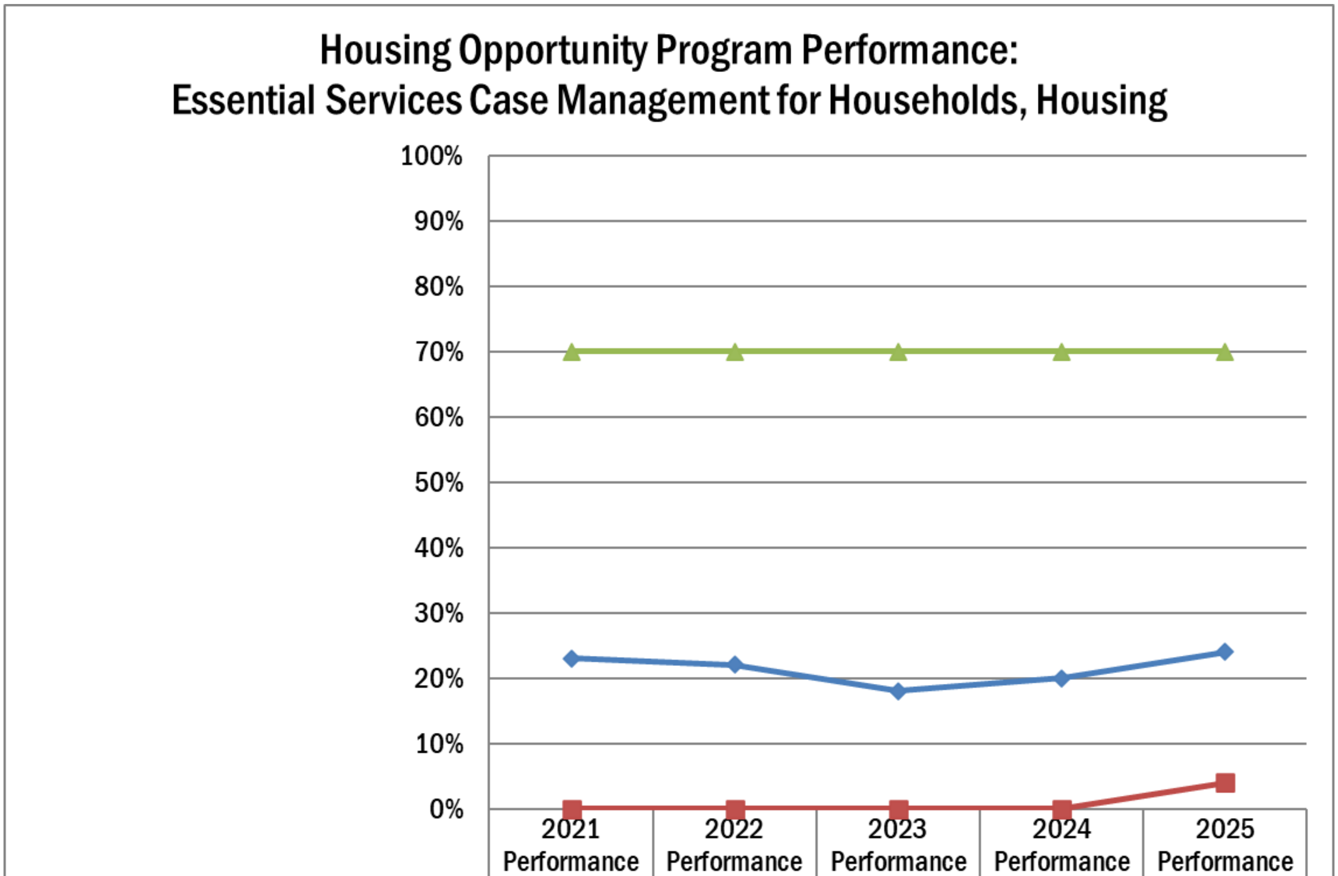
Emergency Shelter Essential Services Performance

Essential Services case management refers to comprehensive case management services provided to households in emergency shelters or the General Assistance Emergency Housing program. Essential Services case management supports households with housing goals, but also focuses more broadly on helping households access resources to support basic needs and increase income. SFY2025 saw level performance on this measure when compared to last year. OEO will continue to evaluate the data to determine if there are areas of training and technical assistance that can be provided or if our performance measures and targets need to be adjusted to reflect changes within our homeless response system as well as external dynamics.

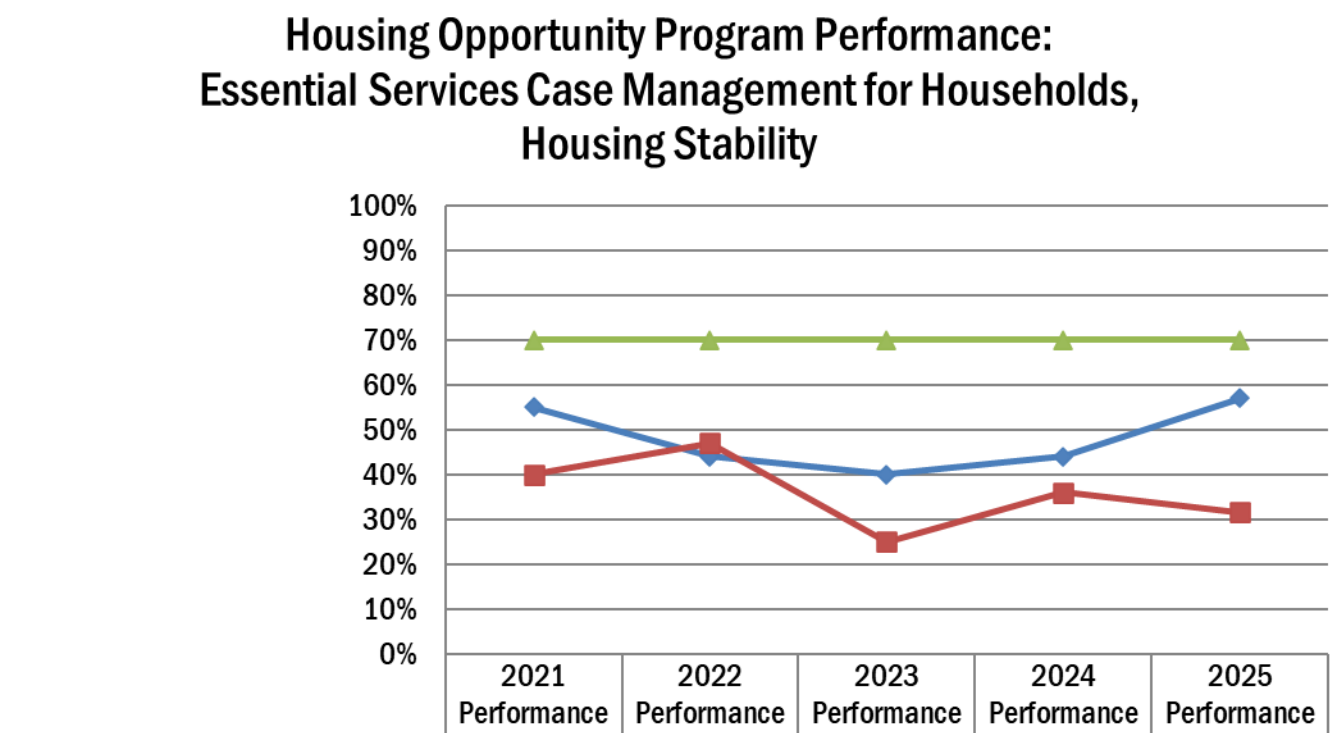


	2021 Performance	2022 Performance	2023 Performance	2024 Performance	2025 Performance
% of HH who - within 90 days of case management - have at least 1 adult who has found employment OR enrolled in education or training OR qualified for income benefits (e.g, TANF, SSI, GA)	35%	32%	38%	35%	35%
Target	70%	70%	70%	70%	70%
% of Grantees Meeting Target	35%	22%	35%	17%	23%

In SFY2025, the number of households moving into stable housing after receiving essential services case management increased slightly, but still remains low. Of those supported into housing, 57% of households continued to be stably housed for at least 90 days. It is clear that stable housing outcomes continue to be impacted by a lack of affordable housing stock or other sustainable and supportive housing options.



	2021 Performance	2022 Performance	2023 Performance	2024 Performance	2025 Performance
% of households who, after meeting with a CM, were stabilized in transitional or permanent housing	23%	22%	18%	20%	24%
Target	70%	70%	70%	70%	70%
% of Grantees Meeting Target	0%	0%	0%	0%	4%



	2021 Performance	2022 Performance	2023 Performance	2024 Performance	2025 Performance
% of households who were stabilized in transitional or permanent housing AND remained stably housed for at least 90 days (DV Excluded)	55%	44%	40%	44%	57%
Target	70%	70%	70%	70%	70%
% of Grantees Meeting Target	40%	47%	25%	36%	32%

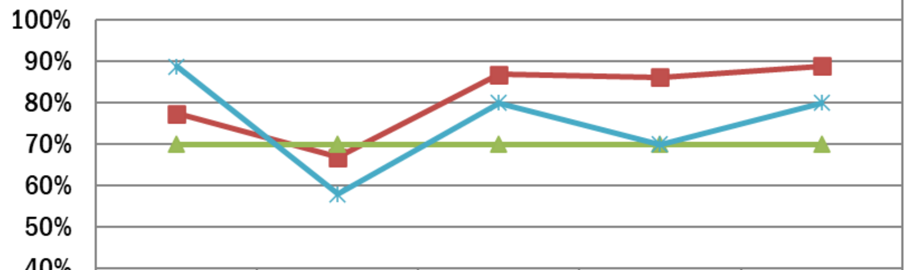
Homelessness Prevention & Rapid Re-Housing Performance

In SFY2025 Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing programs provided housing stability for 1,050 households. The vast majority of these households (879) were served in Homelessness Prevention, with Rapid Re-Housing programs continuing to make up just a small subset of the Housing Opportunity Grant Program. This is partially a result of the restructuring of the Rapid Re-Housing program in HOP beginning in SFY2023, as well as the creation of a statewide Rapid Re-Housing project specifically for families, the HOME Family Voucher Program, in SFY2023.[11]

While the percentage of households reported as achieving stability or being rehoused through Homelessness Prevention programs saw an increase from SFY2024, HOP grantees reported a decrease in those re-housed through Rapid Re-Housing compared to SFY2024.

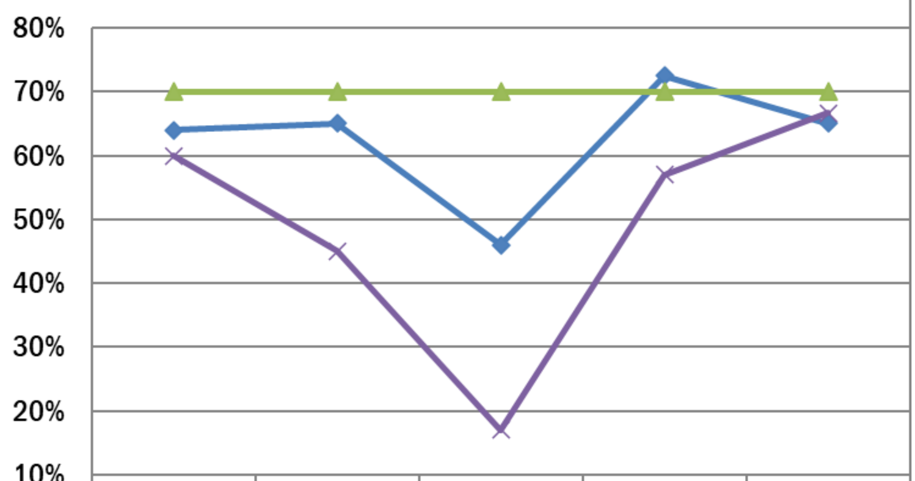
[11] Data from the HOME Family Voucher Program is not included in this report.

Housing Opportunity Program Performance: Homelessness Prevention, Housing



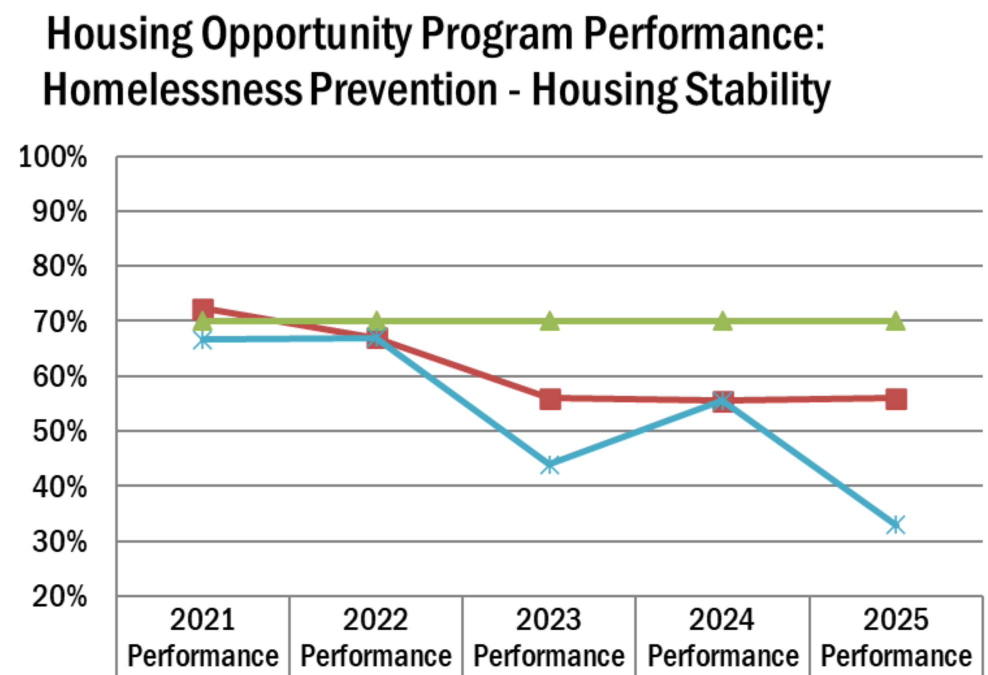
	2021 Performance	2022 Performance	2023 Performance	2024 Performance	2025 Performance
% of households at-risk of homelessness who were stabilized or rehoused	77%	67%	87%	86%	89%
Target	70%	70%	70%	70%	70%
% of Homelessness Prevention Grantees Meeting Target	89%	58%	80%	70%	80%

Housing Opportunity Program Performance: Rapid Re-Housing, Housing



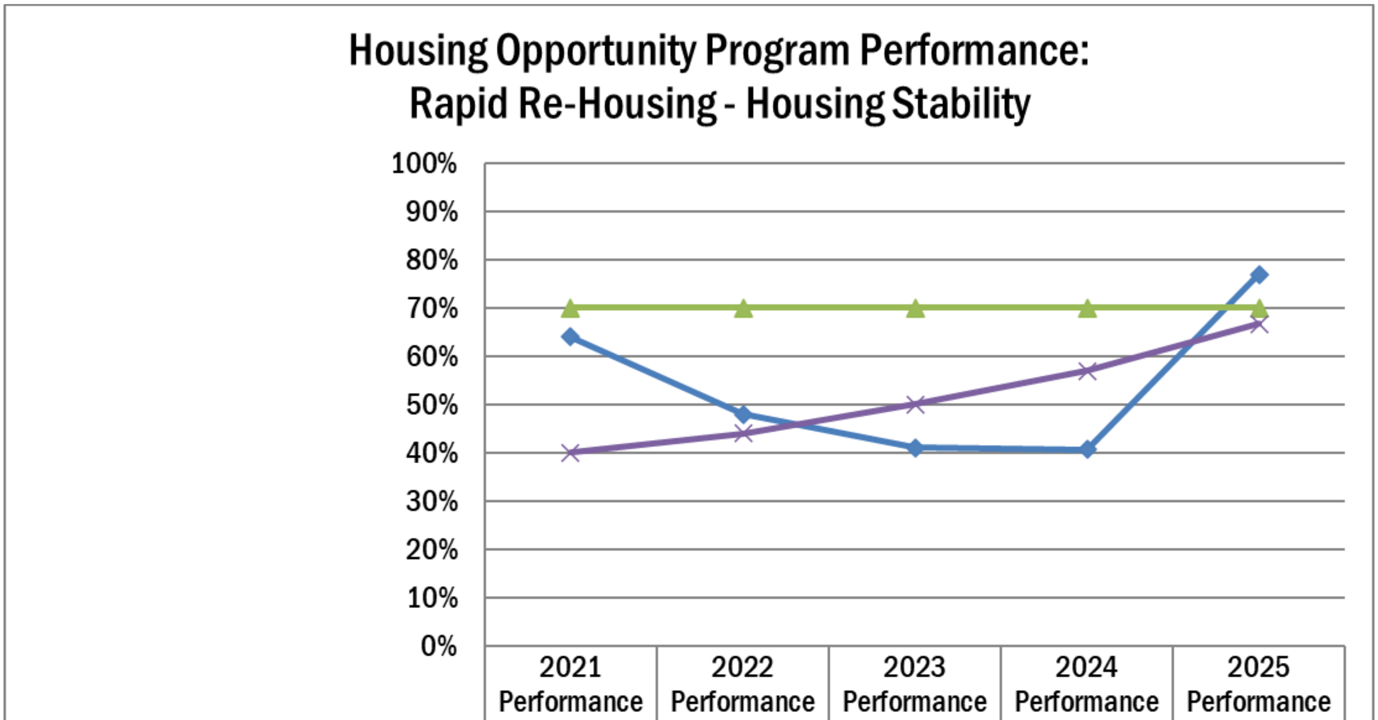
	2021 Performance	2022 Performance	2023 Performance	2024 Performance	2025 Performance
% of homeless households who were re-housed.	64%	65%	46%	72%	65%
Target	70%	70%	70%	70%	70%
% of Rapid Rehousing Grantees Meeting Target	60%	45%	17%	57%	67%

Housing stability outcomes for Homelessness Prevention held steady from last year. External factors that impact the housing landscape and financial stability of participants continue to contribute to participants not being able to sustain housing once they find it.



	2021 Performance	2022 Performance	2023 Performance	2024 Performance	2025 Performance
% of HH at-risk of homelessness who remain in stable housing 90 days after assistance (prevention)	72%	67%	56%	56%	56%
Target	70%	70%	70%	70%	70%
% of Homelessness Prevention Grantees Meeting Target	67%	67%	44%	56%	33%

Rapid Re-Housing programs, however, showed a significant increase in housing stability outcomes. The majority of Rapid Re-Housing programs now funded by HOP have dedicated sources of medium-term rental assistance to support participants with maintaining their housing, which is vital in ensuring stability.



	2021 Performance	2022 Performance	2023 Performance	2024 Performance	2025 Performance
% of homeless HH who remain in stable housing 90 days after assistance (rapid re-housing)	64%	48%	41%	41%	77%
Target	70%	70%	70%	70%	70%
% of Rapid Re-Housing Grantees Meeting Target	40%	44%	50%	57%	67%

Coordinated Entry Performance

Full implementation of coordinated entry has helped to identify appropriate levels of assistance based on household need. In SFY2020, new performance measures for Coordinated Entry Housing Navigation services were introduced and in SFY2023 data collection and performance reporting was further refined for the Housing Opportunity Grant Program. With these changes, SFY2023 created a new baseline by which to monitor performance for Coordinated Entry Housing Navigation services.

Housing Opportunity Grant Program Coordinated Entry Housing Navigation Services	SFY2023	SFY2024	SFY2025
Number of Households Served[12]	1,255	2,750	3,328
% Program Exits to Permanent Housing[13]	37%	43%	59%
Average # of Days from Enrollment to Re-housed or Stabilized	123	117	127

Data presented here reflects only housing navigation services provided by HOP-funded grantees; it does not represent all of the households in the Coordinated Entry system nor the full scope of the services being provided to those households. For additional data on Coordinated Entry, OEO recommends reviewing the following:

- Vermont Balance of State Continuum of Care's most recent Coordinated Entry Annual Evaluation report:
  2024 CE Annual Evaluation Report (Housing and Homelessness Alliance of Vermont)
- Institute for Community Alliances' Vermont Coordinated Entry Dashboard

During State Fiscal Year 2025 Vermont's shelter and service providers remained committed to serving program participants, while also navigating external factors such as the high cost of housing as well as internal factors such as staff turnover. Providing safe shelter, flexible financial and rental assistance, and housing navigation services are vital in the state's effort to end homelessness.

Throughout the year, OEO worked to support grantees navigate these difficulties by providing:

- Logistical support for infectious disease prevention and mitigation efforts
- Space for collaborative discussions to inform updates to HOP standards
- Facilitation of a Shelter Safety group
- Tailored learning opportunities to support the professional development of staff
- Training and technical assistance to new shelter projects

[12] This number may include duplication of households served during different quarters of the fiscal year.

[13] Permanent housing is used here to describe a variety of housing that is expected to long-term and stable, such as home ownership, rental housing, Permanent Supportive Housing, and staying with friends and family on a permanent basis.