

State of Vermont, Agency of Human Services
Department for Children and Families
Office of Economic Opportunity
280 State Drive
Waterbury, VT 05671-1050
[phone] 802-241-0935

Housing Opportunity Grant Program (HOP)

Annual Report - State Fiscal Year 2026

July 2025 – June 2026

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 federal¹ funding to support operations, staffing, financial assistance, and medium-term rental assistance at 38 non-profit organizations providing emergency shelter, transitional housing, statewide training and technical assistance, housing navigation services, rapid re-housing services, coordinated entry services, and homelessness prevention services around the state.

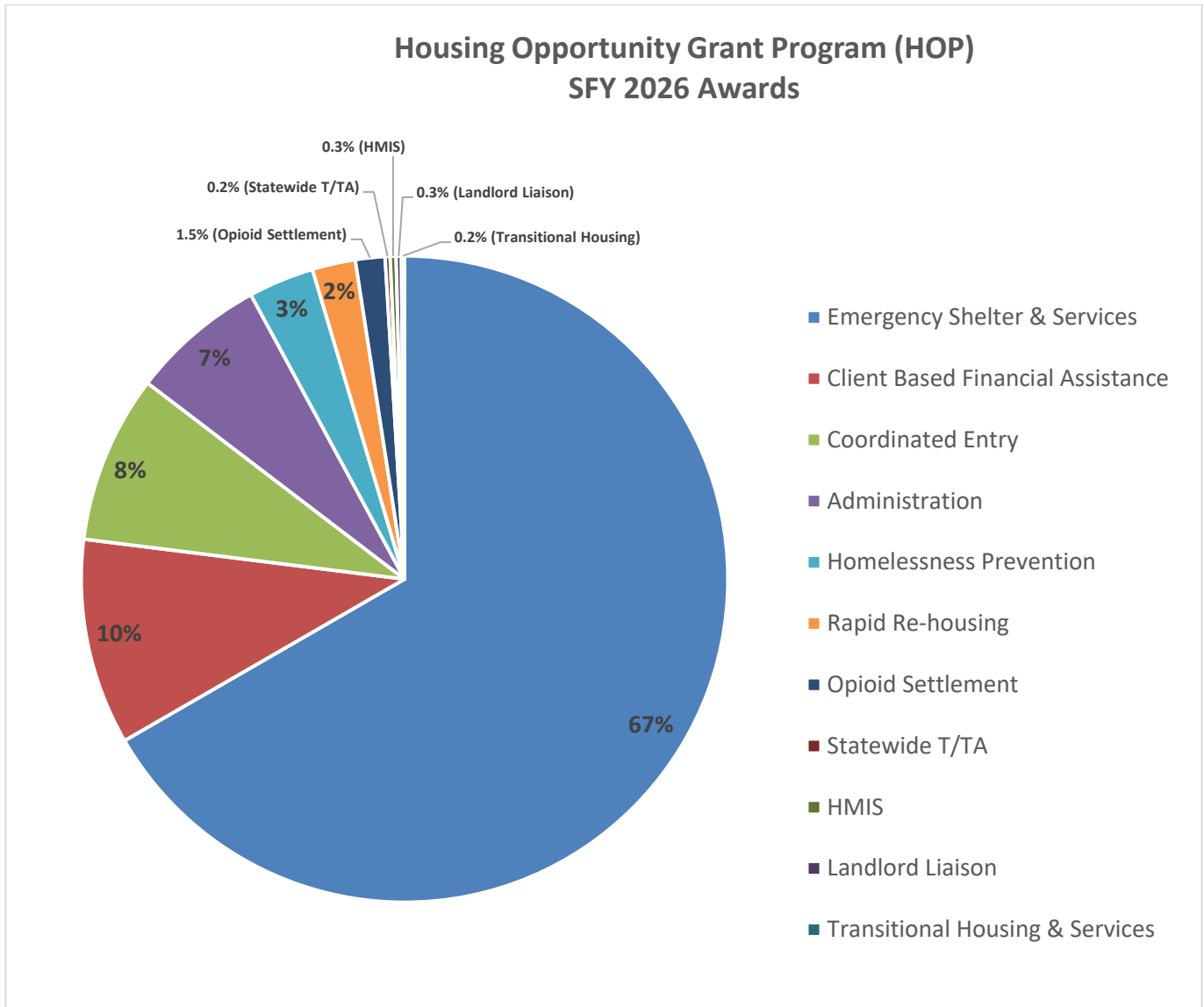
The State Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) works in close partnership with both HUD-recognized Homeless Continua of Care, the Chittenden County Homeless Alliance and the Vermont Balance of State., to consult on performance measurement, data management, and developing coordinated entry within both systems of care. This report details the services and shelter provided by publicly funded, privately operated non-profit partners. It 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.

The State Fiscal Year 2026 (SFY26) report is a departure from the report template used in recent years due to multiple factors. In SFY26, OEO worked with an advisory group to review and update performance measures and multiple changes were instituted for State Fiscal Year 2027. Act 143 was also enacted in June 2026, established the Vermont Homelessness Response Continuum. The Continuum replaces the Housing Opportunity Grant Program fully in State Fiscal Year 2028 and includes a new set of required measures. And finally, OEO is working to ensure reports meet new accessibility standards. The team is focused on building the infrastructure to include the new measures and report on them in an accessible report. Therefore, this report is narrower in scope with the goal of sharing key, headline measures only.

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

Funding Summary

In SFY2026, over \$36 million in state and federal funding was awarded under the Housing Opportunity Grant Program. The majority of funding supported emergency shelter projects, client-based financial assistance, and services provided in Coordinated Entry, Homelessness Prevention, and Rapid Re-housing projects. While HOP funds were also used for other project types, the remainder of this report focuses on the project types that received the majority of HOP funding.



Emergency Shelter

In SFY2026, the Housing Opportunity Grant Program supported basic operations and essential services at 26 organizations operating overnight emergency shelters around the state, including eight shelters for persons fleeing domestic/sexual violence and seven motel overflow pools operated by these agencies. Shelters ranged in size from a few rooms for families to 56 beds for single adults. Additionally, seven organizations provided emergency shelter in 63 scattered site apartments, ranging in size from one to three bedrooms. The following table provides an overview of the shelter capacity funded by county in SFY26; numbers are based on the total number of households able to be sheltered.

County	Year-Round Capacity	Seasonal Capacity	Total Capacity
Addison	62	0	62
Bennington	31	0	31
Caledonia	36	0	36
Chittenden	202	26	228
Franklin	40	0	40
Lamoille	31	0	31
Orleans	7	0	7
Rutland	37	0	37
Washington	116	25	141
Windham	50	6	56
Windsor	46	4	50
Total	658	61	719

HOP funds were used for a variety of activities in emergency shelter projects:

- Approximately \$6.8 million supported direct services staff, such as case managers or housing specialists.
- Approximately \$13.5 million supported shelter operations, such as utilities, rent, building insurance, non-case management staff, shelter supplies, or routine maintenance.
- Approximately \$76,000 supported client-based financial assistance to divert or quickly exit households from emergency shelter.
- Approximately \$860,000 supported renovation costs to expand shelter capacity across the state.

Between July 1, 2025, and June 30, 2026, Vermont's publicly funded emergency shelters, domestic violence shelters, and youth shelters, reported the following:

- **3,441** persons (59% individuals and 41% in families with children) sheltered for a total of **275,924** bed nights.²
- **2,612** were adults and **829** were children under the age of 18.
- The average length of stay was **80.2** days (which is a significant increase from the 63.3 days in SFY2025).
- Approximately 52% of sheltered children (433) and 47% of persons in families (660) spent their stay through a domestic/sexual violence shelter

² One bed night = One person sheltered for one night. Total bed nights = Number of persons x the number of nights sheltered.

Flexible Client-Based Financial Assistance

In SFY2026, over \$3.7 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. Between July 1, 2025, and June 30, 2026, flexible financial assistance was provided to stabilize 1,497 households. Sixty-six percent of households assisted were at risk of homelessness, while 34% were experiencing homelessness. One hundred 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 (52%) or without (47%). One percent exited to Permanent Supportive Housing.

Financial Assistance funds were administered by nine organizations operating as Local Fund Administrators for all 14 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.

Homelessness Prevention & Rapid Re-Housing

In SFY2026, the Housing Opportunity Grant Program supported homelessness prevention projects at 11 organizations serving 12 regions of the state, as well as rapid re-housing projects at eight organizations serving six regions of the state. Both project types 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, and money management skills. Rapid Re-Housing projects may also provide financial assistance for security deposits and up to 24 months of rental assistance. Approximately \$1.6 million of HOP funds supported direct service staff in these projects, such as housing navigators, while just over \$214,000 supported medium-term client-based rental assistance.

Between July 1, 2025, and June 30, 2026, Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing programs provided housing stability services to 746 households. The vast majority of these households (680) 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 SFY2023.³

Coordinated Entry

In SFY2026, over \$2.6 million supported Coordinated Entry projects at 17 organizations serving all 14 regions of the state. Coordinated Entry services are designed to streamline access to homeless assistance resources (intake and assessment services) and help re-house homeless individuals and families in permanent housing as quickly as possible (housing navigation services). Between July 1, 2025, and June 30, 2026, 1,688 households received Coordinated Entry Housing Navigation services. 67% of households who exited services did so to permanent housing destinations.⁴

³ Data from the HOME Family Voucher Program is not included in this report.

⁴ 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.

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:
[2025 CE Annual Evaluation Report \(Housing and Homelessness Alliance of Vermont\)](#)
- [Institute for Community Alliances' Vermont Coordinated Entry Dashboard](#)

In Closing

In SFY2026, a minimum of 8,435 individuals⁵ received critical support and services through the HOP program. The team at OEO also grew to help support the network of HOP providers. This capacity means that OEO can provide more timely monitoring as well as training and technical assistance. OEO is implementing these changes in SFY27 and will be working with providers to implement the new Homelessness Response Continuum in SFY28.

⁵ This number does not include all HOP Funded Activities as data is reported separately and is not able to be deduplicated.