

# COVID Response Housing and Homeless Services Report

Presentation to the Dane County Health and Human Needs Committee  
Pursuant to 2020 Res 67 as Amended by HHN  
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Temporary shelter has created social distancing necessary to prevent major outbreaks of COVID-19 among individuals experiencing homelessness, and help prevent overall spread in the community.

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- Pre-pandemic, congregate shelter system did not have the space necessary to provide CDC recommended social distancing to prevent spread.
- County, City of Madison, service agencies, and other critical partners in the pandemic response moved quickly to identify and stand-up alternatives to existing facilities.
- First move-ins to hotel shelters occurred on March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2020.
- Warner Park Community Center became home to the men's overnight shelter March 30<sup>th</sup>.

# As of 8/24/2020, \*363 individuals in 6 hotels.

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- Adults without minor children who are at higher risk of severe illness if they contract COVID-19: 167
- Adults with minor children: 78 Adults, 106 children (52 Families)
- \*Medical respite guests: Averages 12 guests at this time. As many as 35 in the early days of the pandemic response.

# Vulnerable Population Hotel Shelter Has Provided Stability, Increased Connection to Case Management, Community Supports

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- 15 guests have exited hotels to permanent housing.
- 42% of guests over 60.
- 23% of guests have enrolled in long-term case management (CCS).
- 100% have engaged in psychoeducational programming related to the pandemic. Other classes offered on-site related to mental health, wellness and/or substance use disorders.
- 95% of guests have been referred to housing priority list/housing assessment for HSC housing programs.

# Housing Placement Has Been Challenging for Individuals Without Minors Due to Limited Income, High Cost of Housing.

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- **Program Data:**

- Four (4) housing navigators – one at each hotel for adults without minors, one to support Salvation Army's services at family shelter. Existing housing navigation staff have returned to Beacon to assist men's shelter guests with services.
- Seven (7) guests have exited hotels and entered permanent housing since housing navigation offered in July.
- 146 unduplicated hotel/shelter guests have requested services.
- 135 guests have enrolled in more intensive individualized services (similar to case management).
- 80% of guests have SSI/SSDI as their only source of income. At approximately \$800/month, makes finding an affordable unit difficult.
- At least a dozen guests do not have any income. Housing navigators working with them to find employment.

- **Addressing Challenges:**

- Making quick move-in funds more flexible to create additional housing incentives, help pay for arrears, application fees, multiple months rent.
- Case conferencing with other case managers, housing programs, to overcome barriers to housing for guests.
- City of Madison released RFP for nearly \$4 million in funding, possible support for longer-term housing assistance and case management.

# 24/7 Shelter For Families, Women, Has Provided Increased Stability, Supported Housing Placements

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- Family Shelter:
  - 24 families exited hotels and into permanent housing since hotel sheltering began.
  - 43 families enrolled in a rapid re-housing program.
  - 16 families entered permanent housing through shelter diversion services.
- Women's Shelter:
  - Average 53 women per night. Highest number served was 60 in August.
  - 21 guests exited to permanent housing.
  - 17 guests enrolled in rapid re-housing program.
  - No more 90 day stay limit for women provides more consistent access to shelter, services.

# More Space for Men's Shelter Has Helped Service Delivery, Inform Practices For Future Facility

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- An average of 80 men stay at the overnight shelter. Highest guest count was 110 individuals.
- 17 guests have exited to permanent housing.
- 53 guests are enrolled in case management.
- Closer to 24/7 access to shelter (although not in same location) with Beacon partnership.
- Larger/improved space has:
  - Increased shelter safety for guests and staff.
  - No longer enforcing 90 day limit for guest stays or sobriety requirement.
  - Provided separate space for guests who can't be/are uncomfortable in more crowded congregate setting.
  - Enabled staff to better connect with guests.
  - Reduced altercations in shelter and service suspensions.

# Health Assessments, Medical Isolation, Regular Testing Continue to Help Reduce Exposure and Spread of COVID-19

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- Health assessments, informed by Public Health Madison-Dane County, from the beginning of pandemic response.
- Isolation space provides area for symptomatic individuals to recover, wait for test results, without exposing congregate shelter guests.
- Regular testing at congregate shelter began in July to help identify asymptomatic guests, connect them to care.