



BALTIMORE CITY COUNCIL HOUSING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Mission Statement

The Housing & Economic Development Committee is dedicated to fostering equitable growth and opportunity across Baltimore while addressing historic injustices, such as redlining and other discriminatory policies. Our goals include eliminating vacant properties, ensuring affordable housing, promoting sustainable development, and driving economic growth, job creation, and community revitalization through equitable policies and targeted strategies. By utilizing transparent governance, collaboration, and innovative solutions, we strive to enhance the quality of life for all residents.

The Honorable James Torrence

CHAIR

PUBLIC HEARING

11/4/2025

5:15 PM

CLARENCE "DU" BURNS COUNCIL CHAMBERS

Bill: LO25-0018

Title: Homeless Services

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Meeting: Legislative Oversight Hearing

Committee: Housing & Economic Development

Bill # LO25-0018

Title: Homeless Services

Purpose: FOR the purpose of calling representatives from the Mayor’s Office of Homeless Services, other City agencies, & community partners to report on services and projects in the City aimed at creating permanent supportive housing options for those experiencing homelessness & exiting homelessness in the City of Baltimore.

REPORTING AGENCIES

Agency	Report
Mayor’s Office of Homeless Services	Presentation Received
Housing our Neighbors	Report received

BACKGROUND

The Mayor’s Office of Homeless Services’ (MOHS) mission is to “make homelessness rare, brief, and non-recurring in Baltimore City”. According to MOHS’s presentation submitted for this hearing, they have served over 16,600 clients with services including supportive services, emergency shelter, and permanent housing.

According to the Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) the following terms are defined¹:

- **EMERGENCY SHELTER:** any facility, the primary purpose of which is to provide temporary or transitional shelter for the homeless in general or for specific populations of the homeless.
- **TRANSITIONAL HOUSING:** A project that has as its purpose facilitating the movement of homeless individuals and families to permanent housing within a reasonable amount of time (usually 24 months). Transitional housing includes housing primarily designed to serve deinstitutionalized homeless individuals and other homeless individuals with mental or physical disabilities and homeless families with children.
- **SUPPORTIVE HOUSING PROGRAM:** The program is designed to promote the development of supportive housing and supportive services, including innovative approaches to assist homeless persons in the transition from homelessness, and to

¹ HUD Website

promote the provision of supportive housing to homeless persons to enable them to live as independently as possible.

FY Metrics for Shelters

For FY 2026 MOHS's service 895 Temporary Housing for the Homeless was proposed at \$24.2 million. The main function of the service is to operate emergency shelters for those experiencing homelessness².

Fund Name	Fiscal 2024 Actual		Fiscal 2025 Budget		Fiscal 2026 Budget	
	Dollars	Positions	Dollars	Positions	Dollars	Positions
General	10,704,773	0	11,484,355	0	13,661,417	0
Federal	5,370,638	0	314,128	0	1,990,611	0
State	3,151,401	0	3,430,423	0	5,623,362	0
Special	0	0	0	0	3,000,000	0
Total	19,226,812	0	15,228,906	0	24,275,390	0

The service lists several key metrics, including a target of 45% of clients moving from transitional housing. This would be an increase from the FY 24 actual of 37%. The measures also include an increased amount of time for those experiencing homelessness to be in a MOHS program. This is consistent with the presentation's description of the time spent in shelter. Though the budget document accounts for time spent on MOHS programs (such as Outreach Services or a diversion program), the presentation submitted only accounts for time spent in emergency shelters, accounting for the difference in time between the two metrics (see slide 11 of the presentation in the bill file). ³

Performance Measures

Type	Measure	Fiscal 2021	Fiscal 2022	Fiscal 2023	Fiscal 2024		Fiscal 2025	Fiscal 2026
		Actual	Actual	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Target
Outcome	% exit to permanent housing	29%	22%	21%	35%	37%	45%	45%
Outcome	Average length of time that persons are homeless in emergency shelter, housing and transitional housing projects	192	200	183	90	174	90	120
Outcome	% of adults enrolled in temporary housing that increased their earned income	N/A	N/A	28%	15%	29%	15%	15%
Outcome	% of adults enrolled in temporary housing that increased their non-employment income	N/A	N/A	9%	15%	9%	N/A	15%
Outcome	Point in Time (PIT) results for unsheltered persons	0	124	113	200	N/A	N/A	200
Outcome	Point in Time (PIT) results for unsheltered and sheltered persons	1,631	1,597	1,627	2,200	1,487	N/A	2,200
Outcome	# of emergency shelter beds	1,091	872	900	1,535	1,191	1,535	1,535

² FY 26 Agency Detail II Book

³ FY 26 Agency Detail II Book

According to their presentation – MOHS has oversight at 6 shelters in the City. In the FY 2026 budget book it does indicate that the office has 8 shelters – follow up with the Office noted that in the budget book they are also including an overflow location (McVet) and a day center for code blue & red emergencies (Manna House).⁴

Housing our Neighbors (HON) Shelter Conditions Report

HON a local advocacy group committed to improving conditions for those experiencing homelessness in Baltimore City issued a report in September 2025 about conditions in Baltimore City. Those findings describe several issues with facilities, staff, and support offered to those utilizing shelters in Baltimore City. The report notes that not all of these shelters are under the oversight of MOHS. One of their concerns points to the lack of oversight for many of these facilities, those that are overseen by MOHS and those that are not. Issues with food served by these facilities (i.e. food being out of date, improperly served, or not enough food for example), issues with the facilities themselves (i.e. cleanliness, not having a secured place to store valuables, not having refrigerated space to store certain medicines, ADA compliance), and with the staff (i.e. allegations of racism, a general lack of compassion, uneven application of policy, threats of retribution for using the grievance process) were among some of the top concerns highlighted by the report.⁵

MOHS in its presentation notes several similar concerns in the data it collects from the shelters it oversees including issues with the facilities, staff conduct, program services, interpersonal conflicts, rules & policies, health and well-being of clients. MOHS has 3 recommendation areas that it notes with sub recommendations including (but not limited to):

- Deploying DSS support at all 6 city funded shelters
- Partnerships with local departments and agencies focused on aging
- Standardizing key policies across all emergency shelters
- Regular check on facility maintenance (monthly checks by shelter staff and MOHS)
- Daily room checks by shelter staff
- And ADA compliance checklist

These recommendations would be limited to those shelters that are overseen by MOHS. As the HON report noted – MOHS does not exert oversight of those shelters or programs which are not funded at least in part by public funds. MOHS does not have any licensing or regulatory authority over shelters operating in the City but uses funding as its means of oversight⁶.

⁴ FY 26 Agency Detail II Book

⁵ HON Shelter Conditions Report Sept 2025

⁶ HON Shelter Conditions Report Sept 2025

Federal Funding

MOHS in its analysis notes a concern with the priorities of the current federal administration as it relates to housing. There are issues with federal funding for programs such as Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHV) and Hope Safe Haven.

EHVs are meant to help:

- Those experiencing homelessness or may become homeless
- Those who are fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence

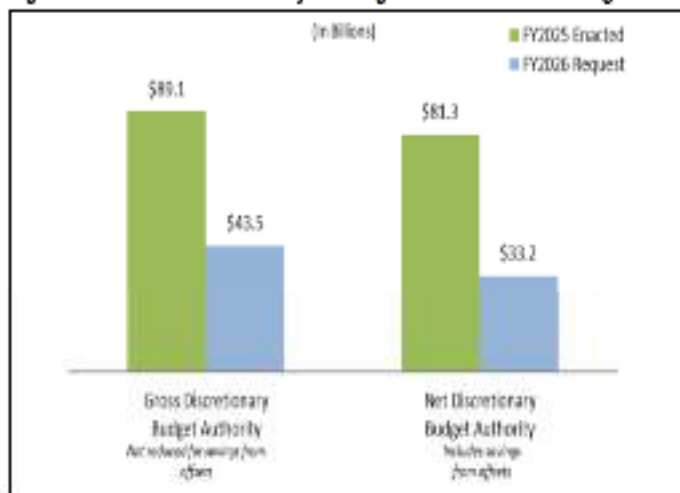
Hope Safe Haven is a residential facility serving those experiencing chronic homelessness and mental health issues.

While MOHS is working with other stake holders like the Housing Authority of Baltimore City (HABC) and community partners to address some of these issues the presentation from MOHS makes clear that the shift of money in programs will have effects on those experiencing homelessness in Baltimore City. This includes a 30% cap on permanent housing programs in favor of more funding for transitional housing. Which may not align with housing priorities of organizations like MOHS & HON.

Federal funding for EHV is set to run out in 2026 and Hope Safe Haven is set to close in November 2025 due to the ending of Federal Funding.

According to Congress.gov the current federal proposal for HUD in FY 2026 is approximately ½ of what it was in FY 2025 – going from \$89.1 Billion gross to \$43.5 Billion gross⁷.

Figure 1. Total HUD Discretionary Funding With and Without Savings from Offsets and Other Sources: FY2025 Enacted and FY2026 Request



Source: Chart prepared by the Congressional Research Service (CRS). FY2025 and FY2026 figures taken from FY2025 President's budget documents and Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Congressional Budget Justifications.

Notes: These totals include emergency-designated funding for regular program operations but exclude emergency-designated spending for disaster recovery.

⁷ Congress.gov

As a result of these proposed cuts – advocacy groups such as the Housing Development Consortium are warning of impacts to the efforts of HUD and partner organizations to address homelessness. Particularly at risk⁸:

- HUD staff
- Continuum of Care funds
- Housing voucher programs helping low-income families stay housed

The HUD justification for their 2026 budget speaks to these cuts and notes that more funding would be going to a program called the emergency solutions grant. Which would be directed to states to “...address housing crises quickly and efficiently, by empowering state and local governments with targeted, flexible funding for prevention, outreach, rapid rehousing, emergency shelter, and essential services.”⁹ But it is not clear from an initial review how decreasing the overall funding for HUD and the programs it oversees would affect homelessness for those who rely on those programs. The most likely scenario is that this reduction in funding would result in more pressure on state and local systems, threatening the housing stability of those in need.

SUMMARY OF RESOURCES BY PROGRAM

(Dollars in Thousands)

Budget Activity	2024 Budget Authority	2023 Carryover into 2024	2024 Total Resources	2024 Obligations	2025 Appropriation	2024 Carryover into 2025	2025 Total Resources	2026 President's Budget
Continuum of Care a,b,c	3,492,000	3,812,496	7,304,496	3,436,602	3,492,000	4,306,351	7,800,351	-
New Permanent Supportive Housing d/	103,000	75,000	175,000	-	103,000	175,000	275,000	-
Set aside- Construction awards for populations of less than 2,500,000 (Non-Add)	35,000	30,000	65,000	-	35,000	100,000	135,000	-
Victims of Domestic Violence	52,000	80,999	132,999	65,287	52,000	82,104	134,104	-
Emergency Solutions Grants	290,000	40,408	330,408	279,171	290,000	51,237	341,237	4,024,000
National Homeless Data Analysis Project	10,000	2,952	12,952	12,952	10,000	-	10,000	-
Youth Homelessness Demo	107,000	193,958	300,958	123,881	107,000	177,143	284,143	-
Youth Homelessness System Improvement Grant (Non-Add)	20,000	00,000	20,000	44,807	20,000	30,143	50,143	-
Youth Homelessness Technical Assistance (Non-Add)	10,000	7,767	17,767	8,767	-	3,000	3,000	-
Total	4,051,000	4,203,613	8,255,613	3,667,793	4,051,000	4,793,835	8,844,835	4,024,000

- a/ The 2024 CoC carryover includes \$32 million of rental assistance recaptures (including \$3.1 million for CoCs in rural areas and \$3.1 million for ESG disaster areas) authorized by Sec. 231 of P.L. 116-94.
- b/ The 2024 CoC obligations for CoC include \$8.7 million for disaster areas in Florida in response to Hurricane Ian and \$8.2 million for disaster areas in Hawaii in response to wildfires impacting Maui County. Obligations also include \$30.7 million for CoCs in rural areas awarded under a Special NOFO, as well as \$282.6 million for CoCs awarded under the same Special NOFO.
- c/ The 2025 CoC carryover includes \$453 million of rental assistance recaptures (including \$46 million for CoCs in rural areas and \$46 million for ESG disaster areas) authorized by Sec. 231 of P.L. 116-94.
- d/ As authorized by Public Law 119-4, HUD will reappropriate \$100 million provided for new Permanent Supportive Housing in 2025 to fund CoC renewals.
- e/ Not reflected in the above table is \$483 thousand reimbursable obligation that occurred in 2024.

⁸ Housing Development Consortium

⁹ HUD FY 2026 Budget Justification

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Fiscal Note:

A thorough fiscal note is not possible at this time because we do not know how much funding will be available in the next federal fiscal year. MOHS is an office whose projected FY26 budget is reliant on federal dollars. Over \$46 million of a proposed \$73 million budget came from federal funding, and lapses in that funding would have a profound effect on the office's budget. According to budget documents, federal funding supported 41 of 65 positions in the office.

Operating Budget Highlights

Fund Name	Fiscal 2024 Actual		Fiscal 2025 Budget		Fiscal 2026 Budget	
	Dollars	Positions	Dollars	Positions	Dollars	Positions
General	16,847,188	18	15,093,064	18	17,234,013	20
Federal	37,008,347	40	43,216,762	45	46,899,379	41
State	5,122,031	1	3,754,852	3	6,434,557	3
Special	173,647	3	138,370	3	3,156,000	1
Total	59,151,212	62	62,203,048	69	73,723,949	65

Information Source(s):

- MOHS Presentation November 2025 LO25-0018 (Slides in packet & bill file)
- FY 2026 Agency Detail II Book
<https://bbmr.baltimorecity.gov/sites/default/files/upload/FY2026%20Agency%20Detail%20Volume%20II.pdf>
- HUD Glossary of Terms (HUD website)
https://archives.huduser.gov/portal/glossary/glossary_all.html
- Housing our Neighbors Shelter Conditions Report (included in packet & bill file)
<https://www.honbaltimore.org/blog/shelter-survey>
- Congress.gov <https://www.congress.gov/crs-product/R48567>
- Housing Development Consortium
<https://www.housingconsortium.org/2025/08/13/expected-federal-impacts-on-affordable-housing-appropriations-executive-action/>
- Department of Housing and Urban Development Fiscal Year 2026 budget justification
https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/CFO/documents/FY_2026_Congressional_Justification_E-File.pdf

Analysis by: Tony Leva
Analysis Date: 10/30/2025

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Baltimore City Council



Housing & Economic Development Committee

Bill: LO25-0018

Title: Homeless Services

Agency Reports

Housing & Economic Development Committee

**MOHS City Council
Presentation**

November 4, 2025



MAYOR'S OFFICE OF
HOMELESS SERVICES

MOHS Agency Overview



MAYOR'S OFFICE OF
HOMELESS SERVICES

Ernestina Simmons, LCSW-C
Executive Director

Purpose

To respond to the urgent housing crisis in Baltimore City and to support the city's heightened and urgent commitment to preventing and ending homelessness.

Mission

To make homelessness rare, brief and non-recurring in Baltimore City

Baltimore City Coordinated Response to Homelessness

Designed to promote community-wide commitment to the goal of ending homelessness and provide funding for efforts by nonprofit providers, and State and local governments. MOHS manages nearly \$70 Million annually in CoC, HOPWA, ESG, HSP and other federal, state and local funds to support street outreach, emergency shelter, rapid re-housing and permanent housing programs.

Core Programs & Services

- Coordinated Access
- Street Outreach
- Emergency Shelters
- Housing for People with Aids (HOPWA)
- Permanent Housing

Executive Team:

- Lakeysha Williams, Deputy Director
- Sade Creighton-Wade, Chief of Fiscal Services
- Nii Sowah, Chief of Emergency Services
- Althea Lyness-Fernandez, Chief of Partnership & Policy

2025 At A Glance



MOHS endeavors to make homelessness rare, brief and non-recurring. From January 1 to September 30, 2025, MOHS supported thousands of Baltimore City residents at risk of, or experiencing homelessness, through a variety of permanent supportive housing programs, permanent housing, supportive services, winter shelter and key initiatives.

- **16,649** clients served through supportive services, emergency shelter and permanent housing programs
- **4,345** successfully enrolled in Coordinated Access
- **3,849** clients served in permanent housing
- **1,034** clients that exited homelessness to permanent housing
- **2,104** residents were accommodated in City-funded shelters
- **3,111** unhoused residents were served by our outreach team and provided **42, 337** service connections
- **203** survivors of domestic violence were served in our domestic violence shelter, with **50%** of the households exiting to a more secure housing option.
- **803** clients served with permanent housing in our HOPWA programs



Emergency Shelters Assessment and Recommendations



MOHS provides oversight of (6) Emergency Shelters, each location is operated by a 24/7 by a non-profit organization. Each of our service providers are responsible for providing supportive services that includes case management, mental health services, workforce development, housing navigation and additional supports that strengthens clients' ability to exit to permanent housing. In March 2025, our office contracted with Guidehouse to conduct an independent strategic assessment of our Emergency Shelters. The assessment helped us assess our programs and strengthened our ability to develop actionable steps to enhance our Shelter Operations and to align our programs with practices guided from research and national best practices across the US. They concluded their assessment in September 2025. Our office has begun implementing many of the recommended practices.

1. Background Research

North Star Survey: MOHS staff completed a Microsoft Forms survey to identify department-wide goals, metrics, and potential inputs to guide the assessment and planning process.

Homelessness Population Analysis: Review of Baltimore City's population of individuals and families experiencing homelessness and analysis of Emergency Shelter Outcomes.

Peer City Outreach and Promising Practices: Guidehouse conducted interviews with Emergency Shelter leadership and the Offices of Homeless Services in peer cities and counties. Guidehouse conducted additional desk research, as needed.

2. Operational Assessment and Facilities Review

Emergency Shelter Tours and Staff Interviews: Guidehouse visited four of Baltimore's city-funded Emergency Shelters to tour the facilities and interview shelter staff.

Policy Document Review: Guidehouse reviewed shelter policy and procedure documents, and funding applications to understand current operations and potential service gaps.

Facility Review: Guidehouse identified promising practices for facility maintenance and upgrades to address pain points identified during the Emergency Shelter tours and staff interviews.

3. Strategic Recommendations

Recommendations: Based on findings from the Background Research, Operational Assessment, and Winter Shelter review, Guidehouse developed recommendations to improve Emergency and Winter Shelter operations across the city.

Population Experiencing Homelessness in Baltimore City

On January 25, 2025, the City of Baltimore conducted the annual Point-In Time Count. This is mandated by HUD however it also allows communities an opportunity to get a snapshot of what is happening in their city as it relates to homelessness.

Baltimore 2025 Point-in-Time Count

2,024

Number of individuals experiencing homelessness in Baltimore City¹

Sheltered (S)	1,836
Unsheltered (U)	188
% Under Age 18	4.3%
% Age 55+	32%
% Chronically Homeless	13%
% with Serious Mental Illness (SMI)	66% (U)
% with Substance Use Disorder (SUD)	76.6% (U)

6-Year Trend

- From 2019 to 2024, there was an overall 12% decline of homelessness. However, from **2024 to 2025, 26.5%** more residents were surveyed and are experiencing homelessness.
- Potential reasons may include increased cost of living, the lack of affordable housing and the end of COVID-19 related programs such as rapid rehousing programs and eviction prevention funds.

Changes between 2024 and 2025:

- Chronic homelessness decreased by 3%
- Veteran homelessness decreased by 2%
- Homelessness for youth ages 18-24 decreased by 9%
- Households that includes children experiencing homelessness increased by 46%
- Older Adults experiencing homelessness (over 65) increased by 22% from 2024.

First Time Homelessness:

- 37% of the clients in emergency shelters and 52% of those that were unsheltered reported this was their first time experiencing homelessness.

- **Full 2025 PIT Report Can be Accessed Here:** [2025 Baltimore City PIT Count Report.pdf](#)

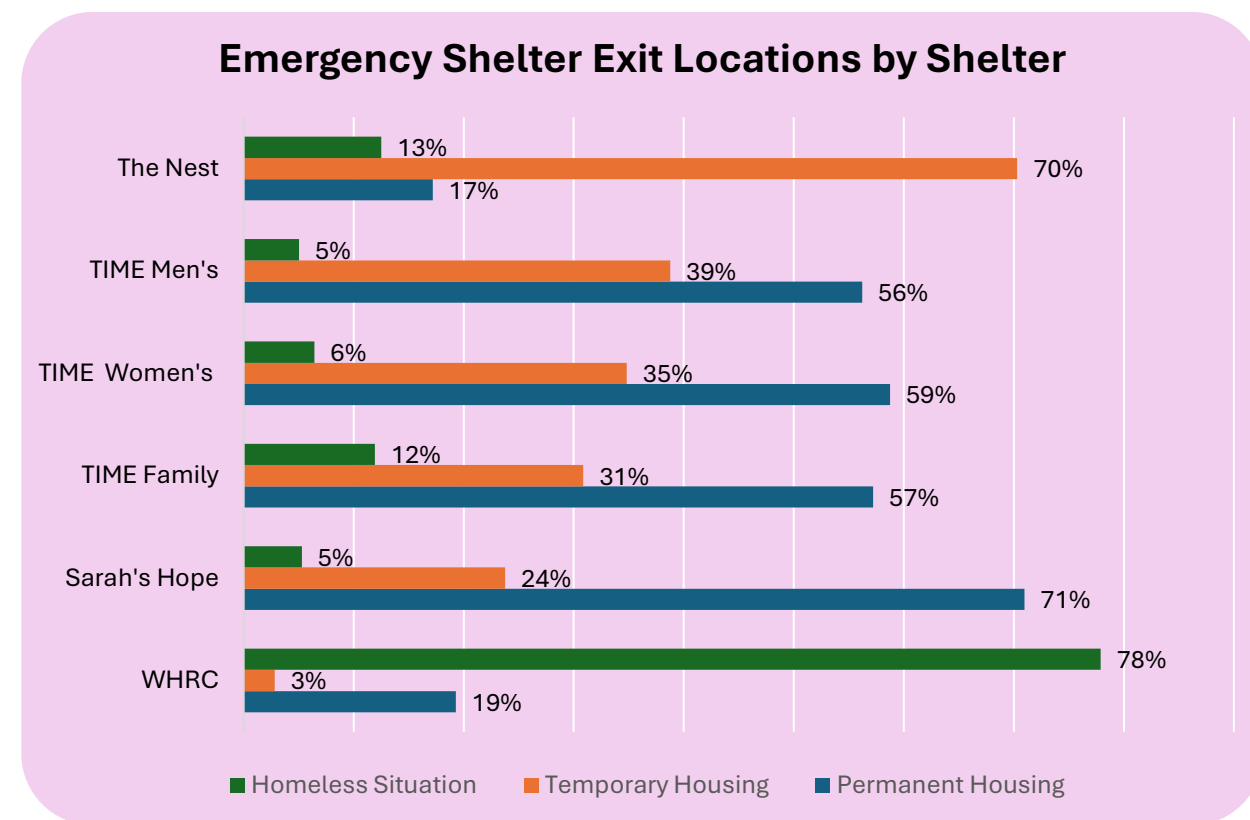
1. First Time Homeless data collected from the City's CA system.

Movement Towards Permanent Housing for Emergency Shelter Residents

Between July 1, 2023 and September 30, 2025, **3,800 clients** were served by city-funded Emergency Shelters in Baltimore City.

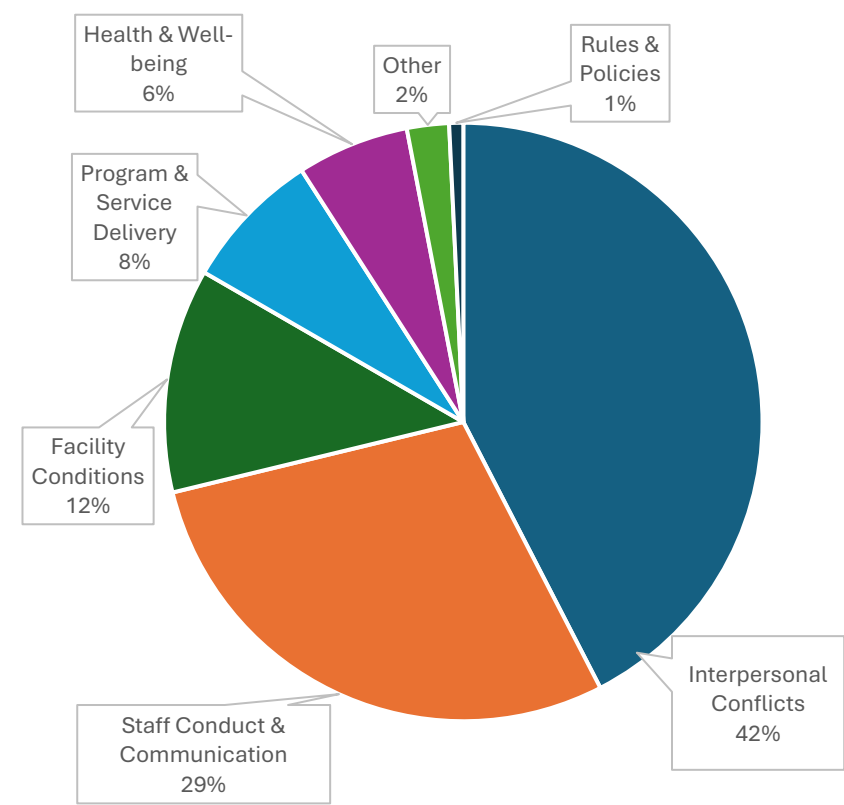
Shelter	Pop.	Num of Client Served	Num. Clients Exited	Average Length of Stay (Num. of Days)
The Nest	Youth (18 – 24)	105	96	69 ¹
TIME Men's	Men	774	647	120
TIME Women's	Women	821	659	174
TIME Family	Families	373	249	147
Sarah's Hope	Families	391	355	204
WHRC ²	Men & Women	1,336	1,125	117

1. Stays at Nest are limited to 90 days.
2. WHRC = Weinberg Housing and Resource Center



Emergency Shelter Resident Grievance Submission Findings

Between 2/24/2024 and 7/29/2025, most grievances submitted by Emergency Shelter residents were related to interpersonal conflicts.



Category	Description
1. Facility Conditions	Cleanliness, Maintenance Issues (plumbing, HVAC, pest control, etc.), Safety & Security, Accessibility Concerns
2. Staff Conduct & Communication	Rudeness or Unprofessionalism, Discrimination or Bias, Harassment, Lack of Responsiveness
3. Program & Service Delivery	Case Management Issues, Unmet Needs (food, clothing, hygiene supplies), Scheduling & Availability of Services, Unfair Treatment
4. Interpersonal Conflicts	Conflicts with Other Residents, Bullying or Threats, Roommate Issues
5. Rules & Policies	Unclear or Unfair Rules, Policy Enforcement Concerns, Appeal of Disciplinary Action
6. Health & Well-being	Medical Concerns Not Addressed, Mental Health Support Issues, Emergency Response Delays
7. Other	Any grievances that do not fit the above categories

12% of the Facility Condition Complaints were related to access to cleaning supplies.

At least 42% of the Interpersonal Conflicts were due to roommate difficulties.

A total of 355 grievances were submitted over a 15-month time period within our City Funded Shelters. Our Congregate Shelter accounted for 30% of all grievances.

City Funded emergency shelters are monitored annually by our program compliance officers. This monitoring includes ensuring compliance HUD ESG Minimum Habitability Standards for Emergency Shelter [ESG Minimum Habitability Standards for Emergency Shelters and Permanent Housing - HUD Exchange](#) . In 2025, all sites have been monitored and are compliant with the standards:

- Associated Catholic Charities (WHRC): March 4, 2025
- St. Vincent de Paul- (Sarah’s Hope): April 24, 2025
- TIME-Woman’s Shelter: June 10, 2025
- TIME- Men’s Shelter: March 31, 2025
- TIME Family Shelter: March 31, 2025
- The Nest- May 13, 2025

MOHS also requires sub-recipients to conduct client satisfaction surveys annually. Across shelters, questions varied however consistent feedback included:

- Clients reporting feeling safe and supported within our city-funded shelters, reflecting strong relationships with staff and effective case management.
- Lack of satisfaction with food and resident engagement activities is a consistent concern across most sites.

* Sarah’s Hope 2025 survey results are pending

In FY26, we will introduce a standardized client satisfaction to be used across city funded shelters. This will enable us to have consistent core areas in the survey and facilitate clearer comparisons across shelters, and inform more targeted system-wide improvements.

Core Area	ACC-WHRC <i>(60+ Respondents)</i>	TIME Women’s Shelter <i>(59 Respondents)</i>	TIME Men’s Shelter <i>(46 Respondents)</i>	TIME Family Shelter <i>(5 Respondents)</i>	NEST <i>(38 Respondents)</i>
Safety	Majority “Safe” or “Very Safe”	81% satisfied	87% satisfied	78% satisfied	85% satisfied
Cleanliness /Facility	69.6% satisfied	68% satisfied	80% satisfied	78% satisfied	74% satisfied
Food Services	Strong at WHRC	59%	53%	54%	68% satisfied
Case Management	Residents cite staff helpfulness	74% satisfied	86% satisfied	90% satisfied	82% satisfied
Daily Supports (hygiene, clothing)	Adequate at WHRC	72% satisfied	72% satisfied	65%	70% satisfied
Program Rules & Communication	Residents seek clearer curfew/policy communication	—	—	—	—
Transportation	—	68%	67%	74%	—
Activities/ Engagement	Residents requested more on-site activities	Residents requested more on-site activities	Residents requested more on-site activities	Residents requested more on-site activities	Residents requested more on-site activities



Recommendation 1:

Increase Case Management and Support Services

Background:

- Emergency Shelter staff stated that **navigating DSS and acquisition of identification documents has continued to be a challenge for case managers.** Staff has also faced difficulty convincing constituents to attend meetings and/or trainings outside of the shelters.
- Staff noted additional support is needed to **address ongoing behavioral health challenges faced by shelter constituents** as they pose a barrier to movement towards positive housing outcomes.
- Staff also indicated that **the growing number of older adults add a strain to current resources.**

Progress:

MOHS has partnered with the following agencies to provide additional onsite services and support:

- Baltimore City DSS-** Adult Protective Services Unit.
- MONSE-** Provides onsite conflict resolution to residents and mediation support.
- Family Preservation-** Intensive case management and support to families who voluntarily agree to services
- Tuerk House-** Hosting meetings weekly to educate clients about services and providing transportation to clients who enroll in programs and services.
- Baltimore City DSS-** Family Investment Program. Effective 1/1/2026, we will begin to offer onsite workforce development programs in selected City Funded Shelters.

Recommendations:

1. Deploy onsite DSS support at all six city-funded shelters:

Enrollment in entitlement benefits and/or housing programs requires access to identification documents. Shelter staff indicated that navigating DSS can be time intensive and a difficult to navigate barrier for shelter residents. Because MOHS already has a standing relationship with DSS, expanding the support to additional locations is a lower-intensity item.

2. Develop a MOHS Case Management team to provide targeted onsite support to Emergency Shelter staff and residents:

Shelter staff requested additional support with navigating behavioral health needs among shelter residents and the growing aging population (i.e., 55+). A MOHS-owned case management team would provide needed expertise for targeted areas of need. Supports could include:

- Onsite behavioral health and substance use disorder counseling
- Housing and entitlement benefits training for older adults
- Ongoing service navigation and housing plan development support for onsite case managers of individuals with behavioral health needs and/or older adults

3. Initiate partnerships with local Departments / Agencies Focused on Aging:

MOHS will need to collaborate with the local community to understand opportunities to best serve the growing older adult population experiencing homelessness. Proactively initiating relationships can set the groundwork for future opportunities to jointly apply for grant/funding opportunities.



Recommendation 2:

Update and Standardize Shelter Policy and Procedures

Background:

- Shelter staff reported **inconsistency across emergency shelters in policies and policy enforcement** (e.g., food in rooms, curfew, grooming) **led to resident confusion and tension.**
- Staff noted limited tools or authority to **manage disengaged residents who decline to participate in services.**
- The removal of daytime exit requirements during COVID have **contributed to increased wear and tear on shelters buildings.**
- **PROGRESS:**
- MOHS has worked closely with our Shelter Transformation Committee to create Standards of Care in City funded shelters in 2023. In Dec 2024, we revised the policies to include creating person-centered housing plans which are required for clients after being enrolled in the shelter for (3) days. This process includes the client meeting with their assigned case manager and developing goals focusing on strengthening the client's ability to exit the shelter.
- Currently, MOHS is working closely with the CoC and Shelter Transformation Committee on a Length of Stay policy. We anticipate this going into effect in 2026.

Recommendations:

1. Standardize Key Policies Across All Emergency Shelters

Implement consistent city-wide shelter policies for:

- a. Curfew times and providing opportunities to earn rewards for participating in shelter programming
- b. Food in rooms and guidance on outside food (e.g., allowing coffee outside of mealtimes)
- c. Identifying daytime stay allowances and shelter access hours to minimize wear and tear on buildings

2. Implement a MOHS Policy to Discharge Emergency Shelter Residents who Refuse to Make Progress Towards a Successful Shelter Exit

Require all shelter residents to develop a “shelter exit plan” within 30-days of entering the shelter and collaborate with Emergency Shelter staff to develop guidelines and / or a checklist by which all plans and movement towards permanent housing are measured.

- a. The policy will provide a clear definition of how to determine whether a plan is “actionable” and “effective”.
- b. The policy will also establish timelines by which shelter residents must make measurable steps towards a successful exit.
- c. What is included in each step of an exit plan will be established on a case-by-case basis by onsite case managers and reviewed/approved by case management supervisors.

Baltimore City System Performance Measures (SPM) FY 2020 - FY 2025

*FY2025 Data is not yet final

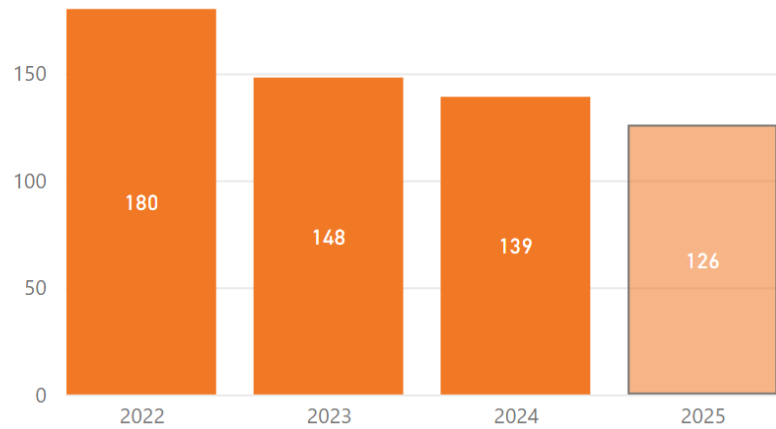
Years

2022

2025

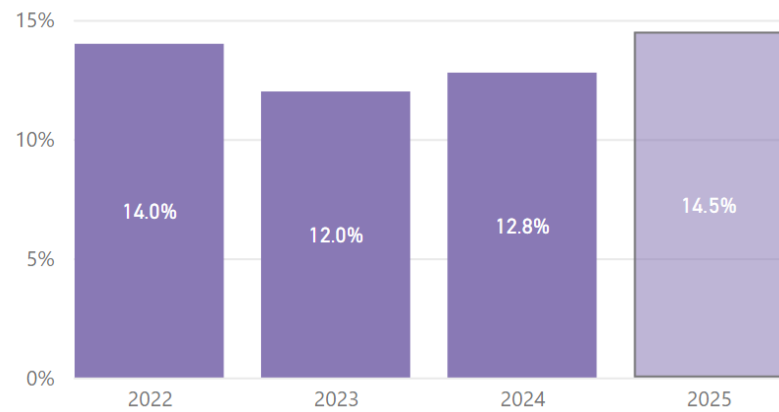
SPM 1- Length of Time Homeless

Average amount of days spent in emergency shelter.



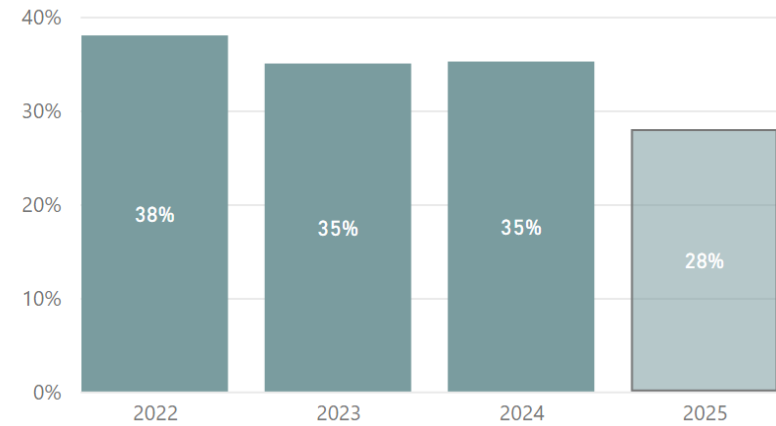
SPM 2- Returns to Homelessness

The extent to which clients who leave homelessness experience additional spells of homelessness.



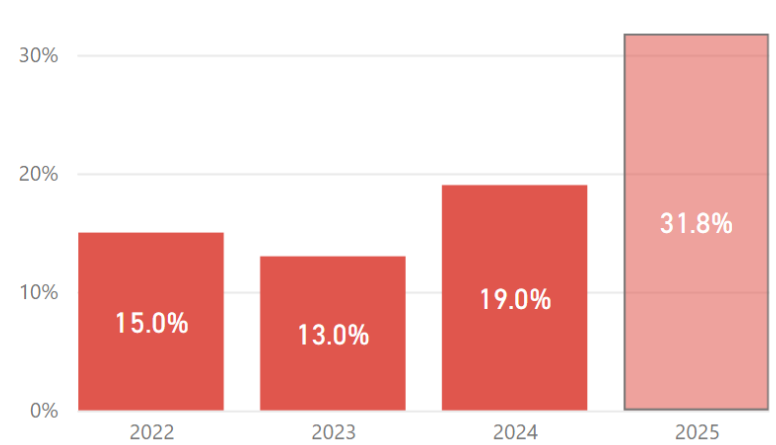
SPM 4- Income Growth

Percentage of adults who left CoC funded programs and saw income growth.



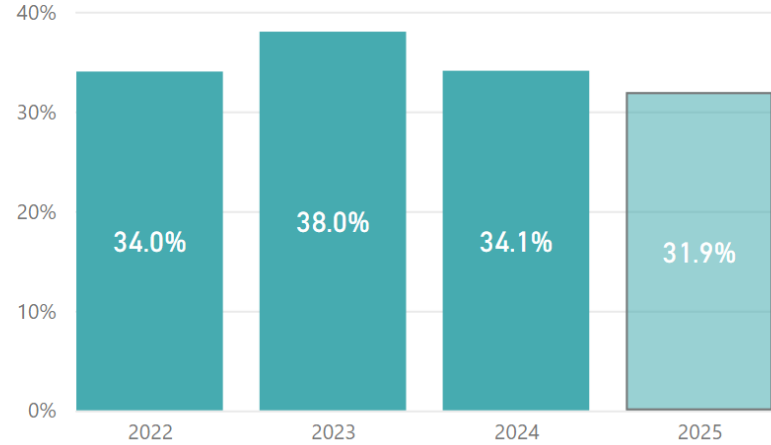
SPM 7a - Successful Placements from SO

Percentage of exits from SO to ES, SH, TH, RRH or PH



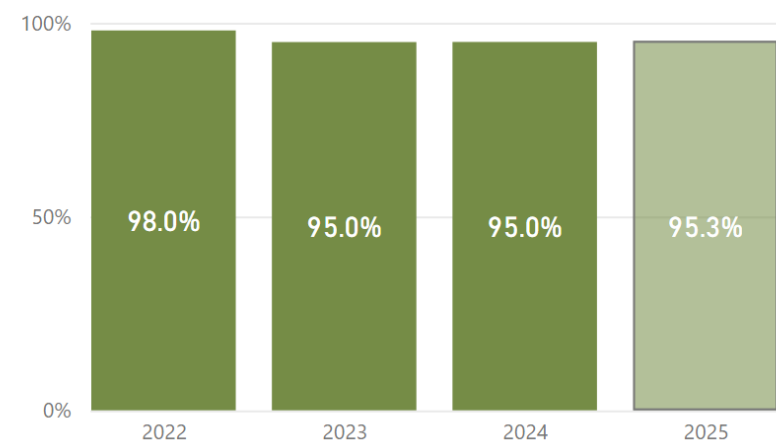
SPM 7b1- Exits to Permanent Housing

Percentage of exits from ES, TH, SH, RRH to PH



SPM 7b2- Retention of Permanent Housing

Percentage of clients in PH who maintained permanent housing



Abbreviations: SO- Street Outreach, ES- Emergency Shelter, TH- Temporary Housing, SH- Safe Haven PH- Permanent Housing, RRH- Rapid Re-Housing

Permanent Supportive Housing Analysis for FFY23, FFY24 & FFY25



The provided statistics offer a comparison of key performance metrics between Federal Fiscal Years which is October-September. Below is a breakdown and analysis of each data point for FFY 2023, 2024 and 2025 for clients served in Emergency Shelter, Transitional Housing, Safe Haven, Rapid Rehousing and Permanent Housing:

Metric	FY23	FY24	FY25 (Unofficial)	Change (FY24 → FY25 Unofficial)
Total Clients Served	6628	6784	7308	+524
Total Households Served	4801	4921	5309	+388
Average Length of Time Homeless (Days)	211	204	181	-23
Exit to Permanent Housing Rate	32%	29%	26%	-3%
Returns to Homelessness Rate	2%	6%	5%	-1%

Emergency Shelter Needs



Emergency Shelters are a critical component in a homeless response system. They are designed to be a low-barrier access point that addresses an immediate need while offering additional supports and services such as case management, mental health workforce development and additional supports that leads to long-term self-sufficiency. As such, investments in non-congregate shelters are critical as we aim to provide comprehensive services and supports that lead to long-term success.

The City of Baltimore purchased the hotel formerly known as the Fairfield Inn on October 1, 2025. This site includes 155 rooms across two separate towers allowing us to serve two separate demographics. MOHS plans to:

- Serve 145 woman in the higher tower (double occupancy)
- Serve up to 80 men in the lower tower (double occupancy)

As of July 1, 2023, the Fairfield Inn has exited 46% of their clients to permanent housing which exceeds this measure nationally which illustrates that non-congregate shelter that includes comprehensive services and supports result in better outcomes for clients. *(The national average for clients in shelter exiting to permanent housing is 32.40%. [National Summary System Performance Measures – 2019-2023](#))*

MOHS Continued Shelter Needs:

- ***Family Shelter-*** The City of Baltimore has seen a 46% increase in families in need of shelter since 2024. As such, we are searching for a site that can be used to support families.
- ***Permanent Location for Overflow Shelter***

Overflow Shelters- Winter Shelter is about the preservation of life. Once the temperature drops below 32 degrees we open overflow sites to ensure every resident experiencing homelessness has a safe space to sleep to prevent cold related deaths

MOHS partners with DGS and BCRP to explore city surplus schools and/or recreational centers for overflow shelter. Over the past 15 months, we have worked closely with DGS assessing existing and new inventory as they come online however nothing has been a viable location due to extensive damage to the building and extensive damage to critical systems such as heat. ***MOHS will continue to work with DGS and the DOR to find a permanent shelter locations.***

The past (5) years MOHS has used Robert C. Marshall as a primary overflow location for single adults. Last year, we also used Lois T. Murray as an overflow site for families.

We understand the practice of using recreation centers and surplus schools can be disruptive to communities and disruptive to normal operations when we use recreational centers. Our goal is to locate a permanent winter shelter space that aligns with national best practices (showers, ADA compliance, storage and supportive services).

Overflow shelter sites hours of operations are 4pm-9AM unless there is a Code Blue. During Code Blue's we declare a stay in place and as a result, residents are able to remain at the site to ensure their continued safety from the extreme cold.

Our primary locations for winter shelter for FY25 includes:

McVets- 65 beds to serve men

WHRC-30 beds to serve women

MOHS Facility- 22 rooms dedicated to families and couples

MOHS Facility-22 rooms dedicated to women and men (double/triple occupancy in each room)

Lois T. Murray: Secondary Overflow for families

Edgewood Elementary School (Pending)- Secondary Overflow for single adults. Community Engagement Scheduled to begin Nov 10th in partnership with MOCA and BCPS.

MOHS ran overflow Shelters are staffed through a staffing firm. Our staffing plan includes:

- **4** Full Time Lead Residential Monitors
- **23** Security Program Assistants
- **3** Full Time Custodians

Key Initiatives & Systems Performance

Permanent Housing Initiatives



ARPA Funding has strengthened our ability to invest in permanent housing and an area of focus for our office has been youth homelessness, family homelessness and chronic homelessness. As such, a few investments have included:

- The City of Baltimore purchased the Holiday Inn and the Sleep Inn in 2024. The Holiday Inn is currently being used as a men's shelter and the Sleep Inn as a Couples/Family Shelter. **In October 2024, Episcopal Housing Corporation and Healthcare for the Homeless** was awarded this project to convert the two hotels to 100 units of Permanent Supportive Housing. This project was successful in their submissions for Low Income Tax Credits for 4% and 9%. The developer anticipates phase one starting in Mid 2026.
- **Homes for America/Restoration Gardens-** This funding enabled us to rehabilitate 44 units of permanent housing for Transitional Aged Youth. In partnership with Baltimore City DSS and HABC, this project will offer onsite supportive services and accept youth that are aging out of foster care. The program began accepting referral from Baltimore City DSS in July 2025, we anticipate the full renovation being complete in November 2025.
- **HABC-** Housing Plus Program. This project enabled us to rehabilitate 50 permanent housing units for households that includes minor children that are experiencing homelessness. This project is complete and thus far has housed 43 families. We anticipate the remaining vacancies being filled by the end October 2025.
- **Springboard Community Services-** This program will provide transitional housing and permanent supportive housing to youth ages (18-24) years of age. The facility will include 24 transitional housing beds and 8 permanent housing units. We anticipate this building coming online in 2026/2027.

Permanent Housing Initiative Continued



MOHS in partnership with DHCD released the Housing Accelerator Fund. This initiative aimed to increase both Permanent Supportive Housing and Affordable Housing for Baltimore City Residents. **The project aims to develop (281) affordable housing units and (127) Permanent Supportive Housing units.** In addition, HABC has provided project-based vouchers that will support many of the projects.

The projects that were awarded are:

- ***407 Franklin Partners:*** 6 units that will prioritize transitional aged youth
- ***Beacon Homes:*** 56 units which will be dedicated to veterans
- ***BRIDGES:*** 83 units which will prioritize families
- ***Health Care for the Homeless Real Estate Company:*** 42 units, mixed household types
- ***Homes for America, Inc.:*** 83 units that will prioritize seniors
- ***NHP Foundation:*** 59 units, mixed household types
- ***Springboard Community Services:*** 29 units dedicated to transitional aged youth
- ***Unity Properties/New Shiloh:*** 50 units that will prioritize single adults and families

The first project is projected to be complete in Spring 2026.

Federal Funding & Community Impact

Programs Impacted by Federal Funding Priority Shifts

- **MOHS is the collaborative applicant for the CoC however we also work closely with HABC on side aside vouchers that are designated for people experiencing homeless. This past year, we have already seen the impact of this federal administration priority as it relates to housing.**
- ***Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHV)***- EHV's are tenant based rental assistance vouchers under Section 8. Eligibility for an EHV was limited to individuals and families who are:
 - (1) homeless
 - (2) at risk of homelessness
 - (3) fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence
- The City of Baltimore was granted 249 EHV vouchers using ARP funds. The funds were intended to support households through September 30, 2030. On March 25, 2025 the federal government announced there were insufficient funds to continue to operate the programs and clients would need to exit the program in 2026. This will impact over 215 households who remain enrolled in the program.
- **Hope Safe Haven**- This program is a residential facility that provides support for individual experiencing chronic homelessness and mental illness. The program lost their federal funding and informed us they would be ending their program on November 30th, 2025.

The Mayor's Office of Homeless Services is working closely with the Housing Authority of Baltimore City to transfer the EHV residents to other HABC programs. In addition, we are working closely with Hope Safe Haven to attempt to transfer eligible clients to permanent supportive housing programs.

Emerging Shifts to HUD CoC FY24-25 NOFO

- **HUD- Continuum of Care Programs:** *These programs serve our most vulnerable clients in the City with supportive services, rapid rehousing and permanent supportive housing.*
- **July 31, 2024:** HUD issued a 2-year NOFO and the City was awarded 33M for FY24, with the same amount expected for FY 25
- **July 3, 2025:** HUD shared intent to issue FY 25 NOFO prioritizing street outreach and transitional housing
- **September 29, 2025:** [POLITICO article](#) reveals intended changes that includes:
 - **30% cap on permanent housing programs** (PSH & RRH): This would result in a potential *\$19.5 million in funding that supports 700 permanent housing units being shifting to transitional housing or street outreach programs.*
 - **Transitional Housing:** Transitional housing facilitates the movement of homeless individuals and families to PH within 24 months of entering TH. A shift towards transitional housing will result in a lack of permanent housing that supports our most vulnerable population.

Current Allocation of CoC Award

Project Type	Units	Grant Award	% of Total Rental Assistance & Services Awards	
PSH	858	\$23,694,426	79%	} 93% to permanent housing rental subsidies
RRH	132	\$4,186,066	14%	
	7	\$256,487	1%	
	13	\$864,334	3%	
Supportive Services Only Projects (SSO)	N/A	\$821,358	3%	
Total Rental/Lease/Services/ Subsidy Projects		\$29,822,671		
Other Services (House of Ruth CE and Springboard YHDP)		\$882,490.00		
MOHS (HMIS, CA, Planning)		\$1,783,577.00		
Total HUD Award		\$32,488,738		

Impact of HUD Proposed Changes

Project Type	Units	30% Cap on PSH/RRH Units	Grant Award	30% Cap on Grant Award
PSH	858	257	\$23,694,426	\$7,108,327
RRH	132	39	\$4,186,066	\$1,255,819
TH	7		\$256,487	
TH-RRH	13		\$864,334	
SSO Only	N/A		\$821,358	

This is a reduction of \$19.5 million in funding for nearly 700 permanent housing units in Baltimore City.




Call to Action



































- The National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH) [issued a call-to-action](#) urging Congress to include a provision in the continuing resolution that requires HUD to renew all eligible CoC renewals based on the results of the FY2024 2-year CoC Program NOFO, as originally planned.
- View the [NAEH website](#) for a guide on recommended talking points and data on nation-wide impact.

Appendix

Onsite Case Management and Support Services at Emergency Shelters

Case management and support services provided by Emergency Shelters were identified through review of funding applications and interviews with shelter staff.

Key:
 = Yes
 = No
 = Through Partnership

EMERGENCY SHELTER	Case Management	Housing Navigation	BH Services	SUD Services	Workforce Dev.	Onsite DSS
Sarah's Hope – Family Shelter						
TIME – Family Shelter						
TIME – Women's Shelter						
Wienberg Housing and Resource Center (WHRC)						
Staff Interview Not Conducted	The Nest (Youth Shelter)	 Partners with YO! Baltimore				
	TIME – Men's Shelter					

1. BH = Behavioral Health
2. SUD = Substance Use Disorder
3. DSS = Baltimore City Department of Social Services

Emergency Shelter Training Requirements

Emergency Shelter Providers are required to provide new hire and ongoing training for their staff. As a part of their contractual agreements, we have required the below trainings by our providers. In addition, MOHS hosts ad hoc training for providers. They include:

Contractual Obligations for Training hosted by Providers

Homeless Management Information System, Coordinated Access System, Housing First Training, Reasonable Accommodations and ADA Compliance, Emergency Preparedness

*Customer Service Training, Cultural Responsiveness (including LGBTQI cultural responsiveness), **Trauma Informed Care, Motivational Interviewing, Suicide Risk Assessment and Prevention, Mental Health & First Aid***

Non-Violent Crisis Intervention, Boundaries and Confidentiality, Race Equity and Homelessness, Naloxone/overdose and Understanding Lived Experience of Homeless.

MOHS Hosted Training

Baltimore City Health Department:
*Narcan Training- Train the Trainer Model,
Naloxone Training and Overdose Response
Trauma Informed Care Training (Select Sites)*

Baltimore Crisis Response Initiative (BCRI):
*Crisis De-Escalation, Crisis Intervention
Sheppard Pratt: Mental Health & First Aid*

HUD Technical Assistance Consultant:
*Shelter Participation and Motivational Interviewing,
Office of Attorney General- Fair Housing Training*



Recommendation 3:

Update and Standardize Shelter Policy and Procedures (cont.)

Background:

- Shelter staff reported **inconsistency across emergency shelters in policies and policy enforcement** (e.g., food in rooms, curfew, grooming) **led to resident confusion and tension.**
 - Some policies—such as strict curfews or no outside food—were seen as unnecessarily punitive, limiting client autonomy and comfort.
 - Opportunities to reward resident engagement were underutilized, despite clear benefits to participation.
- Staff noted limited tools or authority to **manage disengaged residents who decline to participate in services.**
- The removal of daytime exit requirements during COVID have **contributed to increased wear and tear on shelter buildings.**
- PROGRESS:**
- Emergency Shelters are overseen by both a Program Compliance Officer (PCO) and the Emergency Shelter Manager. Annually, the PCO monitors the programs and facilities using the Emergency Shelter Grants Habitability Standards. In addition, MOHS Emergency Shelter team conducts site visits to the shelters. Last, effective October 2025, we added a room-check list to our inspection process.

Recommendations:

3. Develop a Standardized Facilities Maintenance Cadence and Checklist:

a. Recommended Frequency and additional items to include on Checklists:

	<i>Suggested Items</i>
1. Room-Checks <i>Daily by Shelter Staff</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add review of sufficient supplies (e.g., linens, toilet paper, paper towels). Add review of fridge and exit signs/emergency route signage to maintenance/repairs review.
2. Facility Maintenance Checks <i>Monthly by Shelter Staff</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarify the type(s) of Signage (e.g., Emergency Evacuation Routes) that must be included in each room. Develop a “Common Space” preventative maintenance checklist in addition to the Room Checklist.
3. Facility Checks <i>Monthly by MOHS Staff</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add review of whether there are enough trash receptacles in kitchen common spaces, bathrooms, and sleep areas.
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an ADA Compliance Checklist for non-congregate rooms that house residents with physical disabilities. The list should be used to confirm the room meets minimum mobility requirements during the intake process. Clarify tobacco product rules across shelters (e.g., is there a smoking area? Can residents keep cigarettes and / or vapes in their rooms) and add guidance to checklists,

Baltimore City Council



Housing & Economic Development Committee

Bill: LO25-0018

Title: Homeless Services

Additional Materials

Service 895: Temporary Housing for the Homeless

This service provides short-term overnight sheltering for people experiencing homelessness. This goal of this service is provide emergency shelters, safe havens, transitional housing through the City's winter shelter program. The primary activity performed by this service is supporting eight (8) emergency shelters across the City, including shelters which specifically serve families, unaccompanied homeless youth, and households fleeing intimate partner violence.

Fund Name	Fiscal 2024 Actual		Fiscal 2025 Budget		Fiscal 2026 Budget	
	Dollars	Positions	Dollars	Positions	Dollars	Positions
General	10,704,773	0	11,484,355	0	13,661,417	0
Federal	5,370,638	0	314,128	0	1,990,611	0
State	3,151,401	0	3,430,423	0	5,623,362	0
Special	0	0	0	0	3,000,000	0
Total	19,226,812	0	15,228,906	0	24,275,390	0

Performance Measures

Type	Measure	Fiscal 2021	Fiscal 2022	Fiscal 2023	Fiscal 2024		Fiscal 2025	Fiscal 2026
		Actual	Actual	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Target
Outcome	% exit to permanent housing	29%	22%	21%	35%	37%	45%	45%
Outcome	Average length of time that persons are homeless in emergency shelter, housing and transitional housing projects	197	200	183	90	174	90	120
Outcome	% of adults enrolled in temporary housing that increased their earned income	N/A	N/A	28%	15%	29%	15%	15%
Outcome	% of adults enrolled in temporary housing that increased their non-employment income	N/A	N/A	9%	15%	9%	N/A	15%
Outcome	Point In Time (PIT) results for unsheltered persons	0	124	113	200	N/A	N/A	200
Outcome	Point In Time (PIT) results for unsheltered and sheltered persons	1,631	1,597	1,627	2,200	1,487	N/A	2,200
Outcome	# of emergency shelter beds	1,091	877	930	1,535	1,191	1,535	1,535

Major Operating Budget Items

The Recommended Budget reflects:

- Increasing funding for shelter operating and service contracts from \$15,215,905 to \$21,262,000 (a \$6 million, or 40% increase compared to Fiscal 2025). This increase includes allocating \$3.0 million from the Opioid Restitution Fund to support shelter operations. In Fiscal 2026 this funding will support 5 shelter locations providing services to families, women, and men as well as overflow shelters during extreme weather events.
- Increasing State and Federal grants based on anticipated awards for Fiscal 2026. The federal funds include transferring the Emergency Solutions Grant from Service 894-Outreach to Homeless. The increase is State funds is new Assistance in Community Integrations Services (ACIS) award for temporary housing, and a new allocation from the pass-thru Ryan White HIV prevention program for permanent housing transition support.

Change Table - General Fund

Changes or adjustments	Amount
Fiscal 2025 Adopted Budget	11,484,355
Changes with service impacts	
Increase Operating budget for Women's and Family Temporary Shelter	611,213
Increase Operating budget for Winter Temporary Shelter	590,951
Increase Operating budget for Overflow and Congregate Shelter	557,772
Increase Operating budget for Men's Temporary Shelter	330,992
Increase Operating budget for Veterans Temporary Shelter	93,948
Changes without service impacts	
Increase in contractual services expenses	8,572
Adjustment to utilities	(16,776)
Increase in operating supplies and equipment	390
Fiscal 2026 Recommended Budget	13,661,417

Service 895 Budget: Expenditures

Object	Actual	Budget	
	Fiscal 2024	Fiscal 2025	Fiscal 2026
3 Contractual Services	19,220,883	15,215,906	21,262,000
4 Materials and Supplies	5,929	13,000	13,390
7 Grants, Subsidies and Contributions	0	0	3,000,000
Total	19,226,812	15,228,906	24,275,390

Activity	Actual	Budget	
	Fiscal 2024	Fiscal 2025	Fiscal 2026
Booth House Shelter (MOHS)	0	314,128	0
Emergency Shelter Homeless Women and Children	0	3,430,423	0
Manna House (MOHS)	106,140	111,184	114,520
McVet Emergency Shelter and Street Outreach	458,310	204,702	298,650
Men's Overflow Shelter (MOHS)	2,716,931	2,569,008	2,900,000
New Vision House of Hope (MOHS)	1,747,686	2,246,313	2,657,526
Sarah's Hope Shelter	0	1,353,923	1,553,923
Temporary Housing for Homeless	9,089,868	395,512	10,998,336
Weinberg Housing Resource Center	5,107,447	3,840,471	4,398,243
Winter Emergency Sheltering	431	763,241	1,354,192
Total	19,226,812	15,228,906	24,275,390



SAFE SHELTERS NOW!

Shelter Conditions Report

Housing Our Neighbors

Research Committee

September 2025

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About Housing Our Neighbors (HON)

Housing Our Neighbors is a community organization made up of homeless, formerly homeless, allies, and advocates fighting for the right to housing in Baltimore City.

Over the past 10 years, HON has worked on campaigns to stop the closure of encampments, fight back against bills that would criminalize panhandling, create the affordable housing trust fund, and empty the shelters during the pandemic.

We believe in a Baltimore where the basic human right to housing is a reality for everyone.

We work to create a city without homelessness.

We believe that all people in Baltimore should have access to a decent, affordable home, and be adequately and safely housed within an atmosphere of acceptance and human dignity.

For more information about Housing Our Neighbors, visit our website at <https://www.honbaltimore.org/>

Overview

Baltimore City shelter residents have long raised the alarm about undignified, inhumane, and dangerous conditions within city shelters. Residents frequently talk about brown water coming out of faucets, dirty linens, lack of safety, bed bugs, and lack of staff compassion or care. The levers that we currently have for holding shelters accountable depend on funding source. Some shelters receive no federal, state, or city funds and can't be held accountable the way shelters that receive public funding could be. But regardless of funding, shelters should be delivering quality care and services to our neighbors.

Housing Our Neighbors has conducted a survey of over 70 unhoused neighbors to get a better understanding of how shelters are failing our community. More than 70 % of residents at some sites rank their services and cleanliness at a 3 or below. Shelter residents gave shelter conditions overall a score of 5.1 out of 10. Only 49.5% of shelter residents are aware of the grievance policy at the shelter they are staying at. Code Purple and Helping Up Mission both scored a 3.4 out of 10 for cleanliness. Baltimore Rescue Mission (2.5), Helping Up Mission (3.8) and TIME Organization (3.88) earned the lowest food scores.

The federally funded HUD Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) and state- funded Maryland Homelessness Solutions Program (HSP) provide funding to the Baltimore City Mayor's Office of Homeless Services (MOHS) which leads the Baltimore City Continuums of Care (CoCs).

The CoC coordinates funding and resources for some shelter providers in Baltimore City including Weinberg Housing and Resource Center, SCS Youth Resource/Drop-In Center, Healthcare for the Homeless's Convalescent Care Program, Project PLASE's Temporary Housing for Vulnerable Adults, St. Vincent dePaul's Beans and Bread, Sarah's Hope and FrontDoor, and TIME Organization's Men's and Women's Shelter.

Both programs have minimum habitability, safety, and sanitation standards that grantees are required to follow. HSP also requires shelter providers to follow Housing

First Principles. Some shelters get no money from the CoC and therefore don't have to follow ANY regulations outside of the City's building code.

We KNOW that shelters do not follow many of these regulations and MOHS does not enforce accountability. We also know that the Trump Administration plans to weaken shelter standards and accountability by issuing "block grants" with less regulations.

If we want shelters to be safe places, regardless of who is in the White House or City Hall, we need shelters to be licensed and held accountable NOW!

HAS TO BE LICENSED

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Nursing homes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hotels
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Animal shelters	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Schools
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rental housing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Therapists
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hospitals	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Electricians
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restaurants	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Catering
<input type="checkbox"/> Homeless shelters	

Everyone deserves safe, dignified housing.
Pass HB93 / SB234 to establish a Homeless Shelter Certification Program

Under current law, homeless shelters in Maryland are not required to follow any minimum health or safety standards. To address this critical need, HON launched a campaign earlier this year to support SB234/HB93, a bill in the Maryland General Assembly that would have created a certification program for Maryland's homeless shelters.

The bill, requested by the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), would have established: (1) a shelter resident bill of rights; (2) a minimum standard for shelters to ensure the protection of those rights; and (3) a

grievance process for shelter residents whose rights are being violated within the shelter system.

An amended version of this bill was passed during the 2024 session, which called for a study of current shelter conditions and the development of recommendations for how a shelter licensing/certification program could be established in the state. This

year, the bill was introduced again and was heard in both the House Environment and Transportation Committee and the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee. The bill passed the subcommittee vote in the House. However, it was never brought to a vote by the full committee, so it did not make it across the finish line this year.

We believe that all shelters, regardless of funding sources, should treat residents with dignity and respect, and need to be held accountable. Find more information about HON at honbaltimore.org.

Shelter Survey Metrics

Full Data Dashboard <https://tinyurl.com/honsurveydata>

Background

Over the summer of 2025, HON surveyed 74 current and former residents of Baltimore City homeless shelters. We asked them to name one shelter they currently or recently resided at, then rank their overall experience, cleanliness, facilities (working toilets, showers, lights, AC, etc.), food, staff supportiveness, and grievance process of that shelter.

Key Citywide Findings

- **Average overall satisfaction is 5.1 / 10**, a failing grade that captures the citywide pulse on current shelter conditions.
- **32.8 % of respondents rated their overall experience 3 or below**, signaling deep dissatisfaction.
- 74 total people surveyed.

Theme-Level Red Flags

- **Lowest-rated theme:** *Grievance process* on average rates **4.3 / 10**.
- **Other weak spots:** Food (4.8), Cleanliness (5.5), Staff Supportiveness (5.7), Facilities (5.7)/10
- **Low-score prevalence by theme** (ratings 1–3):
 - Grievance process – **47 %**
 - Food – **43 %**
 - Facilities – **29 %**
 - Cleanliness – **26 %**
 - Staff Supportiveness – **25 %**

Shelter-Level Accountability

- More than 50% of respondents at several major shelters rank key measures at a 1–3 out of ten indicating extremely poor experiences.
- More than **70 %** of residents at some sites rank their services and cleanliness at a 3 or below.
- Code Purple and Helping Up Mission got the **lowest cleanliness score, 3.4 out of 10**
- Baltimore Rescue Mission (**2.5**), Helping Up Mission (**3.8**) and TIME Organization (**3.88**) earned the **lowest food scores**

Grievance Awareness Gap

- Only **45.95 % of survey participants are aware that a grievance policy exists at their shelter at all**, revealing a serious information and access problem.

The following pages show visualizations of survey data which are also available at <https://tinyurl.com/honsurveydata>.

Shelter Survey Metrics

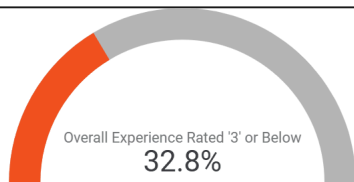
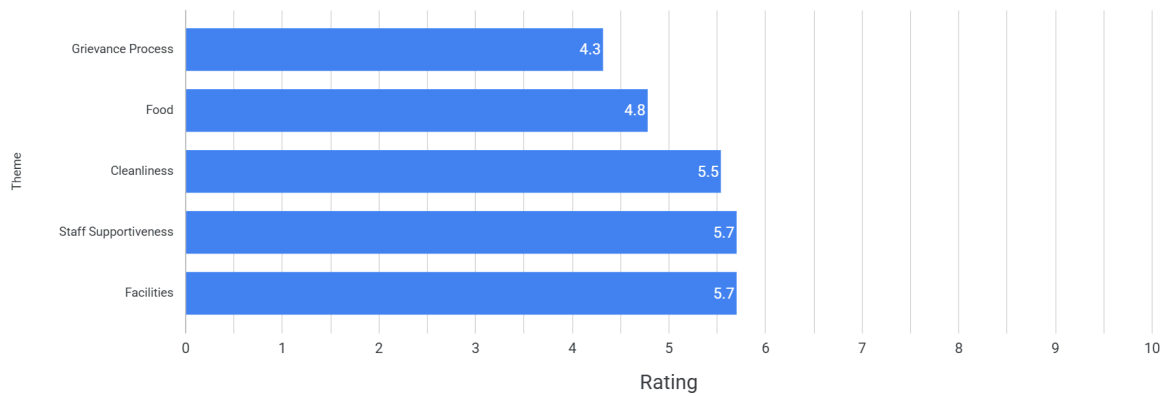
1 Overview Metrics

5.1

Average Overall Satisfaction

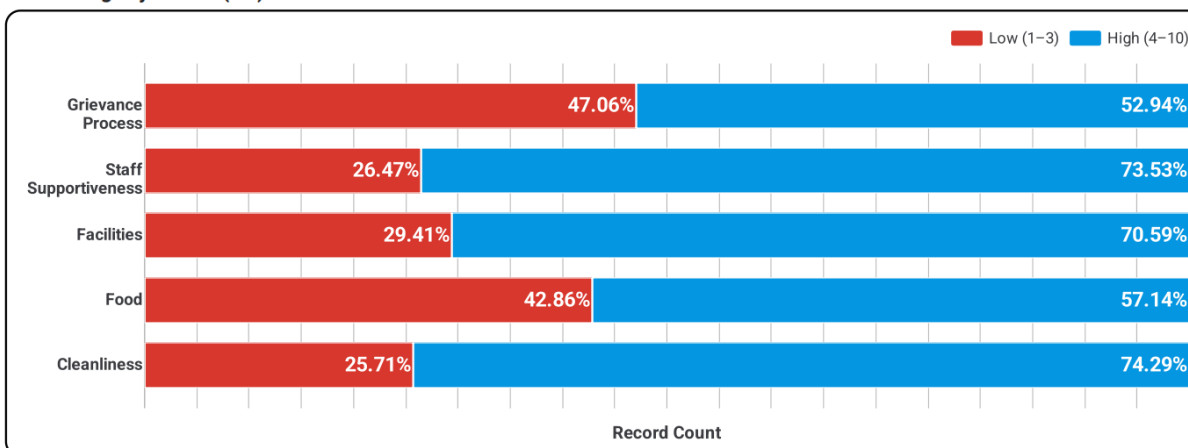
This average reflects every survey response we've received. It's the citywide pulse on how well Baltimore's shelters are serving residents today.

Rating by Theme



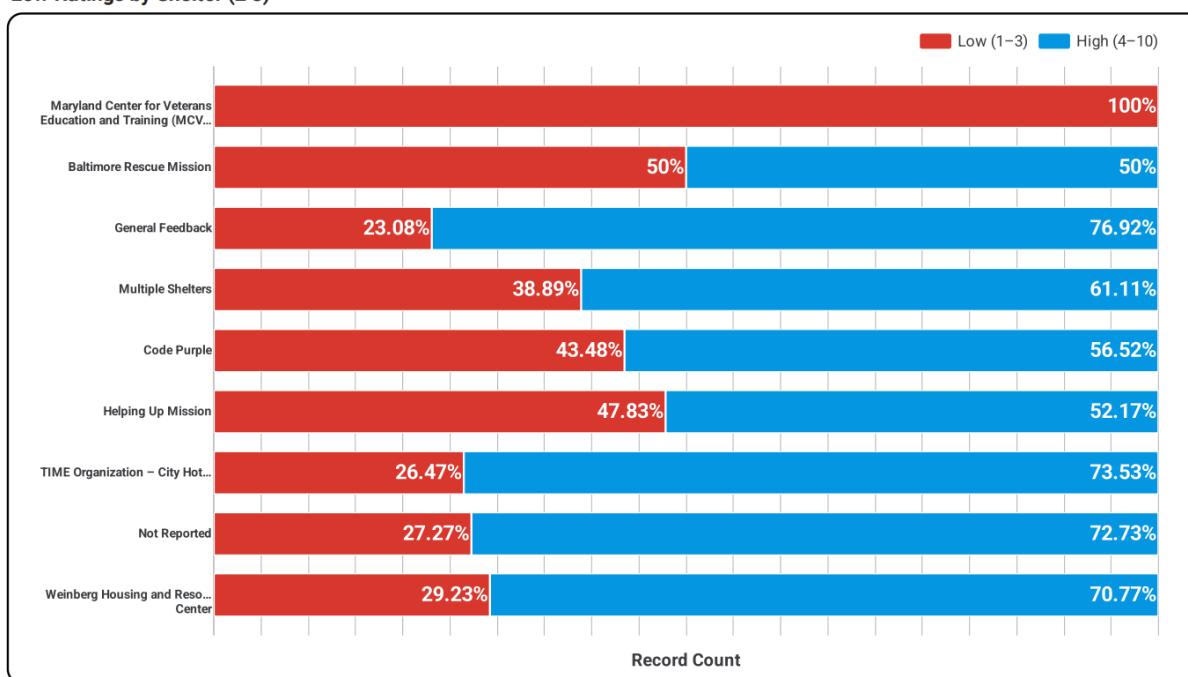
*Out of all the responses we received, this figure represents the percentage that scored **overall satisfaction** at a **3 or lower**.*

Low Ratings by Theme (≤ 3)



Here, we break out the low ratings by THEME as a percentage of total responses received. **Note that not all survey respondents replied to every question.**

Low Ratings by Shelter (≤ 3)

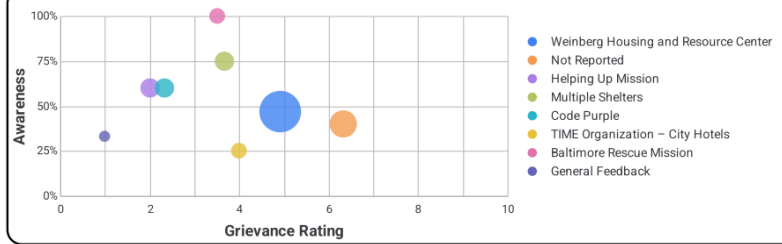


Here, we break out the low ratings by SHELTER as a percentage of total responses received. **Note that not all survey respondents replied to every question.**

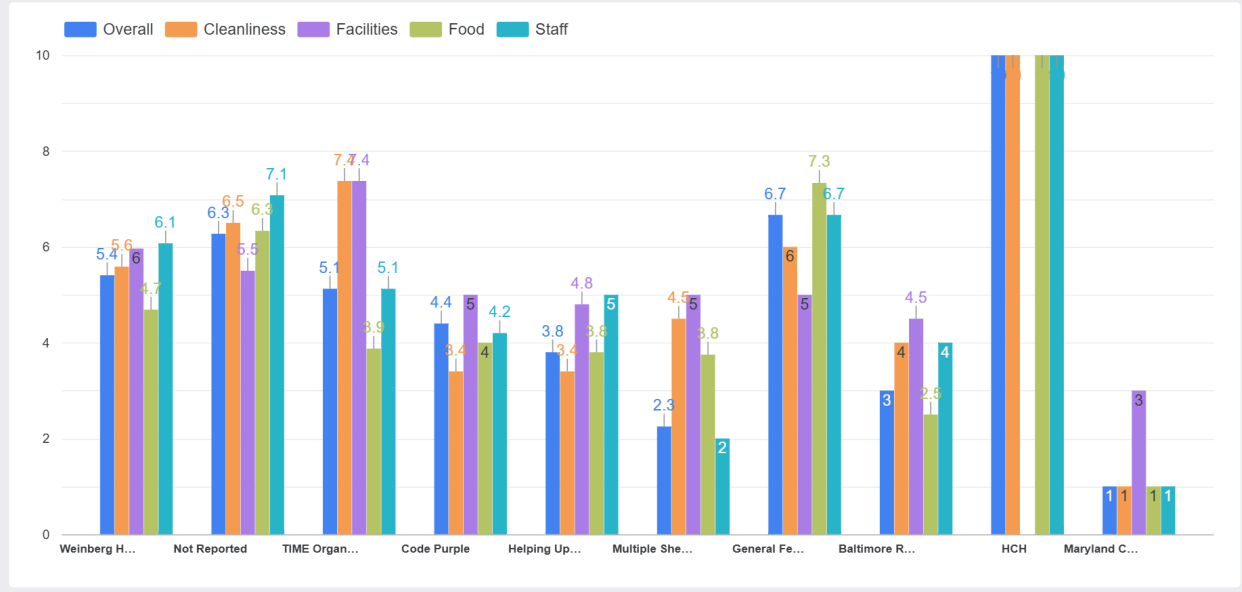
Overall Awareness of Shelter Grievance Policy

45.95%

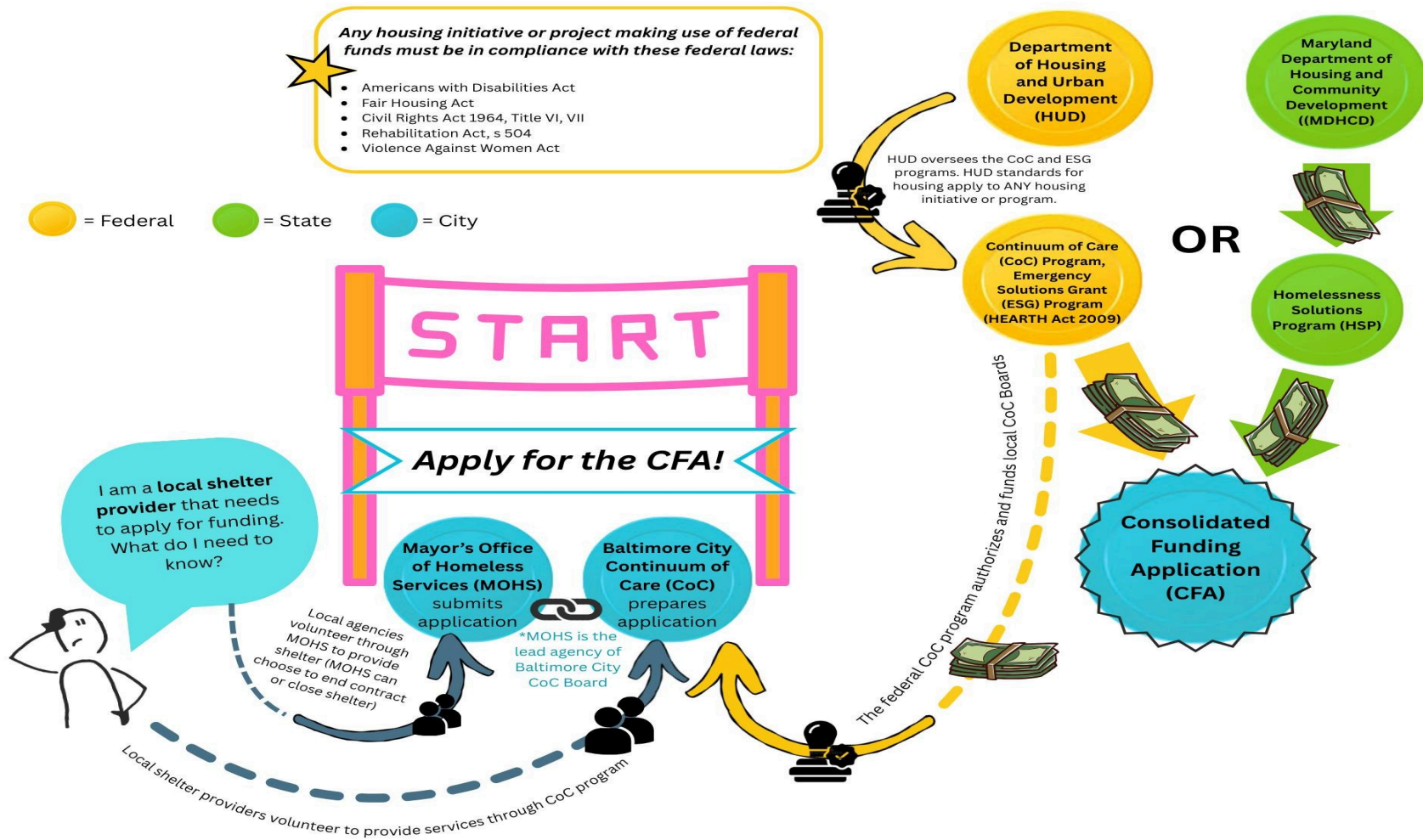
Distribution of Grievance Rating by Awareness



Average Ratings by Shelter



How Baltimore City Shelters Get City Funds



Funding Sources– Conditions Standards Policies and Realities

Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) Standards: HUD oversees and funds the Continuum of Care (CoC) program and the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) program. Any COC or ESG grantees or subgrantees must be in compliance with HUD's minimum safety and sanitation standards. Additionally, the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development requires that any emergency shelters to which it provides assistance must be in compliance with these minimum safety and sanitation standards. Shelters and programs that receive ESG funds are–

- Catholic Charities: Weinberg Housing and Resource Center
- Family and Children's Services of Central Maryland: SCS Youth Resource/Drop-In Center
- Healthcare for the Homeless: Convalescent Care Program
- Project PLASE: Temporary Housing for Vulnerable Adults
- St. Vincent dePaul: Beans and Bread, Sarah's Hope and FrontDoor
- TIME Organization: Men's Shelter and Women's Shelter

<u>Policy</u>	<u>Practice</u>
Shelter is structurally sound to protect residents from the elements.	
Is accessible in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Fair Housing Act, and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act.	
<u>Rehabilitation Act, Section 504:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prohibits discrimination solely on basis of disability in employment opportunities, enrollment in services, and receipt of benefits in federal programs 	
<u>Fair Housing Act:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prohibits discrimination by direct 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals with wheelchairs or other mobility assistive devices can't

<p>housing providers, as well as other agencies involved in housing (Ex: home insurers) solely on the basis of: race; religion; sex; national origin; family status; disability.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires that all newly constructed (1st occupancy after March 31 1991) multi-family dwellings (4 or more units) to have: accessible entrance on accessible route; accessible common and public use areas; doors wide enough to accommodate a wheelchair; accessible routes into and through each dwelling; accessible light switches, electrical outlets, and thermostats(ADA 2010 standards = 48 inches); reinforcement in bathroom walls for installation of grab bar; kitchens and bathrooms configured for usability and maneuverability for wheelchair users. 	<p>always navigate shelter halls, rooms</p>
<p><u>Americans with Disabilities Act, Title II:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State and local governments must provide people with disabilities an equal opportunity to benefit from all their programs, services, and activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Applies to government agencies and entities which contract with government or other entities to provide public services • Mandates equal treatment for individuals with disabilities; prohibits isolating or separating people with disabilities, or denying them the opportunity to participate in programs offered to others • Public entities (or contractors providing public services) cannot 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals need to be in shelters to have access to a case manager; individuals need to stay consistently in the same shelter to maintain access to case manager • Individuals with diabetes may not have adequate space to store insulin – requires refrigeration • Individuals with medical devices (insulin pumps, oxygen tanks, mobility assistive devices) have been told that they have too many personal possessions and cannot bring all of them <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Carolyn Johnson at PJC noted this as a complaint and said that the “reasonable accommodation” standard can be applied to rules

<p>impose eligibility criteria with (tend to) screen out individuals with disabilities, unless criteria are necessary for provision of service, benefit, or activity offered</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals with disabilities cannot be excluded from programs, services, or activities because buildings are inaccessible <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Where structural changes can be made, should be made to make building accessible ◦ Where structural changes cannot feasibly be made, programs and services can be provided at an alternate location, or in different manner ◦ People with disabilities must have access to programs and services under the same conditions as others (Ex: privacy) ◦ Entities not required to undertake 'undue burden'; undue burden determined by Department head or similarly high-ranking administrator with access to financial records 	<p>governing residents' possessions (medical devices, service/support animals and their necessities don't count towards total possessions)</p>
<p>Provides each resident with an acceptable place to sleep, and adequate space and security for themselves and their belongings.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some rooms do not have locks on doors, or may not even have doors • Some people have reported that their belongings were stolen, or that someone (another resident or shelter staff) went through their belongings • Many people have reported harassment and abuse from shelter staff and other residents • Need for Secure Storage/Privacy ("would like a lock place to store

	valuables"
Has rooms with ventilation and interior air that is free from pollutants at a level that could harm residents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some folks have reported brown water in faucets, showers (see below)
Has clean water, free of contamination.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brown water in faucets Hot water problems
Has sanitary facilities that are in proper operating condition and are private.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "showers not clean," "run out of toilet paper"
Has working heating and cooling facilities.	
Has adequate lighting and ability for safe use of electrical appliances.	
If it has food preparation areas, those areas have suitable space and equipment to store, prepare, and serve food in a safe and sanitary way.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moldy food (inadequate storage?) Cross contamination with allergens (unsuitable prep and/or storage) Raw/undercooked meat (inadequate prep) "months out of date," "not enough food," "forced salad," "bread & soup" "Food is the worst, staff does not seem to care"
Is maintained in a sanitary condition.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shelter linens and bedclothes can be dirty, unwashed, mildewy Problems with bedbugs Problems with cockroaches, mice, bed bugs and rats Bathrooms unclean, ran out of toilet paper, brown water in toilets and showers, hot water problems

Has at least one working smoke detector in each occupied unit of the shelter, with smoke detectors located near sleeping areas where possible.	
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<p><u>Homelessness Solutions Program, Habitability Standards:</u> The Homelessness Solutions Program is a grant program run by the Maryland state government. HSP provides funding to Maryland Continuum of Care (Coc) boards and Local Homeless Coalitions. In principle, HSP grants are tied to minimum habitability standards, listed below, as well as Housing First principles. In practice, these standards are not consistently or reliably enforced, if they are enforced at all.</p>	
<u>Policy</u>	<u>In Practice</u>
Residents may have shared housekeeping duties only for the area in which they reside. Any other housekeeping duties must be performed voluntarily.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Westside Men's Shelter requires residents to sign up for chores during intake - responsible for keeping entire shelter clean, not just area in which they reside <ul style="list-style-type: none"> See language in Westside Mens' Shelter resident handbook
<p>Charging residents any fees is NOT allowed, including collection of public benefits such as SNAP.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents are not to be charged for shelter or programs 	
Shelter policy regarding client's personal possessions should be clearly explained at admission to shelter	
Providers should have <u>clear and fair</u> policies on how client belongings and personal information will be handled.	
Policies regarding clients' possessions and personal information should include guidance for clients on what happens to their belongings if they don't return to the	

shelter, as well as what constitutes abandonment of personal belongings or shelter space.	
Providers should make every effort to ensure policies regarding clients' possessions and personal information are followed compassionately.	

Housing First Principles: Housing First is an approach to addressing homelessness which emphasizes providing access to housing as a foundation for supportive services, rather than requiring clients to meet certain standards or graduate from certain programs. Maryland's Homelessness Solutions Program requires grantees and subgrantees to follow Housing First principles.

<u>Policy</u>	<u>In Practice</u>
No sobriety requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Westside Men's Shelter reserves right to conduct random Breathalyzer tests on reasonable suspicion of intoxication. If result indicates intoxicated blood level, resident may be asked to sleep it off, to leave shelter following day, or may be prohibited from using shelter vans/shuttle services
No income requirements, or other policies which would make it difficult to enter a shelter	
NO searches and seizures by law enforcement without a warrant	
No mandatory drug testing	
Denial of service and/or termination of assistance ONLY when client behavior creates danger or threat of harm for shelter staff and other clients	

Regardless of source of funding, shelter residents report unsanitary and undignified conditions and treatment.

- **Lack of ADA accessibility and disability discrimination:** Elevators malfunction, individuals with diabetes not allowed access to adequate space to store insulin (requires refrigeration), hallways not wide enough for wheelchairs and walkers, individuals with medical devices told they have too many personal belongings and cannot bring all of them.
- **Discrimination based on race, ethnicity, gender and language spoken:** Haitian-Creole speaker turned away from shelter because he was a “liability”, racist treatment from staff
- **Negative Staff Attitudes:** “they don’t care,” “staff not kind,” “poor, redundant, inefficient”,
- **Cleanliness Issues:** “bed bugs,” “not clean,” “showers not clean,” “run out of toilet paper”, frequent reports of brown water in faucets, rats, mice, “Shelter linens and bedclothes can be dirty, unwashed, mildewy”
- **Problems with Food:** “months out of date,” “not enough food,” “forced salad,” “bread & soup”, cross contamination with allergens (unsuitable prep and/or storage), raw/undercooked meat (inadequate prep),
- **Feeling Unsafe or Unheard:** “can’t get help,” “people having trouble breathing,” “threats to any grievance,” “non-existent grievance process”
- **Need for Secure Storage/Privacy:** “would like a lock place to store valuables”, some rooms do not have locks on doors or may not even have doors, belongings were stolen, or that someone (another resident or shelter staff) went through their belongings, many people have reported harassment and abuse from shelter staff and other residents
- **Some Positive Staff Interactions:** “made sure I had something to eat,” “wanted to make sure I was ok”
- **Lack of AC:** Sarah’s Hope was without AC for a *whole month this summer!*

Grievance Process

How can shelter residents submit grievances?

- Residents can report potential building code violations by submitting a [3-1-1 Service Request](#)
- Shelters receiving money from the City are required to have a Client Grievance Procedure. The Client Grievance Procedure provides a formal process for residents to submit a grievance when they have a concern about the level or quality of services provided.
 - This policy must be explained to clients at intake/admission
 - Staff are expected to be knowledgeable of policy, and copies of policy and forms must be available at all program locations
 - Part 1 of the form is completed by the client and submitted using the “secured grievance box” in the designated area of the program facility
 - Once you submit a grievance, here’s what should happen next:
 - Level 1: The form is reviewed by the program manager who then has 3 days to meet with the resident to discuss the situation. At the end of the meeting, the manager fills out their half of the form and tells the resident how they think the grievance can be resolved. The resident is asked to sign a form to indicate whether they agree or disagree.
 - Level 2: If the resident disagrees with the decision, the grievance goes to the Executive Director. The Executive Director then has 3 days to meet with the resident. At the end of the meeting, the Executive Director fills out their section of the form and tells the resident how they think the issue can be resolved. The resident is asked to sign a form to indicate whether they agree or disagree.
 - Level 3: If the resident disagrees again, the grievance goes to a MOHS representative, and they are expected to meet with the resident within 3 days. The MOHS representative fills out their section of the form and tells the resident how they think the grievance can be resolved. This is the final step, and the decision

is final. The resident is asked to sign a form and indicate if they agree or disagree.

54% of survey respondents said they had no knowledge of a grievance process at the shelter they stayed at. Shelter residents overall rated the grievance process at shelters 4.3 out of 10.