

HOMELESSNESS IN THE CITY OF RICHMOND, VA – STATUS UPDATE



Richmond City Council

January 25, 2021



Presented by: Sharon L. Ebert
DCAO for Planning, Economic and Community Development

HOMELESSNESS IN THE CITY OF RICHMOND, VA – STATUS UPDATE

STRATEGIC PLAN TO END HOMELESSNESS



2020

CITY OF RICHMOND
STRATEGIC PLAN TO END
HOMELESSNESS
2020-2030



MAYOR LEVAR M. STONEY

Development of Housing and Community Development

Department of Social Services

CITY OF RICHMOND, 900 EAST BROAD STREET, RICHMOND, VA REVISED | MAY 8, 2020 FINAL

How We Can Help

The staff within the Departments of Housing and Community Development and Social Services are working with the City's local homeless organizations and have identified Seven Strategies to reduce the number of individuals experiencing homelessness:

1. Provide greater financial support to organizations that help prevent individuals and families from becoming homeless;
2. Create a minimum of 250 emergency housing units by partnering with existing registered nonprofit and faith-based organizations to offer emergency shelter with supportive services with low or no barriers to entry 365 days a year for anyone experiencing homelessness and eliminate the City-sponsored, seasonal CWOS;
3. Increase the number of permanent supportive housing units by at least 300 units by providing financial assistance to the City's registered homeless service and housing providers;
4. Increase financial support to the City's registered homeless providers to ensure supportive services are available to every homeless person;
5. Provide additional supportive services and housing for underserved populations that are experiencing homelessness;;
6. Promote connections to comprehensive services including employment resources and behavioral health services for persons experiencing or at risk of becoming homeless; and
7. Educate our citizens on homelessness and provide collaborative leadership to all City registered homeless service and housing providers to ensure that programs are coordinated and effective.

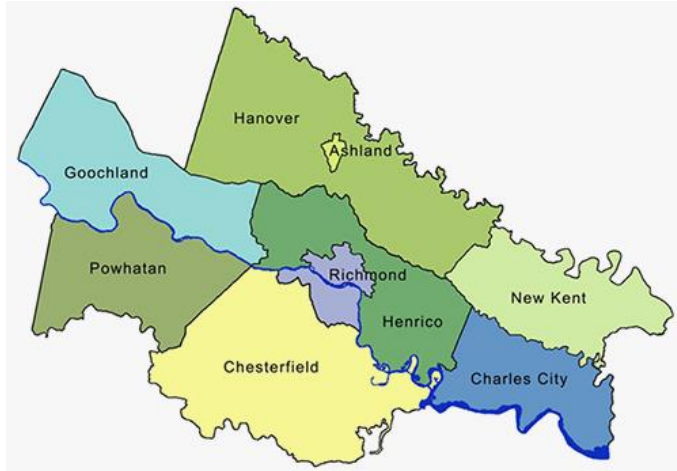
Permanent housing is the goal for persons facing homelessness or is homeless. The strategies listed above are designed to assist everyone who seeks and desires help.



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WHAT IS THE GREATER RICHMOND CONTINUUM OF CARE (GRCoC)?



Map retrieved from
<http://www.richmondregional.org/>

- A Continuum of Care (CoC) is a broad group of stakeholders coming together to take action against homelessness in a community.
- A CoC is required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in order to receive funding targeted for homeless services.
- The GRCoC was established in 1997 by community stakeholders to fight homelessness.
- Homeward was created in 1998 to facilitate and support the GRCoC.
- It develops policies and procedures locally to maximize services for each household and resources.



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SUMMARY OF EMERGENCY SHELTER BEDS PROVIDED IN 2020



ACCESS TO HOMELESS ASSISTANCE IS THROUGH THE GRCoC COORDINATED ENTRY SYSTEM

- Homeless assistance is not an entitlement resource, and
- Resources are limited and are provided based on need and vulnerability:
 - Age 65 years or older
 - Families with young children
 - Individuals with underlying health issues, and/or
 - Individuals with a history of long-term homelessness

☐ Homeless Crisis Line: 804-972-0813

☐ Greater Richmond Regional Helpline: 804-612-6126

☐ Coordinated Outreach: tgarrett@dailyplanetva.org; bit.ly/RVAOutreach



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THE HOMELESS CRISIS LINE (HCL) (804-972-0813) IS:

Available to persons experiencing homelessness:

Monday thru Friday: 8 AM – 9 PM; and Saturdays and Sundays: 1 PM – 9 PM

Because of the extreme volume of calls, a caller will get a recorded message:

“Thank you for calling the Greater Richmond Region’s Homeless Crisis Line. Please listen to this message and your options so that we can connect you to someone who can help. Due to the current high volume of calls, our staff may be assisting someone else right now. If you do not speak to a staff member, please leave a message. Our goal is to return all messages within one business day.

We will prioritize calls from people within 3 days of losing their housing.

If you are in the City of Richmond and seeking human services or social service assistance, not shelter, please press 1.

If you need housing assistance, and not in need of emergency shelter, please press 2.

If you are currently experiencing literal homelessness and have no place to stay tonight, please press 3.

If you are currently in the Safety Net Shelter and need to report a concern, please press 4. If you would like to repeat this message, please press 9.”

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DUE TO LIMITED FINANCIAL RESOURCES
THE HOMELESS CRISIS LINE (HCL) IS
NOT A 24/7 HOTLINE

&

LIKE MOST HOMELESS SHELTER & SERVICE PROGRAMS
ACROSS THE STATE OF VIRGINIA
AND THE NATION
THE GRCOC DOES NOT OPERATE 24/7



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IMPACT OF THE HOMELESS CRISIS LINE IN 2020

4,461

Clients helped by **Homeless Crisis Line (HCL)**
meeting the criteria of homelessness or within 3 days of losing housing



1,534

Clients connected to community resources avoiding homelessness



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In April, 2020 the GRCoC established what is now called

THE PANDEMIC SHELTER SYSTEM

In response to the COVID 19 Pandemic and the growing concern over the spread of the virus among persons experiencing homelessness.

Before the Pandemic more than 400 people were in shelters across the GRCoC area and more than 130 people were sleeping outside.

THE PANDEMIC SHELTER SYSTEM

The Pandemic Shelter System currently is operating out of **SIX** hotels: With approximately **400 rooms** and capacity for up to **800 individuals** based on need and vulnerability .

In addition it also has 25 rooms available for individuals that have tested positive for COVID-19 and need to be quarantined.



THE PANDEMIC SHELTER SYSTEM IS:

Accessed through the HCL

An Intake Packet is provided to every individual/household

It includes a Grievance Policy, and

A Guest Agreement.

Individuals are tested for COVID 19

All guests are provided 3 meals a day.

Case management is provided, but limited due to current funding.



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THE SAFETY NET SHELTER SYSTEM

The Safety Net Shelter System was opened up the first week of January 2021 and is operating out the Quality Inn Hotel located on Arthur Ashe Boulevard.

It was set up in response to the Richmond City Council’s request for an Inclement Weather Facility, where someone who is experiencing homelessness could go just to get out of the cold or inclement weather.

It is a safe, COVID 19, CDC-compliant Congregate Shelter located in the Inn’s meeting rooms.

It can accommodate up to 155 individuals a night.

COVID-19 testing is provided as well as two meals.

Bathroom facilities are also available with hotel towel service.

Check-in is from 4 PM to 9 PM daily.



THE SAFETY NET SHELTER SYSTEM CURRENTLY AVERAGES 80 PERSONS EACH NIGHT

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THE SAFETY NET SHELTER SYSTEM INFORMATION LINE IS 804-277-4423



It is for residents in the Safety Net Shelter System, or those interested in this to learn information including:

- When the SNS is open
- Hours of check in
- How to access for first-time and repeat guests
- HCL hours
- Other resources available
- How to provide suggestions or express opportunities for improvement to the shelter



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THE SAFETY NET SHELTER SYSTEM & THE PANDEMIC SHELTER SYSTEM

 Non-Congregate Shelter	Pandemic Response Emergency Shelter	 Safety Net Shelter
Increased risk from COVID-19 due to age (65+) or underlying health conditions as identified by the CDC; homeless families with minor children	Target Population	Unsheltered individuals who lack safe, overnight accommodations when forecast is below 40 degrees
Hotel rooms (double occupancy)	Accommodations	COVID-safe congregate space
Shelter residents are referred to year-round shelter programs, treatment programs, or housing depending on household needs and program availability	Destinations	Information and connections to community resources are made available and assistance is provided in securing safe accommodations
PPE 24/7 staffing Meals delivered safely Service coordination/COVID testing Connections to case management Donated supplies	Health & Safety Program Components	PPE 24/7 staffing Meals delivered safely Overnight accommodations Connections to community resources Donated supplies
Determination of prioritization and availability of space through the HCL	Access	One-time intake process through HCL (call once) with periodic case review for ongoing services



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THE SAFETY NET SHELTER SYSTEM & THE PANDEMIC SHELTER SYSTEM: OPEN ISSUES

- **Written & Verbal Communications needs to improved between the person experiencing homelessness and the shelter service system;**
- **There is a real need for more case management workers, especially in behavioral health services;**
- **Communities outside of the GRCoC are now bringing their homeless individuals into the City to access shelter and services**
- **There is simply not enough affordable housing units available to individuals ready and able to leave the shelter system**

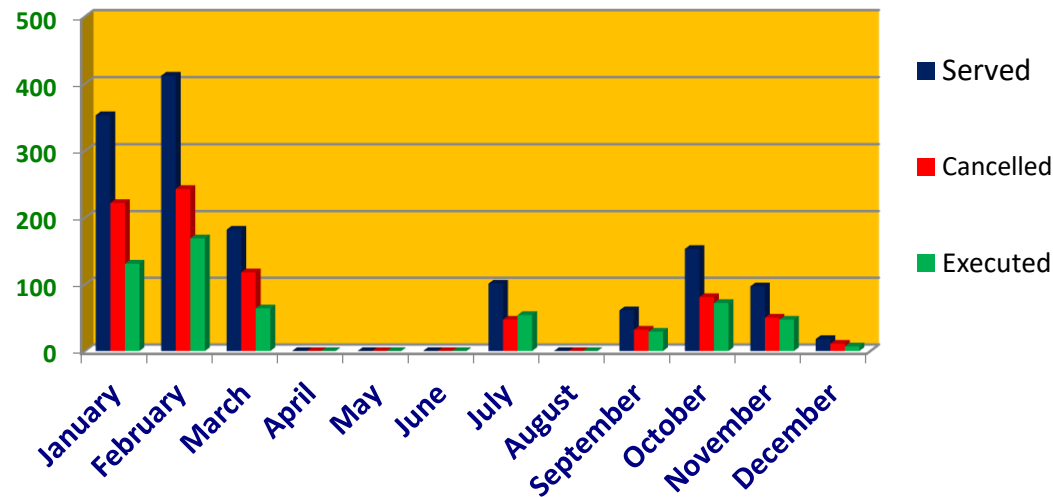


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UPDATE ON EVICTIONS IN 2020

From data received from the City’s Sheriff’s Office:

573 HOUSEHOLDS WERE EVICTED FROM THEIR HOMES IN 2020



	Scheduled for Eviction	# of Evictions Cancelled by Landlord	# of Evictions Executed by S.O.
2020	1,377	804	573
2019	4,354	2,474	1,878
2018	6,891	4,351	2,527
2017	9,381	6,440	2,941
2016	10,610	7,509	3,101
2015	10,646	7,312	3,334
2014	9,368	5,855	3,513
2013	7,429	4,433	2,996
2012	6,761	3,761	3,000
2011	6,840	3,909	2,931
Total for year ending	41,044	25,270	15,774



UPDATE ON EVICTION PROTECTIONS IN 2021

In general, eviction protections now only apply to tenants whose landlords are seeking to evict them for unpaid rent.

CONTACT:

**Central Virginia Legal Aid Society 101 West Broad Street, Suite
#101 Richmond, VA. 23220**

**Martin Wegbreit, Director of Litigation marty@cvas.org / 804-200-
6045**



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UPDATE ON EVICTION PROTECTIONS IN 2021

CDCEVICTION MORATORIUM – applies only if tenant provides their landlord with a CDC declaration under penalty of perjury

- Was set to end 12/31/2020, However the COVID-19 bill extended it's provision to 1/31/2021
- **President Biden signed an Executive Order last week extending it's provisions to 3/31/2021**
- **The City of Richmond has a Voluntary Eviction Diversion Program (EDP):** Apply: Online: <https://www.rvaevictions.org/> or by phone: 1-833-663-8428, press 4, and leave a message.
- **The State Eviction and Mortgage Relief Program:** Tenants and homeowners can establish an account and complete an online application at www.applications.deval.us/ or by calling 703-962-1884.
- As a reminder, landlords can initiate applications on behalf of tenants at www.virginiahousing.com/rmrp.
- Anyone who would like to learn more about their eligibility before starting a new application, can call 2-1-1 Virginia by dialing 2-1-1 on their phone or by going to DHCD's eligibility portal here: www.dhcd.virginia.gov/eligibility.



THE POINT IN TIME COUNT IS SCHEDULED FOR JANUARY 27th, 2021

THE POINT IN TIME COUNT IS:

A single day count of people living in shelters or sleeping in places not meant for human habitation

A requirement for federal and state funding

HUD provides guidelines for completion of count; required data collection elements laid out in regulatory notices

Has been conducted using similar methodologies in our community since 2007

Modified count this year due to rising coronavirus cases

Last year's count was 509 persons



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QUESTIONS?

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