

Monthly Report: August 2020

Emergency Solutions Grant

Nashville has received a total of \$10 million in Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funding as part of its CARES dollars to address COVID-19. These funds are designated to addressing homelessness. They are one-time funds and are exponentially higher than the usual annual ESG allocations, which was \$450,000 for 2020. In addition to the \$10 million, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) provided Nashville with free technical assistance and has assigned Heather Dillashaw of ICF (icf.com) as our local consultant to use the COVID-19 allocations to improve our Housing Crisis Resolution System.

The Metropolitan Development and Housing Agency (MDHA) is receiving and managing the grants. About 20 organizations have submitted bids for the first Request for Applications (RFA) for the Emergency Solutions Grants in the amount of \$1.5 million. It is under review for awards.

The community is working diligently with Heather Dillashaw's guidance to develop a housing-focused strategy for the remaining \$8.4 million in grants. The goal is to spend a majority of those dollars on Rapid Re-Housing to assist an estimated 400 individuals/households for up to one year. That last RFA is expected to be released at the end of August.

Downtown Permanent Supportive Housing Project

Metro is moving forward with the Downtown Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) project, which will be located at 505 2nd Avenue North. The building will be constructed by Bells and Associates, and the Metropolitan Development and Housing Agency (MDHA) will manage it once it is finished. It will be approximately 10-story building with the first floor for entrance, management, and maintenance. On the second floor will be office spaces, a multi-purpose room and a couple of units. The remaining 8 floors will be for 1-bedroom apartments and studios with a shared community space. There will be about 10 units per floor. At present, a total of 82 units are planned.

The designs are being finalized, which means there still could be changes. We will keep the Homelessness Planning Council informed with regular updates. If you have any thoughts and input, please email judith.tackett@nashville.gov. We will share all comments for consideration and discussion.

Housing Placement Rate

Per data entered into the coordinated entry (CE) process through the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), 45 individuals or 18 households obtained permanent housing in the month of July.

The total housing placement numbers in coordinated entry from January to July 2020, are 563 individuals making up 200 households. Thus, the monthly permanent housing placement rate per CE data so far averages 80 individuals or 28 households in 2020.

Total Number of People:

Exit Date:	#
2020	2711
CE Exit: Inactive	2148
CE Exit: Permanently Housed	563
Hotel or motel paid for without emergency shelter voucher (HUD)	3
Long-term care facility or nursing home (HUD)	1
No exit interview completed (HUD)	13
Owned by client, with ongoing housing subsidy (HUD)	11
Rental by client in a public housing unit (HUD)	34
Rental by client, no ongoing housing subsidy (HUD)	173
Rental by client, with HCV voucher (tenant or project based) (HUD)	11
Rental by client, with other ongoing housing subsidy (HUD)	64
Rental by client, with RRH or equivalent subsidy (HUD)	149
Rental by client, with VASH housing subsidy (HUD)	30
Staying or living with family, permanent tenure (HUD)	53
Staying or living with friends, permanent tenure (HUD)	12
Owned by client, no ongoing housing subsidy (HUD)	9
Grand Total	2711

Currently, 200 members at 30 participating HMIS agencies in our community have an active HMIS license. Our HMIS team at the Metro Homeless Impact Division is in the process of onboarding several new agencies to participate in HMIS.

By Name Lists

While the Homeless Impact Division is keeping track of four By Name Lists (BNLs) for Veterans, Youth and Young Adults, Families with minor children, and Individuals, we are currently most confident in the quality of the BNLs for Veterans and the Youth and Young Adults. The Homeless Impact Division team is working with Domestic Violence (DV) providers on their BNL and we will keep including them in this report (thank you to the Mary Parrish Center for providing that data).

Veterans:

	April	May	June	July
Veterans BNL				
How many Veterans are on the BNL at the end of the month?	187	172	164	146
How many Veterans were housed?	15	18	11	22
What was the average length of time from identification to housing?	238 days	175 days	178 days	247 days
How many Veterans met the chronic definition?	40	45	42	47
How many have experienced long-term homelessness?	22	22	22	22
How many Veterans were exited from HMIS due to inactivity, housing or death?	36	26	23	35
What was the total BNL inflow?	36	10	11	16

Youth and Young Adults:

	April	May	June	July
YYA BNL				
How many YYA are on the BNL at the end of the month?	112	117	137	127
How many YYA were housed?	9	10	4	11
What was the average length of time from identification to housing?	152 days	75 days	98 days	104 days
How many new YYA were added to the BNL?	18	18	18	18
How many previously housed YYA were added to the BNL?	1	1	1	0
How many previously inactive YYA were added to the BNL?	10	1	5	3
What was the total BNL inflow?	29	19	24	21

Domestic Violence (DV)/Intimate Partner Violence (IPV):

	April	May	June	July
Domestic Violence/Intimate Partner Violence				
How many DV/IPV Survivor households are on the BNL at the end of the month?	data unavailable	215	209	223
How many DV/IPV Survivor households were housed?	35	31	21	11
What was the average length of time from identification to housing?	75 days	129 days	109 days	170 days
How many DV/IPV Survivor households met the chronic definition?	0 new entries total in BNL unavailable	4 new entries total in BNL unavailable	29	33
How many DV/IPV survivors are active on the High-Risk Intervention Panel?				24
How many DV/IPV Survivor households were exited from HMIS due to inactivity, housing or death?	3	14	11	19
What was the total BNL inflow?	27	31	33	45

In July, there were 254 families on the Family BNL, and 604 individuals are on the Individual BNL. However, we know based on the Point In Time Count from January, from the winter shelter data census, and an educated estimate we took in March of how many people stay outdoors that we are missing hundreds of people in HMIS. The biggest gap we see is around individuals. We have reached out to Nashville Rescue Mission leadership to start discussion on developing a plan about how to get their data into to HMIS.

Move-in Cost Assistance

The Metro Homeless Impact Division (MHID) assists with move-in costs including security and utility deposits, first month rent, and some arrears. The sources for these move-in costs are Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) dollars through a partnership with the Metropolitan Development and Housing Agency (MDHA), Metro dollars, and a How’s Nashville community donation fund managed by MHID.

Only trained housing navigators can apply for move-in costs on behalf of their clients. MHID provides monthly housing navigator trainings to partner agencies that have full-time staff who provide outreach, case management or other social service assistance. Payments are made directly to landlords and utility companies. In July, a total of \$24,985.58 were spent on NES deposits, NES back pay, security deposits, pro-rated rents, first month's rent, rental arrears, water services, and miscellaneous fees. MHID pays up to \$1,000 in move-in assistance per household. With 30 clients receiving move-in cost assistance in July, the average assistance provided was \$832.85 per household.

Encampment/Outdoor Homelessness

The Metro Homeless Impact Division (MHID) identified three areas in Nashville-Davidson County that are getting a tremendous amount of complaints from neighborhoods:

- The Jefferson Street Bridge encampment, along 2nd Avenue North;
- The Brookmeade Greenway encampment, off Charlotte Pike by Lowe's in West Nashville; and
- Downtown Nashville.

The director of MHID, Judith Tackett, has participated in meetings with neighborhoods in each of those areas. The main focus is on increased violence, trash, and substance use. At present, MHID's focus is three-fold:

1. Work with community nonprofits to try to coordinate services and most urgently, help that people are entered into the Coordinated Entry process within HMIS;
2. Work with Council members and Metro Police and other departments in the respective areas to see if we can mitigate immediate issues, identify opportunities for intervention to link people with services and a place to go; and
3. Work with the city, MDHA, and the community to utilize the additional Emergency Solutions Grant that Nashville receives due to COVID-19 to build a systems approach for housing, specifically invest in Rapid Re-Housing opportunities for vulnerable people experiencing homelessness.

To recap from last month's report, MHID has worked with our community partners and together we have identified just under 75 specific encampments that may need food box assistance. That encompasses between 450-530 people (discrepancies among this population happen because of the constant movement of people). An additional 15 encampments were identified but it was unclear how many people currently reside at those locations. They generally were smaller encampments.

Overall about six locations have 20 or more people (this includes Green Street, an encampment that is sanctioned on private, Church property). At least 40 encampments have 5 or fewer people. Encampment sizes range from 1 to close to 100.

We suspect many encampment locations are not shared by provider agencies. Therefore, our estimates based on past anecdotal reports as well as reports from Metro Police are that Nashville has 100-150 encampments at any given time.

Personal Stories

The Metro Homeless Impact Division (MHID) responds to complaints about encampments in Davidson County. Those complaints come to us in different ways including through other departments, through the HUB (Metro's 3-1-1 call-in number), through Metro Council members, or directly from neighbors. Since January 2020, we have received a total of 256 calls that our team of two outreach specialists has followed up on. In July 2020, MHID received 24 requests compared to 18 in July 2019.

It is important that we look beyond the numbers and do not forget that each person has a story to tell. Here is one such encounter from July:

A gentleman was a resident at the Metro shelter at the Fairgrounds. He said he recently became homeless due to drug and alcohol abuse. Due to his disability (he had lost a leg), he was approved for disability benefits and within a couple of days he was approved for housing at Riverwood Towers in Madison. Metro Social Services (MSS) assisted him with his move-in fees, transportation as well as moving his clothes and furniture into his new place. He was very thankful for MSS, the fairground shelter and all the assistance received while at the shelter. He continues to work on "staying clean" and becoming more self-sufficient in his journey towards sobriety.

Another gentleman was living at Church Street Park when it closed for renovations in July. He had experienced several bouts with homelessness and moved near Jefferson Street Bridge due to the park closure. He had been living at the Fairgrounds shelter for a while before moving in with his sister. He moved back outdoors because his family asked him to leave due to his drinking. He was going to Centerstone for mental health appointments but said that the lack of transportation prevented him from following up on his appointments. The MHID outreach specialist provided him with a couple of bus passes, entered him into the coordinated entry process, and confirmed that he receives social security benefits, has his birth certificate, an I.D., and social security card. With that, the outreach worker has completed a VI-SPDAT assessment and is assisting him with his housing search.

This report includes some highlights from July 2020. If you would like additional information and/or have questions regarding building an effective Housing Crisis Resolution System to address homelessness in Nashville-Davidson County, please email Judith Tackett, the director of the Homeless Impact Division, at judith.tackett@nashville.gov

Glossary

By Name List (BNL) - A real-time up, up-to-date list of all people experiencing homelessness, which can be filtered by categories and shared across agencies. In essence, this provides a regular census of how many people have been identified as experiencing homelessness in Nashville. Our community is working on these lists constantly. We do not feel we have the capacity quite yet to produce quality lists for all populations.

Collaborative Applicant - The organization that is designated by the CoC to collect and submit the CoC Registration, CoC Consolidated Application, and apply for CoC planning funds on behalf of the CoC during the CoC Program Competition. More information is available at hudexchange.info.

Continuum of Care (CoC) - A regional or local planning body that coordinates housing and services funding for individuals, families, and unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness. A CoC creates a collaborative community effort that provides a strategic systems approach that focuses on connecting people to housing and services to end their homelessness.

Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) - A program to assist individuals and families quickly regain stability in permanent housing after experiencing a housing crisis or homelessness. ESG provides grants by formula to states, metropolitan cities, urban counties, and U.S. Territories to support homelessness prevention, emergency shelter, transitional housing, and Rapid Re-Housing.

Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) - a local information technology system used to collect client-level data and data on the provision of housing and services to individuals and families experiencing or at-risk of homelessness. It is used as a tool to evaluate people's needs and assist them more effectively, avoiding duplication of services. To make HMIS functional and effective, our community recently took the first steps to allow agencies to share data within HMIS.

Housing Crisis Resolution System (HCRS) – A community system that includes all types of programs from prevention/diversion, emergency and temporary interventions to permanent housing solutions. As a whole, an effective Housing Crisis Resolution System focuses on identifying people in a housing crisis as early as possible and connects them with housing and needed supports as quickly as possible. In Davidson County, the current goal is to house people in an average of 90 days or less.

Point In Time (PIT) Count – A one-night count conducted within the last 10 days of January of people meeting the Literal Homelessness definition. The PIT Count should be used as part of a data set including data from HMIS, the local school system, and other data sources to provide a full picture of homelessness in a community.

Rapid Re-Housing - provides short-term rental assistance and services. The goals are to help people obtain housing quickly, increase self-sufficiency, and stay housed. It is offered without preconditions (such as employment, income, absence of criminal record, or sobriety) and the resources and services provided are typically tailored to the needs of the person.

VI-SPDAT (Vulnerability Index – Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool) – is a triage tool in form of a self-reported survey to determine risk and prioritization when providing assistance to homeless and at-risk of homeless individuals, families, and youth. It allows to determine the appropriate housing intervention based on vulnerability determinants.