

Housing First and Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) Explained, and Why it's a great investment for Helena and for Montana ...



Housing First successfully connects individuals and families experiencing homelessness to permanent housing without preconditions or barriers to entry such as sobriety, or service participation requirements. Supportive services are offered to maximize housing stability and prevent returns to homelessness as opposed to addressing predetermined treatment goals prior to qualifying for housing entry.

Supportive Housing is an innovative and proven solution to some of local communities' toughest problems. It combines affordable housing with services that help people who face the most complex challenges to live with stability, autonomy, and dignity. PSH offers flexible, voluntary services designed to help people meet their needs, obtain, and pay for housing, and keep the housing for as long as they choose.

Studies have shown that Housing First permanent supportive housing models result in long-term housing stability, improved physical and behavioral health outcomes, and reduced use of crisis services such as emergency departments, and jails.

Permanent Supportive Housing is...

- Safe, affordable housing with an array of voluntary supports for residents.
- A place where many tenants experience improvements in their quality of life.
- Where self-determination is respected, and residents are treated with dignity.
- A place where the configuration of services is determined by the population.
- A place with few to no programmatic prerequisites to permanent housing
- Entry level housing for persons who have experienced chronic homelessness.
- A place where tenants have full rights and responsibilities, and legal protection.

Permanent Supportive Housing is not...

- An Emergency Shelter or transitional housing for persons with severe needs.
- A full service medical or mental health care facility for tenants.
- Only for people living with mental or physical disabilities.
- A place where supportive services are mandated for residents.
- Only for tenants who hold housing vouchers to pay their rent.
- A residence with strict lease agreements, persons can choose other sites if available.
- "Public Housing" These programs ended in the 1970's and did not offer services.

This level of housing is in great demand in Helena. Persons with federal vouchers for housing, valued at approximately \$850 per month, struggle to find an apartment to rent for that price. This site will provide modest, efficient studio apartments along with supportive services for residents experiencing a wide variety of challenges. Locally, professionals estimate between 75-100 persons hold vouchers and are seeking permanent housing. This building will accommodate up to 48 persons and will support them in their journey toward healthy, independent living.

Contribute today - United Way of the Lewis & Clark Area: unitedwaylca.org 406-442-4360