

Tri-City Joint Mayor's Task Force on Homelessness
City Hall Annex, Isinglass Room
33 Wakefield Street
Rochester, NH 03867
October 18, 2018
6:00 PM

	<u>MAYORS</u>	
<u>Chairman</u>	Mayor Caroline McCarley	<u>Vice Chair</u>
Jeremy Hutchinson	Mayor Karen Weston Mayor Dana Hilliard	Marcia Gasses

<u>Rochester Members</u>	<u>Dover Members</u>	<u>Somersworth Members</u>
Elizabeth Atwood	Phyllis Woods	Todd Marsh
Rev. Eliza Tweedy	Betsey Andrews Parker	Laura Hogan
Jeremy Hutchinson	Andrew Howard	Rick Michaud
T.J. Jean	Marcia Gasses	Dina Gagnon

Alternate:
Lindsey Williams

Survival Shelter Sub-Task Group	Master Plan Sub-Task Group
Marcia Gasses	Betsey Andrews-Parker
Todd Marsh	Todd Marsh
Elizabeth Atwood	Dina Gagnon
Andrew Howard	Eliza Tweedy
	Phyllis Woods
	Lena Nichols
	Laura Hogan
	Rich Michaud

MINUTES**1. Call to Order**

Chairman Hutchinson called the meeting to order at order at 6:03 PM.

2. Roll Call

Deputy City Clerk Cassie Givara took the roll call. The following members were present: Chairman Hutchinson, Laura Hogan, Todd Marsh, Rick Michaud, Terra Stewart, Eliza Tweedy, Phyllis Woods, Mayor Weston and Mayor Hilliard.

The Following members were excused/absent: Betsey Andrews-Parker, Dina Gagnon, Andrew Howard, TJ Jean, Lindsey Williams, Vice Chair Gasses and Mayor McCarley.

3. Public Input

Chairman Hutchinson invited members of the public to come forward and address the committee.

Randy Heller of the Dover chapter of disabled American Veterans spoke about his organization and what they can do for homeless veterans.

Don McCullough inquired about the email distribution list for the Task Force and ensuring everyone who wishes to receive the information is reached.

Denise Ambrose discussed distributing Narcan where needed and the stories which had been passed around in the community about drug dealers selling Narcan along with their narcotics. Ms. Ambrose also read a list of harm reduction techniques.

Mayor Weston relayed several incidences she had been told where those misusing drugs held "Narcan" parties in which they would overdose purposely in order to be revived with Narcan

Tory Jennison of the Strafford County Commissioners addressed the claims of these Narcan parties stating the reality is a suggested "buddy system" and harm reduction techniques to try to prevent overdose deaths, not purposeful overdoses Ms. Jennison also stated there is no evidence of dealers distributing Narcan with their narcotics.

Terra Stewart concurred that she had not heard of Narcan parties or purposeful overdosing in the homeless community.

4. Approval of Minutes

4.1 Tri-City Task Force Meeting September 13, 2018, consideration for approval

Phyllis Woods **MOVED** to approve the minutes for the September 13, 2018 meeting. Terra Stewart seconded the motion. The **MOTION CARRIED** by a unanimous voice vote.

5. Communications from the Mayors

Mayor Weston inquired whether the group had received documentation from the Salvation Army in regards to the warming shelters. She stated she has had inquiries with the cold weather coming and she would like to be able to present something to her Council.

Councilor Hutchinson stated that the Salvation Army shelter would be discussed slightly later in the meeting.

6. Communications from the Task Force Chairs

Chairman Hutchinson said that he had not heard from any of the congressional candidates who had been invited to attend the task force meetings.

Hutchinson spoke about the impending November 1st deadline which had been set. The Task Force is now aiming for a January/February time frame in order to have a draft master plan which can be presented to the respective Councils of the 3 cities.

Mayor Hilliard stated that the Master Plan is such an important task and should not be rushed. The Committee should do their due diligence and take adequate time to produce a quality plan even if it has to be extended into spring.

Chairman Hutchinson added that any of the items involved in the Master Plan which will require City funding should be done prior to the passing of the City budgets. When looking at new strategies to focus on, those requiring funding should be tackled first.

7. Proposal for Needles & Campsite Clean-up – Terra Stewart

Ms. Stewart spoke about the initiative she has started for cleaning up homeless campsites, starting in Rochester and hopefully expanding to Dover and Somersworth. The timeline for the clean-up is not set in stone due to the upcoming cold weather and possibility of snow. The clean-ups will cease as soon as there is snow on the ground.

Ms. Stewart reported that the one of the biggest hurdles at this stage is having the supplies needed for the clean-up, but she does have a supply list for those willing to donate.

Ms. Stewart also spoke about the great need for adequate housing for the homeless community. Law enforcement sweeps are often performed displacing the homeless from their home communities where their resources and support is located.

Chairman Hutchinson suggested setting a date for a clean-up and a call to action for gathering necessary supplies such as contracting bags and tamper-resistant gloves. Donated supplies can be dropped at the Tri-City Co-Op at 55 Summer Street in Rochester. A date will be discussed in the future for potential campsite clean-ups.

The other major issue hampering clean-up is the number of needles being found. There have been other cities in the country which have installed tamper-resistant sharps containers in hotspots which is a possible solution in this area if funding can be sourced for these containers. Ms. Stewart suggested a one-year pilot program to do research of sharps bins, possible locations and funding sources.

Ms. Jennison said that NH does have a needle exchange program currently and these organizations may be able to offer assistance.

Julian Long, Grants Manager for Rochester, committed to sourcing possible grants and funding for sharps containers and supplies for the needle clean-up initiative.

8. Report from Sub-Task Groups

Chairman Hutchinson instated a permanent bookmark on the agenda for Tory Jennison to present relevant data.

Ms. Jennison spoke about the difficulty in obtaining accurate data for the homeless community. She made a presentation on the trends in homelessness in the Strafford County area as well as homelessness and shelter data throughout the state.*

**see addendums A through D*

There was a discussion in committee regarding school-aged students facing homelessness and their unique needs and considerations. Ms. Jennison stated that there is a homelessness liaison for each school in the area. Each community is also responsible for transporting the students to and from school regardless of where they are housed or sheltered. Homeless children are more likely to need special services and helping to care for this population is a strain on the school system. Todd Marsh stated that welfare departments try their best to refer homeless families for resources close to the schools their children attend.

Chairman Hutchinson suggested that the Task Force focus on housing as their next strategy for the Master Plan. It is a large issue to tackle which may require changes in codes or zoning to implement action which will involve the governing bodies of each municipality. Due to the scale of the affordable housing piece of the Master Plan and the challenges involved, the Chairman stated it would be added as a reoccurring item on the agenda being headed by Betsey Andrews-Parker. Each member of the committee will be involved as opposed to a single subgroup.

Chairman Hutchinson asked Mr. Long of Rochester if, as part of the Community Development Committee and working closely with HUD, he could assist with potential funding and grants related to housing.

Barbara Holstein spoke about the Greater Seacoast Coalition to End Homelessness (GSCTEH) and their focus on affordable housing as well as working with landlords to help prevent evictions and increasing the need for individuals needing housing.

Phyllis Woods said the Greater Seacoast Housing Summit would take place on Thursday November 1st and said she would attend and bring back information to the next meeting. It was also suggested that Paige Farmer (GSCTEH) be added on the agenda for the following month to speak about housing.

It was decided that the next meeting would focus primarily on housing. A representative from each community could gather information on codes and zoning and bring it back to the committee to determine where any gaps exist. The Committee will receive data and reports from organizations such as Community Action Partnership and GSCTEH and ensure that there is not duplication of efforts.

8.1 September 26th Meeting of the Cold Weather Shelter Sub-Group

Todd Marsh of Rochester Welfare said that the Cold weather subgroup met on September 26 at SOS. The group is looking not only at an extreme cold weather shelter but also at options for long-term seasonal shelters, which would require more funding and resources.

The Salvation Army is on track as an option for extreme cold weather station. There are some concerns for zoning and code issues for this location, but the Salvation Army is currently working with City Staff to resolve these issues.

The Salvation Army runs a toy program annually prior to the holidays, and due to the space required for this program there will not be space to accommodate those seeking shelter prior to the end of this toy program. There is a potential for the extreme cold weather shelter to start at this Salvation Army location in mid-December with a

maximum of 30 temporary residents. The Tri-City Co-Op may also offer some limited shelter options for their members. These shelters would be low-barrier.

Ms. Jennison clarified that the Salvation Army is not doing anything at the direction of the task force, there is no agreement. The Task Force is simply providing support.

Mayor Weston inquired if there would be definitive answers on whether or not these shelter options would go forward or not. The cold weather is imminent and if there are issues to be fixed in order to facilitate the opening of cold weather shelters, it should be handled sooner rather than later.

There was a discussion regarding City budgeting for cold weather and emergency sheltering; potentially adding a cold weather line items within the municipal budgets or as an item in the operating budget for the City welfare departments. The outcome may be to get the Department of Homeland Security to recognize cold weather as an emergency, which it is not currently.

8.2 Reports of Subcommittee for Strategy #1 and Strategy #4

The discussion on the strategies will be moved forward to the next meeting when there is a more thorough presentation to be made.

There was a discussion in committee regarding each municipality gathering data on what each municipality currently funds as well as an estimate of funding needed. The Committee will also look into how and where CDBG could come into play and if CDBG funds could be used for any of the Task Force strategies.

8.3 Master Plan Process Review

9. Other

Chairman Hutchinson asked that Ms. Jennison present on municipal strategies to respond to increase housing need. The next meeting will focus heavily on items involving funding.

The Chairman indicated that there is virtually no advertising for the Task Force to involve the public and potentially receive donations which would decrease the requests to the Cities' for funding. Options for advertising and marketing were discussed; A Facebook page, potentially "airing" the meetings on Facebook live, and having a meeting for public input with opportunity for questions and answers and education. It was suggested that there be an area on each municipal website for public donation to the Task Force, but the legality of such a donation option through a City site was questioned.

The next meeting will be held at November 15, 2018 at 6:00 PM at the McConnell Center in Dover.

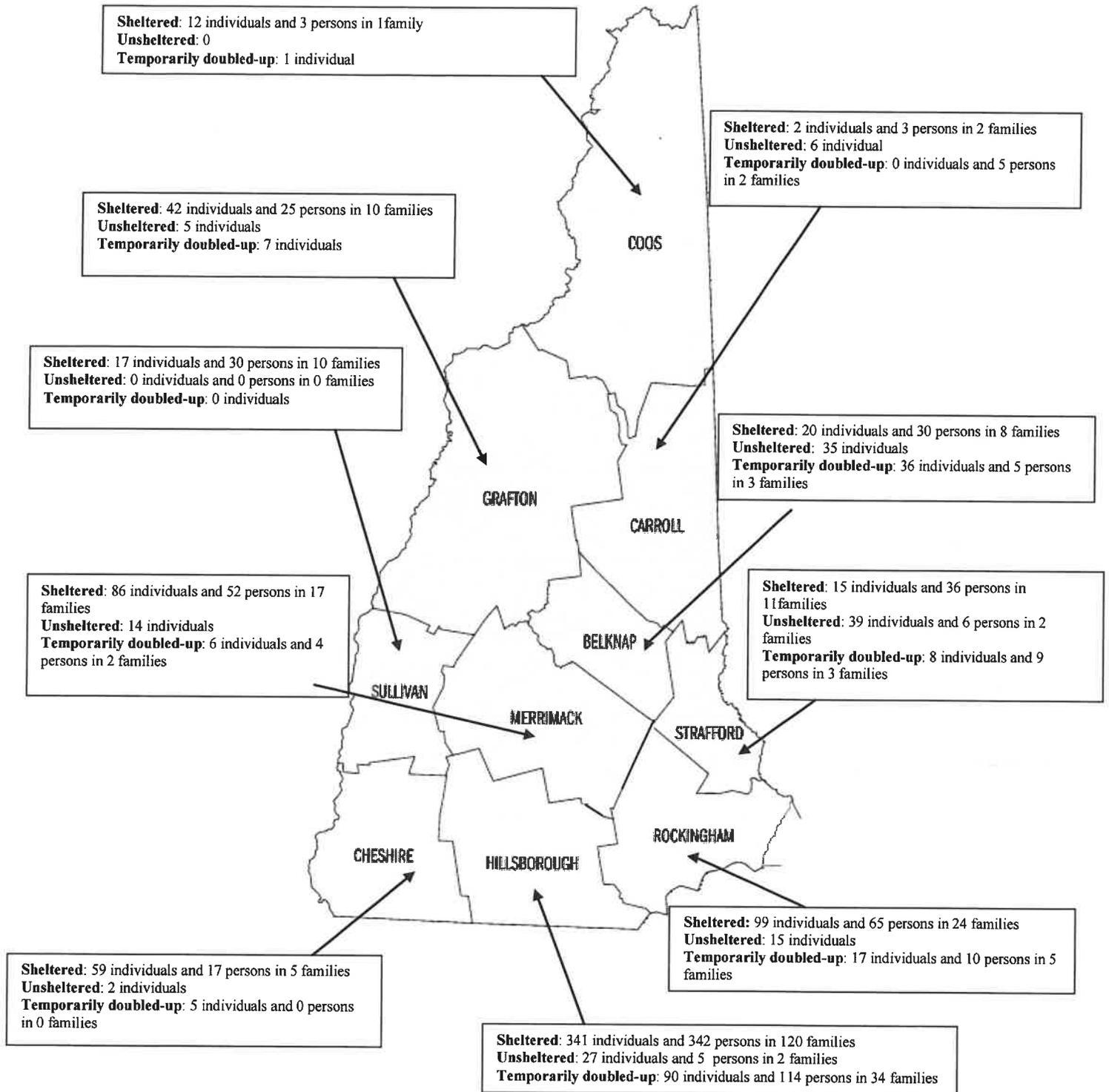
10. Adjournment

Chairman Hutchinson **ADJOURNED** the meeting at 8:12 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cassie Givara
Deputy City Clerk
Rochester, NH

New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services, Bureau of Housing Supports
2018 Point-in-Time Count - January 24, 2018



Total Homeless and doubled up persons for the State of NH: 1,767
(1,296 sheltered, 154 unsheltered and 317 temporarily doubled-up (temporarily residing with family/friend included in totals).
Totals: 1006 individuals, 761 persons in families, 260 families

Veteran sub-population totals: 143

Strafford County



Trends in homelessness from 2015 to 2017

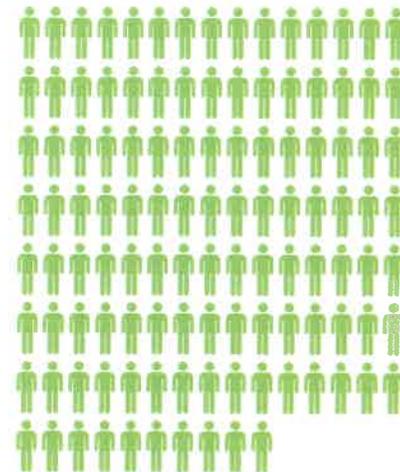
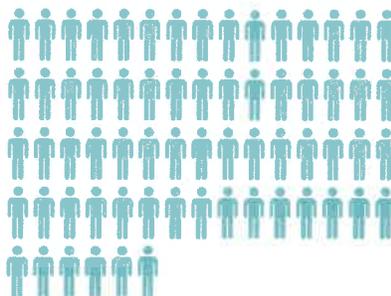
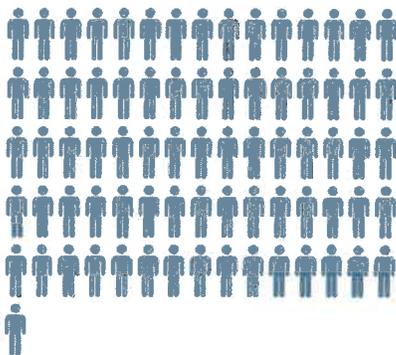
*All data from the 2017 State of Homelessness in New Hampshire Report.

Overall homelessness increased by 44.7%.

2015

2016

2017



**Median household
renter income
decreased by 1.2%.**



**Monthly
median gross
rent increased
by 12.7%.**



**The vacancy
rate fell
from 2.3%
to 1.3%.**



**Family
homelessness
decreased by 20%.**



**Unsheltered
homelessness has
more than doubled.**

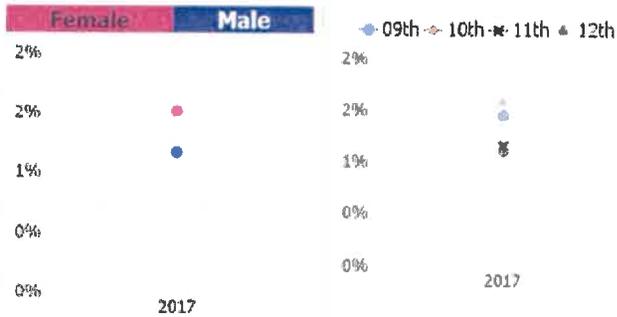
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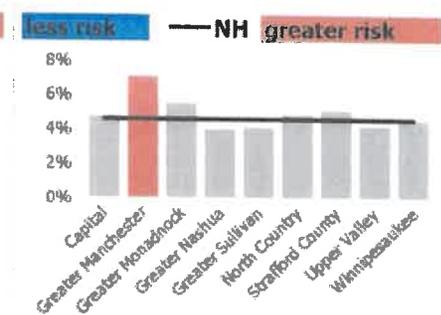
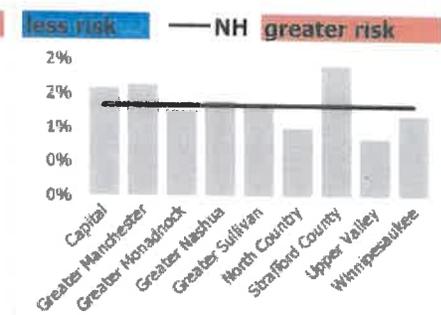
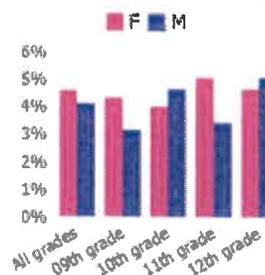
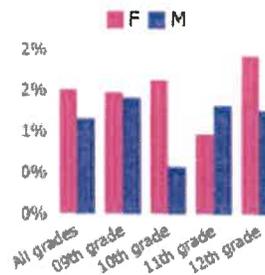
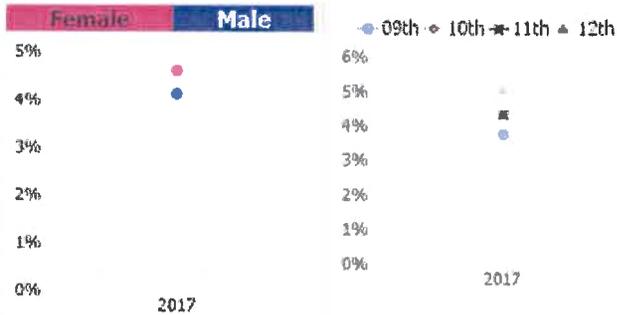
www.nhceh.org | [Twitter](#) | [Facebook](#) /nhceh

[Click here to read the full report.](#)

Usually slept in the home of a friend, family member, or other person because they had to leave their home or their parent or guardian cannot afford housing during the past 30 days (q82)

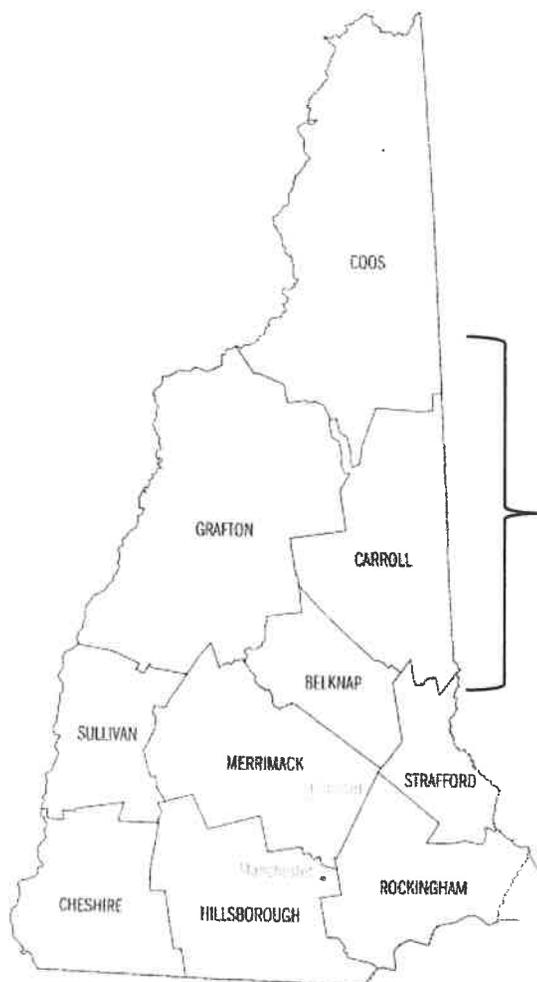


Have ever slept away from their parents or guardians because they were kicked out, ran away, or were abandoned during the past 30 days (q83)



State Funded Emergency and Transitional Shelters

Emergency Shelter = ES; Transitional Housing = TH



Coos:

Tyler Blain House, Lancaster – ES

Carroll:

None.

Grafton:

The Bridge House, Plymouth – ES
Headrest, Inc., Lebanon - TH

Cheshire:

Southwestern Community Services, Keene – ES

Belknap:

Laconia Area Community Land Trust, Laconia – TH
Salvation Army – Carey House, Laconia – ES

Hillsborough:

Families in Transition Locations:

- Family Willows, Manchester - TH
 - Lowell Street Specialty Emergency Shelter, Manchester - ES
 - Manchester Emergency Housing, Manchester – ES (2)
- Helping Hands Outreach Ministries, Manchester – ES
The Front Door Agency, Nashua – TH
Family Promise of Greater Nashua, Hudson – TH
Harbor Homes, Nashua – ES
Nashua Soup Kitchen & Shelter, Nashua – ES
New Horizons for New Hampshire, Manchester – ES (2)
The Way Home, Manchester – TH
Marguerite’s Place, Nashua – ES

Sullivan:

Southwestern Community Services, Claremont – ES

Rockingham:

Cross Roads House, Portsmouth – ES
New Generation, Greenland – TH

Merrimack:

FIT: Concord Transitional Housing, Concord – TH
The Friends Emergency Housing Program – ES
The Salvation Army – McKenna House, Concord – ES

Strafford:

My Friend’s Place, Dover – ES & TH

EMERGENCY & TRANSITIONAL SHELTERS

The NH Bureau of Homeless and Housing Services provided funding to over 40 Emergency, Specialty, and Transitional Shelters that served approximately 4,496 homeless men, women and children in SFY '17. These shelter programs act as a safety net for individuals and families who have run out of options and would otherwise be without a place to sleep. They are a critical component of the local homeless care network.

Emergency Shelters and Transitional Housing Services for our New Hampshire Neighbors

Shelter services in New Hampshire provide several categories of shelter for those in need of services. The State budget allocates funds that support these organizations providing supportive services to emergency and transitional shelters statewide in order to assist victims of domestic violence, single adults and families residing in New Hampshire.

Day Shelters provide a warm and supportive environment to homeless and low-income people during the day. Case management and assistance accessing mainstream services is often provided. Meals and basic hygiene products, laundry and shower facilities may also be offered. Most day shelters provide their services free of charge. Any emergency or homeless shelter that allows clients to stay during the day is also classified under this category.

Emergency Homeless Shelters both provide short term relief for individuals and families experiencing homelessness. Frequently, emergency shelters encourage a maximum stay of 3 months or less. Many of these shelters ask their clients to leave during the day. Meals and other supportive services are often offered.

Transitional housing is temporary housing designed to provide client-centered support services to persons who are homeless or who are close to homelessness. The intention is to help individuals develop daily living skills to be independent and successful in permanent housing. Services provided at transitional housing facilities can include life skills, budgeting, substance use disorder treatment, community mental health services, employment and educational training, domestic violence assistance, etc.