

Understanding the Housing Landscape in Cook County: A Housing Resource Guide for CountyCare Staff

Updated: 4/21/2025

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Executive Summary

Patients experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity face multiple challenges in accessing health care and stabilizing their health conditions. Without access to safe, stable, and affordable housing, individuals and families can struggle to achieve optimal health. According to a report prepared for the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) by the University of Illinois Chicago (UIC) School of Public Health, those who are homeless are likely to have a significantly lower life expectancy and are more likely to be the victim of a violent assault or homicide. The "Illinois Homelessness Morbidity and Mortality Report 2017-2022" is only the second state government report on the mortality of those who are homeless.

Below is a snapshot of some of the "Key Findings" reported in the data within the "Illinois Homelessness Morbidity and Mortality Report 2017-2022".

Key Findings

- Illinois: A total of 2,520 deaths involving people experiencing homelessness (PEH) were identified in the Illinois statewide vital records for the years 2017-2022.¹
- Nearly all the PEH decedents died in urban counties (94.5%). By comparison, 83.5% of the general population died in urban counties.¹

According to the CHICAGO COALITION TO END HOMELESSNESS Reporting data 2015-2022 the City of Chicago and Census data suggest roughly 76,375 Chicagoans experience homelessness in 2022.² In 2022, DHS reports about 54% of Illinoisans experiencing homelessness reside in Cook County. ³

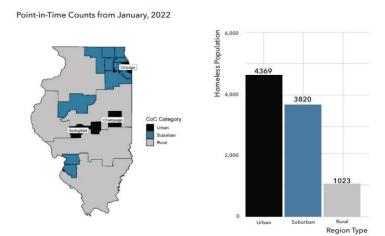
https://dph.illinois.gov/content/dam/soi/en/web/idph/publications/idph/topics-and-services/life-stages-populations/hmmr-report-201722.pdf

¹ Illinois Department of Public Health. (2024). Mortality of People Experiencing Homelessness in Illinois, 2017-2022.

² Homeless-Estimate-2024.pdf

³ 'Home Illinois: Illinois' Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness - Annual Report 2023,pg.10

54% of Illinoisans experiencing homelessness in 2022 reside in Cook County



Overview of Homelessness Among CountyCare Membership

Homelessness and housing insecurity among CountyCare membership is reflective of the housing challenges faced across Cook County and the City of Chicago. According to CountyCare's 2024 Annual Report, almost 32% of our membership stated they need help with food, clothing, shelter. Further details of the social risk factors identified by our members can be found in the table below.

July 2023 - June 2024	Acc	ess	ACHI	V-CCC	H	IP	M	HN	Com	bined
Total screened	11,	873	14,	089	48,	936	44,	,071	118	,969
Help with food, clothing, shelter	8,488	71.48%	3,330	23.64%	14,611	29.86%	11,367	25.79%	37,796	31.77%
Lack of transportation	98	0.83%	1,262	8.96%	5,263	10.75%	8,474	19.23%	15,097	12.69%
Difficulty paying for medication	0	0%	647	4.59%	3,312	6.77%	5,641	12.80%	9,600	8.07%
Self-reported health of fair or poor	2,542	21.41%	4,493	31.89%	22,114	45.19%	11,538	26.18%	40,687	34.20%
Physically or emotionally abused	0	0%	167	1.19%	587	1.20%	1,910	4.33%	2,664	2.24%
BMI over 30	6,784	57.14%	N/A	N/A	n/a	n/a	14,287	32.42%	21,071	17.71%
Depression	46	0.39%	1,003	7.12%	6,713	13.72%	2,073	4.70%	9,835	8.27%
Homeless or in shelter	156	1.31%	165	1.17%	346	0.71%	586	1.33%	1,253	1.05%
Alcohol or drug abuse	0	0	98	0.70%	384	0.78%	8,273	18.77%	8,755	7.36%
Refuses smoking cessation	0	0	13,283	94.28%	29,812	60.92%	NR	NR	43,095	36.22%

^{*}NR - Not Reported as assessment used captures data differently

In addition, for members who completed the SDOH survey, in CY2024, 388 members reported they are housing insecure.

Community Context: What do we know about the housing needs of the communities we serve?

At least 3.5% of residents in Cook County live in crowded housing. Almost 1 in 4 Cook County residents is extremely rent-burdened. This means that they spend more than 30% of their income on housing. We also know that at least 1 in every 10 Cook County households has a Housing Choice Voucher. Lastly, the 2021 State of Rental Housing in Cook County showed that the stock of affordable housing continues to decrease and that individuals who are low-income continue to have a high housing burden.

Goals of this Reference Guide

The goals of this reference guide are to:

- Provide a brief overview of the systemic policies and practices embedded in Chicago's history that have led to the current rates of homelessness.
- Describe what CountyCare is doing to address homelessness and housing insecurity.
- List the housing options available to CCH patients and CountyCare membership.

Background

Defining Homelessness

There are multiple federal definitions of homelessness:

- 1. **US Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD):** persons living in a shelter, fleeing domestic violence situations and those living in places not meant for human habitation (e.g., in a car, park, encampment, building without heat, running water. This is also referred to as literal homelessness. Housing resources funded by HUD and through the Coordinated Entry System (CES) are for households meeting this definition.⁴
- US Department of Education via the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act Title X, Part C of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act: HUD definition above plus those living temporarily with family and friends, also known as "couch surfing" or "doubled-up."

For the purpose of this document, we will be using the US Department of Education definition when we describe homelessness and/or homeless households.

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⁴ HUD Exchange. (2025). CoC and ESG Homelessness Eligibility – Four Categories in the Homeless Definition. <u>CoC</u> and <u>ESG Homeless Eligibility - Four Categories in the Homeless Definition - HUD Exchange</u>

⁵ National Center for Homeless Education. (2012). Increasing Access to Higher Education for Unaccompanied Homeless Youth: Information for Colleges and Universities. https://nche.ed.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/higher_ed.pdf

Strategy

CountyCare's Approach to Addressing Homelessness

To work towards addressing homelessness among CountyCare membership, multiple strategies have been employed, listed below. Additionally, each Care Management Agency (CME) contracted with CountyCare may have additional strategies, approaches, or programs in place to address homelessness among patients.

- All Health Risk Screens used for CountyCare members include one or more questions to identity housing insecurity, which prompt Care Coordinators to perform additional assessments and link members to resources accordingly
- In addition, CountyCare has partnered with several local organizations to match patients with available housing opportunities or support people experiencing homelessness in finding housing:
 - Housing Forward Wellness Initiative Network: Connects CountyCare members with supportive housing and case management services in west and south suburban Cook County. from the Assessment of American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian Housing Needs.
 - Illinois Housing Development Authority Rental Housing Support Program/Housing Forward Partnership: Links unstably housed CountyCare members to housing in suburban Cook County.
 - o **Rise Center of Cook County**: Provides medical respite care for homeless patients exiting an inpatient hospitalization.
 - Corporation for Supportive Housing (CHS): Trainings have occurred across CMEs to train Care Coordinators, Managers, and Community Health Workers in understanding the City of Chicago housing landscape, including entry points to using the Coordinated Entry System (CES) to assess and prioritize patients for housing assistance.
 - Mercy Housing: Links housed CountyCare members to care management services.
 Provide residents with health trainings. Provide staff with Medicaid 101 trainings and resources.
- An investment (2020) by CountyCare to address homelessness through a housing first model
 is the Chicago & Cook County Flexible Housing Pool (FHP). FHP targets members who are
 persistent service users but are difficult to serve well due to homelessness augmented by
 mental illness and/or SUD. In addition this program prioritizes CTI members, families with
 children who are minors, pregnant individuals, justice-involved members, asylum and
 refugee-seekers, among others.
- CountyCare released an RFP in 2024 to expand our capacity to assist our members in need of housing resources.

Overview of Housing Program Models

To understand the housing options available to CCH patients and CountyCare members, it is first essential to understand the types of housing options available in the overall housing system. The table below summarizes different types of housing options.

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Housing Program Model	Description	Common Eligibility Requirements	Examples	
Market Rate	Private market housingHousehold pays 100% of the rentNo services attached	N/A	Traditional Real Estate	
Publicly funded affordable housing Note: There are many models for housing subsidies (affordable housing could be a subsidy or naturally occurring)	Rent subsidy program typically operated by government entity • Household pays 100% of rent that is lower than market rate OR Household pays 30% of income towards rent • No services attached	 Citizenship: U.S. citizens and specified categories of non-citizens who have eligible immigration status Income under 50-80% of area's median income Household Size Eviction history 	 State-wide referral network property Housing Choice Vouchers Family Unification Program Vouchers Chicago Low Income Housing Trust Fund Units https://www.ihda.org/rentalhousing/ 	
Permanent Supportive Housing	Housing assistance (e.g., long-term leasing or rental assistance) and supportive services are provided Household pays 30% of income on rent Supportive services provided in-home	 Literal Homelessness Diagnosed disability Income at or below 30% area median 	 Wellness Initiative Network (WIN) Flexible Housing Pool 	
Rapid Rehousing	Program that helps people experiencing homelessness move into permanent housing as quickly as possible	 Literal Homelessness OR Imminently losing primary night-time residence OR fleeing or attempting to flee 	All Chicago ExpeditedHousing InitiativeRenaissance Social ServicesCOVID-19 Rapid Rehousing Initiative	

Housing Program Model	Description	Common Eligibility Requirements	Examples
	 Rental assistance Case management for up to 24 months in market rate Individual pays 30% of income towards rent % of income towards rent increases until HH pays 100% of rent 	domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or other dangerous or life-threatening conditions • Household annual income must be less than or equal to 30% of area median income	
Recuperative Care/Medical Respite	Temporary housing programs with medical services attached for persons discharged from acute care • Settings medical needs but not acute enough for nursing home care • No program fees	 Literal homelessness Clinical recuperative care need Exclusion criteria in greater detail can be found here. 	The Boulevard Rise Center of Cook County
Recovery Homes	Temporary housing programs with abstinence-based SUD recovery programming • Program fees up to 90% of income	Background check	 Stairway to Freedom Sober Living Kedzie Recovery Home Haymarket Center's Recovery Home for Men
Interim Housing	Interim housing features non-congregated sleeping arrangements (i.e. individual rooms with doors that close), and offers a basic level of supportive services, individual privacy, security, and space to keep belongings. Short-Term or Temporary housing program (type of shelter)	 Currently homeless at risk of homelessness Meet income poverty guidelines 	 St. Leonard's Ministries- St. Leonard's House (men), Grace House (women) Deborah's Place Housing Forward

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Housing Program Model	Description	Common Eligibility Requirements	Examples
	Assigned room and 24-hour accessNo program fees		
Emergency Shelter	An emergency shelter is a place for people to live temporarily when they cannot live in their previous residence, similar to homeless shelters. • Temporary housing program • No program fees • First come-first served • Usual access in the evenings/overnight only	Persons who are homeless or at risk of homelessness	 Pacific Garden Mission Franciscan Outreach FeatherFist

^{*}Eligibility can vary greatly across these programs, depending on funding sources and/or the agencies that offer them.

Nursing Homes & Supportive Living Facilities (SLFs)

Nursing homes, medical care facilities with 24/7 clinical care provision, including Supportive Living Facilities (SLFs) are <u>not traditional housing resources</u>, <u>nor should they be primarily utilized to address homelessness</u>. Primarily, nursing homes and SLFs are intended to address unmet health needs that would not otherwise be addressed in other housing or medical models. The primary eligibility requirements for nursing homes and SLFs include a medical condition that requires clinical care provision, and a Determination of Need (DON) score of >29, demonstrating the degree of unmet need to address functional deficits in performing activities of daily living at time of admission. Cook County Entry Points for Individuals Experiencing Literal Homelessness

Connecting Members to Housing Services in Cook County – Emergency and Permanent Housing

If a person is experiencing homelessness and needs to be assessed for emergency, transitional, or permanent housing, they can complete or update an assessment by going to a Coordinated Entry Access Point. There is a system specific to Chicago and a system for Suburban Cook County. Please refer to the following sections dependent on where the member lives.

Coordinated Entry System (CES)

The Coordinated Entry System is designed to ensure that all people experiencing a housing crisis have fair and equal access to the service system, no matter where or when they present for services. A key feature is that it coordinates housing and homeless assistance to prioritize those with the most severe service needs. It requires that homeless residents or those who are at risk of homelessness, are quickly identified, assessed, referred, and connected to housing and homeless assistance based on their needs and strengths. Coordinated entry requires standardized tools and practices, incorporates a system-side Housing-First approach, and focuses on participant choice to rapidly connect individuals to housing.

How to contact:

- City of Chicago CES Contact- 311
- Surburban Cook Contact 211

Chicago CES

The Chicago CES is operated by All Chicago. Below is information on how to refer a member.

How to Refer a Member City of Chicago

If a person is experiencing homelessness and needs to be assessed for permanent housing, they can complete or update an assessment by going to a Coordinated Entry Access Point (listed below).

The most updated list of Coordinated Entry Access Points can be found here: https://allchicago.org/coordinated-entry-system/. People can also call 211 to receive information about the Access Point closest to them. Because housing resources are limited, completing an assessment does not guarantee housing.

Please note, this may or may not lead to a housing option and does not solve your immediate housing crisis.

If you need shelter, please call 3-1-1 to request transportation to a shelter. Questions? You can also contact the Coordinated Entry System team at **ces@chicagococ.org** or leave a voicemail at **872.296.5004**.

Access Points

Access Points provide Coordinated Entry Assessments and updates on a walk-in basis. Please contact Access Points in advance to confirm hours.

Phone Access Point: The Coordinated Entry Phone Access Point is run by United Way. Phone Access Point Hours are as follows:

Phone Access Point Hours:

Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, & Friday: 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM

Tuesdays: 3:00 – 9:00 PM

The Phone Access Point Number: 312.971.4178

More information and Access Point locations can be found here: <u>Coordinated Entry</u> System - All Chicago

Entry Point- CES for Suburban Cook County

Entry Point's purpose is to ensure all people experiencing homelessness or who are at-risk of homelessness have fair and equal access to housing – regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, familial status, disability, actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identify, or marital status.

Individuals and families experiencing homelessness or who are at-risk of homelessness can access Entry Point throughout the region. Trained Entry Point staff at access locations work with households to understand their strengths and needs using a standardized assessment. Entry Point uses HUD homeless assistance eligibility guidelines and uniform prioritization policies to refer people to the right programs based on their preferences and levels of need.

Entry Point also helps suburban Cook County make the best matches between homeless assistance resources and the people who need them most.

How to Refer a Member

If you need to support a member connecting to housing services, please reach out to the Entry Point number below:

Suburban Cook Call Center

1-877-426-6515

8:30am – 4:30pm Monday through Friday
Illinois Domestic Violence Hotline

Call or Text

1-877-863-6338

(877-TO END DV)

24 Hours

Universal Data Platform: Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)

What is the Homeless Management Information System?

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires that each metropolitan area use a Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). HMIS is a database that collects and organizes specific data on people experiencing homelessness and the housing and homeless

services that they receive. Collecting standardized data helps us better understand homelessness and allows us to measure the progress toward specific goals.

All Chicago serves as the Lead Agency designated by the CoC to operate the HMIS and to ensure the HMIS is administered in accordance with the HEARTH Act. In our role as administrator, we:

- Collect standardized data on homelessness from partner agencies
- Monitor and improve data quality on more than 400,000 unduplicated client records
- Provide training and help desk support for more than 1,200 database users
- Measure progress towards specific goals in preventing and ending homelessness
- Analyze aggregate data and publish data dashboards
- Share trends to drive discussion, strategy, policy, and funding at federal and local levels
- Submit reports to HUD, such as the Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems and Annual Homeless Assessment Report
- Develop and monitor HMIS policies and procedures, in partnership with the HMIS Committee
- Administer day-to-day HMIS operations, including vendor agreements and contracts

CountyCare Housing and Member Resources

These housing options are available through CountyCare's Care Management program:

Cook County Health Housing Navigation Program

Background: The Housing Navigation Program (HNP) was proposed as an ARPA funded program in 2021 to provide housing navigation support to Cook County Health patients and CountyCare members.

How to refer a member:

CCH/CountyCare staff will complete a referral on behalf of the patient/member and send it to housing@cookcountyhhs.org

Flexible Housing Pool (FHP)

*At this time, FHP is closed and not accepting referrals.

Permanent supportive housing units in Suburban Cook County and the City of Chicago.

Requirements:

- 1. CountyCare member
- 2. Identified through the CES data match.
- 3. Persistent utilizer of shelter and health system resources

How to Refer a Member:

At this time, members cannot be directly referred to the FHP. All members experiencing literal homelessness should be entered through the CES to be connected to services, however. FHP members are pre-identified by CountyCare through an HMIS data match and prioritization process. Care Coordinators will be notified if they have a member on their caseload who is being targeted for outreach, or currently enrolled in, the Flexible Housing Pool. Care Coordinators with FHP-enrolled members should reference the Care Management Manual for additional guidance.

Medical Respite/Recuperative Care

The Boulevard

The Boulevard is a 64-bed medical respite care center with an on-site clinic that is staffed by PCC Wellness. Each resident works with physicians and nursing staff to develop and implement their individualized care plans. CountyCare holds a payment arrangement with The Boulevard specifically for CountyCare membership to pay for care, if available. The Boulevard provides support to residents to complete their healing, but it is not a medical treatment facility. The Boulevard is not appropriate for patients requiring long-term nursing home care.

Requirements

- Single men and women who are experiencing homeless and being discharged from the
 hospital needing a short-term placement (four to six weeks) to complete their recovery
 from a physical illness or injury, are mentally stable and those that request assistance with
 substance abuse issues.
- Patient must be able to physically care for themselves (e.g., dress, bathe, self-ambulate, attend to their personal hygiene and take medication as prescribed), in addition to,
 - o No longer requiring bedside nursing care, can come to the dining room for meals,
 - o Make their bed,
 - o Keep their living space neat.
- Patient must understand their care plan and can carry out the measures necessary to implement them with the help of The Boulevard staff, including compliance with medications and returning to their primary care physician for follow-up care.

 Patients must be able to live in a communal environment, share a bedroom with four or five roommates, share meals in a common dining room with 64 residents, participate in educational sessions and group meetings and follow The Boulevard conditions of residency.

*To provide the best possible service to residents, it is vital that all medical conditions and mental health history be shared with the Intake Administrator.

Referral process

The Boulevard typically launches the referral process when a member arrives at their facility. The Boulevard staff will typically call CountyCare to confirm that the member's Medicaid is active.

Otherwise, the provider that is referring the member to medical respite typically includes the medical assessment as part of the referral.

The care coordinator should support the member to ensure all documentation is in place, such as the medical assessment. The care coordinator can act as a liaison between the provider that indicated the member needs medical respite and the staff at The Boulevard.

RISE Center (Recuperation in a Supportive Environment) of Cook County (Partnership with Housing Forward)

The Housing Forward Medical Respite facility is in Oak Park and has 19 beds for single and double occupancy. Clinical service areas include COVID isolation, outpatient antibiotic therapy, post-procedural recovery, protective isolation, and advanced serious illness, referrals from CCH Palliative Medicine only currently.

Please note that Housing Forward provides additional services, of which Medical Respite is only one. Members may receive additional services from Housing Forward.

Requirements

Referred clients must be an individual adult or an adult member of a household experiencing homeless according to the U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) definition. An individual or family experiences homelessness if they:

- Lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, such as emergency shelters, transitional housing, or places not meant for habitation.
 OR
- Will imminently lose their primary nighttime residence, provided that no subsequent housing has been identified and the individual/family lacks support networks or resources needed to obtain housing.
 OR

3. Are fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence, has no other residence, and lacks the resources or support networks to obtain other permanent housing.

Clients must meet one of the following three referral source or residency requirements:

- 1) Patient of a Cook County Health facility.
- 2) Patient of a healthcare facility located in suburban Cook County.
- 3) Resident of suburban Cook County referred from any healthcare facility.

In addition, all referred patients required to complete the following:

- 1) a CoVID-19 test from the clinical encounter.
- 2) a target end-date for their stay at the MRC.

Primary Exclusion Criteria

- Large families
- 2. People experiencing homelessness that do not fit one of the clinical service areas.
- 3. People discharged from Chicago hospitals, outside of Stroger or Provident.
- 4. Able to perform activities of daily living (ADLs)
- 5. Absent disorientation
- 6. Absent severe uncontrolled psychosis (NOTE: clients currently taking antipsychotic medications and stable are not excluded)
- 7. Absent suicidal/homicidal ideation
- 8. Not on sex offender registry
- 9. If requires chronic hemodialysis, dialysis facility and routine transportation must be established.

Referral Process

Send email to mrc@cookcountyhhs.org with subject line "New Referral." The email should include:

- Participant's initials
- Referring person's name and contact number.
- Relevant service areas, and
- Confirmation that patient satisfies all requirements and exclusion criteria in the body of the email.

If you do not get a call within **2 hours**, please call Program Director at (708) 738-6861. **A brief conversation is required to determine patient's eligibility.**

Pre-Transport Check List

• Follow-up clinical appointments (tele-health or in-person) have been made.

- Transportation to clinical appointments has been arranged.
- Prescription medications given to patient in quantities sufficient to last through the proximate appointment.
- Homecare services at the MRC have been arranged, if necessary. The MRC has a preferred home care agency. Please inquire before making arrangements.
- If patient requires home oxygen, supplier has been called to ensure delivery of oxygen to MRC preceding patient arrival.
- Patient scheduled to arrive at MRC between 9am-3pm on business days. (Arrivals outside these hours may not be accepted)
- Non-emergency transportation secured, if necessary and when possible. Instruct the driver to call the program director at (708) 738-6861 shortly prior to arrival so that an escort from the MRC can greet the patient in-person. Please instruct the driver not to leave the patient at the destination until the escort has greeted the patient.

Furniture

The Chicago Furniture Bank

The mission of Chicago Furniture Bank is to provide furniture to individuals who are transitioning into a new home. There is a \$100 appointment fee that includes an entire home's worth of furniture. The appointment fee is always \$100 regardless of the size of the household and regardless of if a member selects the furniture during the appointment. Please refer to the CaseWorkers Guide. Individuals must be able to either transport furniture themselves (on-time and within the giving timeframe window outline in the CaseWorkers Guide or have funds available to pay the other fees associated with the Chicago Furniture Bank:

Fee prices:

- Self-Haul- \$100.00
- Curb-side- \$325.00
- In-Home \$425.00
- Cancellation Fee \$50.00

*Please note these are the fee prices for 2025 and they may change. Fees are set by the Chicago Furniture Bank.

Full details on how appointments work, policies, procedures, and additional information is available in the "Caseworkers' Guide to the Chicago Furniture Bank" document, available on the CountyCare Care Coordination Resources page.

Referral

To connect a member to the Chicago Furniture Bank, complete an intake form (available on the CountyCare Care Coordination Resources page) and email the completed form to your organization's designated liaison. Virtual appointments and in-person appointments are available.

*Please note – if a member selects an in–person appointment, the assigned care coordinator needs to accompany the member to the in-person appointment.

Cancellations:

Occasionally, a client may decide that there is nothing they would like from CFB when attending an appointment or they don't pick their furniture within the pickup timeline.

While we understand the decision to do so, any

appointment where a client leaves without selecting furniture will be subject to the \$50 cancellation fee. This is their standard policy, as when clients attend the appointment but do not select any items, it is a block of time that could have been used for another organization.

CountyCare Transportation (Modivcare)

CountyCare provides transportation to and from your scheduled medical, behavioral, dentist, and eye appointments, pharmacies, medical equipment providers, certain events sponsored by CountyCare, or Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) food assistance locations.

More information on CountyCare's transportation services via Modivcare can be found here.

Chicago Housing Authority

The Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) website allows individuals to complete an application for Housing Choice Vouchers and to sign up for CHA Housing waitlists through Public Housing (PH) or Project Based Vouchers (PBV).

CHICAGO (Nov. 12, 2024): The Chicago Housing Authority has launched a new and improved website and an enhanced waitlist application process, making it easier for everyone to find and apply for affordable housing and for CHA residents to access programs and services.

Located at <u>www.thecha.org</u>, the new site was developed after an extensive user research process that included in-depth interviews with current residents, waitlist applicants, property owners and business partners, along with surveys, analytic analysis and more.

Improved features of the new site and application include:

Enhanced property search and mapping tool with the ability to filter properties by multiple criteria, including program type, community area, bedroom size and target audience

Simplified navigation for quick access to the most important information

Fully responsive and mobile-friendly interface for both the website and application

- ADA-compliant design to increase accessibility and inclusivity
- Streamlined, user-friendly application process that includes profile creation and option to save and come back before submitting

The new website is one of several recent CHA initiatives to enhance the customer experience. In 2024, CHA also launched its new customer experience call center to provide people with support in filling out the waitlist application and addressing other critical questions. The customer experience call center can be reached at 312-742-8500 (TTY: 866-331-3603.)

CHA Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program

Allows low-income families to rent quality housing in the private market via federal funds provided by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Through the HCV Program, CHA pays a portion of eligible families' rent each month directly to the property owner. Families can use their vouchers to rent a house or apartment in the private market throughout the city of Chicago. Because there are more families who need rental assistance than there are funds available, CHA uses a waiting list to administer the program to eligible families. Names are selected for the waiting list randomly using a lottery process. Once selected, individuals maintain housing for as long as they remain eligible and meet the requirements for the HCV program. For more information, please refer to the Chicago Housing Authority webpage.

CHA primarily conducts business with HCV applicants, participants and property owners/managers via online portals, email and phone. While in-person appointments and paper

forms are available by request, CHA encourages everyone to try the remote and paperless system first. Digital requests are more easily tracked, which limits repeat requests and therefore processing delays.

CHA's primary account management tool for HCV participants is **RENTCafé**, where you can:

- View your family information, such as household members and income affiliated with the account.
- Access HCV Resources and read important news and announcements from CHA.
- View your HQS inspection information, including appointments and high-level results.
- Complete your Re-Examination appointment (when it's time).
- Request an Interim when you experience changes in your household (loss of income, the addition/removal of a household member, etc.).
- And more

HCVAtaGlanceFlyer 05.24 HCV.pdf

Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) vs PBV (Project-Based Vouchers)

The PBV program is different from the HCV in that, under HCVs, the Public Housing Agency issues an eligible family a voucher and the family selects a unit of their choice. If the family moves out of that unit, the contract with the owner ends and the family can move with continued assistance to another unit. Under the PBV program, a Public Housing Agency (PHA) enters an assistance contract with the owner for specified units and for a specified term. PHAs enter initial contracts for 15-20 years terms and may agree to extend the initial or renewed contract for up to 20 additional years. The Public Housing Agency refers families from its waiting list to the project owner to fill vacancies. In this case, assistance is tied to the unit, not the voucher. This means a family who moves from the project-based unit does not have any right to continued housing assistance. However, they may be eligible for an HCV when one becomes available.

Public Housing Waitlists

Individuals can apply to one public housing (PH) option and one project-based voucher (PBV) option at a time. First, check the waitlist by clicking on "View Properties" and "Estimated Wait Times" as some properties have a one-year wait and others have a 25-year wait.

Affordable Housing

Website: AffordableHousing.com - Affordable Houses & Apartments For Rent

This website is designed to help people with a housing choice voucher (HCV) connect with landlords that will accept that voucher. Since the site offers up-to-date, market rate and affordable housing by City and zip, it can also be a useful tool for households seeking housing without a voucher.

Illinois Housing Search

Website: <u>ILHousingSearch.org</u> | <u>Illinois Apartments</u> | <u>Illinois Rental Homes</u>

ILHousingSearch.org provides detailed information about rental properties and helps people find housing to best fit their needs.

The easy-to-use, FREE housing search engine lets people look for rental housing using a wide variety of criteria and mapping features. Housing listings display detailed unit features, building amenities, and local neighborhood information. This service also provides links to housing resources and helpful tools for renters such as an affordability calculator, a rental checklist, and information about renter rights and responsibilities.

Any and all property owners and managers, ranging from Housing Authorities to private landlords, can use this service to manage their property listings FREE of charge. Listings can include pictures, maps, and information about nearby amenities. Property owners and managers can register and manage their listings online or via phone and fax.

For additional information, call the toll-free, bilingual call center at 1-877-428-8844, available M-F, 8:00 am - 7:00 pm CST or email info@myhousingsearch.com

Community Resources to Support Housing & Wellness

Housing for People Impacted by HIV or AIDS https://www.aidschicago.org/

People impacted by HIV or AIDS are eligible for housing dedicated to this population. On the AIDS Foundation Chicago website, go to "I Need Housing" to be guided through next steps.

Are you experiencing homelessness or housing instability?

Call AFC at 312.922.2322 or email us at info@aidschicago.org.

Are you in need of financial support for emergency eviction prevention and/or utility assistance and living with or vulnerable to HIV or on PrEP? Call the HIV Resource HUB at 1-844-HUB-4040 or visit hivhub.org.

You can also contact the Center for Housing and Health: <u>Contact Us | Center for Housing and Health (housingforhealth.org)</u> or (312) 334-0913.

Know your Rights- Cook County Just Housing Amendment

The Cook County Just Housing Amendment (JHA) amends the Cook County Human Rights Ordinance to protect people with prior justice involvement from housing discrimination. JHA prohibits housing providers from discriminating against people with prior justice involvement. This means that housing providers cannot consider arrests, sealed or expunged records, or juvenile records in reviewing your housing application. Providers can only consider a conviction from the past three years, using a case-by-case review to decide if it poses a real safety risk. If a provider denies an individual housing, they have a right to know why a past conviction posed a safety risk and how to dispute that decision. JHA applies to:

- 1. Communications (e.g., ads)
- 2. Offers to show or apply for a unit
- 3. Application process
- 4. Terms and conditions

Just Housing FAQ

jha faq for applicants updated 1.29.24 (1).pdf

Why did the Cook County Board of Commissioners pass the Just Housing Amendment (JHA) to the Human Rights Ordinance?

In most cities, people with any kind of criminal record, even just an arrest, are unfairly denied housing. The JHA was passed to help these people access safe, stable and affordable housing.

The JHA:

1) prohibits landlords from denying a housing application based on juvenile or adult arrest records; and

2)requires landlords considering an individual's covered criminal history to perform an individualized assessment prior to denying any application for housing.

**PLEASE BE ADVISED, UPLC IS AT CAPACITY ON CASES AND WILL NOT BE ABLE TO ASSIST UNLESS YOU RECEIVE A SUBSIDY AND ARE BEING EVICTED. For additional help, please reach out to Lawyers Committee for Better Housing or Legal Aid Chicago.

Our tenants' rights work helps renters with landlord-tenant issues who live within the 60613, 60625, 60626, 60640, and 60660 zip codes, and/or are formerly incarcerated. That work focuses on people in public housing, project-based Section 8 housing, and the Chicago Housing Authority's voucher program, who have issues such as illegal evictions and poor apartment conditions.

Due to capacity restraints, UPLC has pulled back our intake parameters on eviction related housing issues to include individuals whose cases arose in the 60613, 60625, 60626, 60640, and 60660 zip codes or whose housing instability is directly related to criminal legal involvement (for example eviction based upon mental health related challenges that are a result from an extended incarceration). We are currently only performing intakes for individuals who have received a for cause (10-day or 30-day) notice to terminate or whose case (not non-payment of rent) is currently in court. We will also schedule an intake for an individual who may have experienced/is experiencing an illegal lockout.

We continue to have open intakes for individuals who were denied housing due to their arrest or conviction records in violation of the Just Housing Amendment.

For additional information on our services, please check out our Frequently Asked Questions page, or give us a call at 773-769-1411. Please note that UPLC does not represent individuals in criminal cases.

Lawyers Committee for Better Housing Law Center for Better Housing | Standing for Renters' Rights

Law Center for Better Housing (LCBH) is the only non-profit law firm in the Chicago area that focuses solely on low- and moderate-income renters in the private housing market. LCBH provides free legal and supportive services to improve housing stability for lower income renters

while advocating for the rights of all renters until everyone in Chicago has a safe, decent, and affordable place to call home.

Legal Aid Chicago

Free Legal Services To People Living In Poverty - Legal Aid Chicago

Legal Aid is free representation in civil legal matters for clients who lack the resources to hire an attorney on their own. The American legal system promises equal justice to all citizens, but it's also enormously complex, and hiring a lawyer to navigate through it can be prohibitively expensive. Too often, the high costs of representation block people living in poverty from participating in the legal system that is meant to protect them.

Legal Aid Chicago seeks justice for people living in poverty. Through litigation and advocacy, our team of full-time lawyers and staff fight to secure individual rights to affordable housing, basic healthcare, fair working conditions, protection from abuse, and economic stability.

Health Forward/Salud Adelante

Health Forward/Salud Adelante - BUILD Health Challenge

Health Forward/ Salud Adelante is a medical-legal partnership that brings together healthcare providers from Cook County Health and Hospital Systems and lawyers from LAF to assist people with legal issues impacting their health. LAF provides FREE legal help.

Types of Legal Aid Provided: Medicaid: denials, terminations, SNAP: (Link Card/food stamps), TANF (cash assistance), AABD: denials, terminations, overpayments, Disability benefits (SSI/SSDI): applications, terminations, overpayments, Domestic violence: order of protection, divorce, custody, child support, Subsidized housing: evictions, voucher termination, conditions (lead, mold, infestations, etc.), Decisions about your medical care and property: power of attorney, living will, transfer on death instrument for real estate, Expungement: or sealing of criminal records. Immigration status help for crime victims, including victims of domestic violence

You have been referred to **Health Forward/Salud Adelante**A medical-legal partnership working with Cook County Health and Hospitals System (CCHHS).

You should expect a call from:

Kaitlyn Quigley Staff Attorney at LAF 312-229-6361

During the call, Kaitlyn will need to ask questions

to check if you are eligible for LAF's services and to better understand your legal problem.

Please be prepared to share:

- · Your contact information
- · Who you live with
- · Your income and its source

Your call with LAF is confidential, and your information will be kept private.

LAF's services are FREE.

Prisoners' Rights

The police arrested my friend/family member, what should I do?

• Call FDLA right away. Never say anything to the police without a lawyer present.

IF YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW IS BEING HELD BY THE CHICAGO POLICE OR ANY SUBURBAN COOK COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT CALL 1-800-529-7374 (1-800-LAW-REP4) TO SEND AN ATTORNEY FROM THE PUBLIC DEFENDER'S OFFICE,

Send a written letter addressed to Field Services at the prison the person is at and keep a dated copy.

My friend/family member needs help after being released from prison, what should they do?

 Contact the <u>Safer Foundation</u>, unless your loved one needs help filing for Social Security Disability benefits. Then have them call us after they have filed an application with their local Social Security office.

Want to clear/expunge/seal record?

Cabrini Green Legal Aid

CGLA was established in 1973 to serve legal needs arising from the lack of opportunity, criminalization of poverty, and racial inequity experienced within the Cabrini Green community. Since then, CGLA has grown beyond a single neighborhood to become a citywide, countywide, and now recognized statewide leader in supporting low-income individuals negatively impacted by the criminal legal system. Any engagement with the criminal legal system can greatly disrupt an individual, family, and community's quality of life. For this reason, our mission is to seek justice and mercy for those living in poverty by providing legal services that strengthen individual lives, families, and communities. We aim to proactively fill the void of legal representation, wraparound services, and advocacy for individuals affected by the criminal legal system

General Support Services

Community Service Center

City of Chicago :: Community Service Center Locations

Community Service Centers help individuals and families in need access a wide range of resources from shelter, food and clothing to domestic violence assistance, job training/placement and services for the formerly incarcerated. Clients can also get information about rental, utility and other financial assistance programs. The centers also serve as warming and cooling centers during periods of extreme weather. Centers hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Services available at the Community Service Centers?

- Clothing and referrals to local food pantries
- · Public benefits eligibility assessments, referrals and application assistance
- Regional Transportation Authority Ride Free Program assistance
- Shelter referrals and placement
- Substance abuse treatment referrals
- Veteran services and resources
- Workforce development referrals

1. Englewood Community Service Center

1140 West 79th Street, Chicago, IL 60620 312-747-0200

2. Garfield Community Service Center

10 South Kedzie Avenue, Chicago, IL 60612 312-746-5400

3. Dr. Martin Luther King Community Service Center

4314 South Cottage Grove, Chicago, IL 60653 312-747-2300

4. North Area Community Service Center

845 West Wilson Avenue, Chicago, IL 60640 312-744-2580

5. South Chicago Community Service Center

8650 South Commercial Avenue, Chicago, IL 60617 312-747-0331

6. Trina Davila Community Service Center

4312 West North Avenue, Chicago, IL 60639 312-744-2014

211 Metro Chicago

<u>Home - 2-1-1 Metro Chicago</u>

What 2-1-1 IS

- A free, easy-to-access helpline
- An information and referral resource, helping connect people to **food**, **housing**, **utility** payment assistance, health care, transportation, childcare, employment, mental health, disaster information and assistance, and more
- A go-to resource for any essential health and social service needs, using comprehensive, accurate information, and delivering a user-friendly experience

What 2-1-1 IS NOT

- A non-emergency form of direct service, i.e., 3-1-1 or other nonprofit organizations, businesses, and government agencies
- An emergency medical assistance or dispatch line, i.e., 9-1-1
- A tool for surveillance, evaluation of services, or reporting on individuals or agencies
- A replacement for the 9-8-8 suicide and crisis lifeline

How 2-1-1 Can Help

Chicago and suburban Cook County residents now have access to a local 2-1-1 service—changing the landscape for how we meet the needs of our neighbors. 2-1-1 is a free, 24/7/365 service that connects them to essential health and social service support and information during times of non-emergency crisis and for everyday needs.

Additional Support Numbers

Chicago and suburban Cook County residents looking for support outside of 2-1-1 health and social service resources should contact the below numbers.

Call 9-1-1 for emergencies

Call 3-1-1 or call your city or village office for municipal or local government services if 3-1-1 is not available in your community

Call 9-8-8 for the suicide and crisis lifeline

Homeless Prevention

The Homelessness Prevention Call Center is a service that provides financial assistance and other community resources to those who are at risk of becoming homeless or need other resources. To access the service, you can call 3-1-1 or 312-744-5000 and ask for "Short-Term Help"1. TTY Access is available for callers using specialized TTY equipment due to hearing problems: 312-948-68171. Alternatively, you can go to your nearest Chicago Dept. of Family and Support Services Community Service Center.

Employment Resources

Visit an American Job Center to access employment resources, information about job training and more. Each center has knowledgeable staff that aids people who need career assistance. Assistance is available to youth and adults. All services are free. Please call-in advance to get information about hours, orientation, and workshop details.

1. America Works of Illinois, Inc.

205 W. Randolph Street Suite 920 Chicago, IL 60606

Phone: 312-726-5627

Hours: Monday - Friday 9:00AM - 5:00PM

Business Rep: Yes Veterans Rep: Yes

Last Updated: 05/22/2024

2. Near West American Job Center

1700 W. 18th St. Chicago, IL 60608

Phone: 312-994-8300

Hours: Monday 08:30-16:30, Tuesday 08:30-16:30, Wednesday 08:30-16:30,

Thursday 08:30-16:30, Friday 08:30-16:30,

Business Rep: Yes Veterans Rep: Yes

Youth Services Contact: Yes Last Updated: 09/24/2024

3. Chicago Workforce Center - Mid-South

Martin Luther King Human Service Center

4314 S. Cottage Grove Avenue, Second Floor Chicago, IL 60653

Phone: 773-538-5627

Hours: Monday 08:30-17:00, Tuesday 08:30-17:00, Wednesday 08:30-17:00,

Thursday 08:30-17:00, Friday 08:30-17:00,

Business Rep: Yes Veterans Rep: Yes

Youth Services Contact: Yes Last Updated: 09/24/2024

4. The American Job Center at Malcolm X College West Campus

4624 W. Madison St Lower-Level Chicago, IL 60644

Phone: 773-722-3895

Hours: Monday - Thursday 8:30AM - 5:00PM Fridays 8:30am-3pm

Business Rep: Yes Veterans Rep: No

Youth Services Contact: Yes Last Updated: 09/20/2024

5. American Job Center at Truman College

1145 W. Wilson Ave. Suite 1917 Chicago, IL 60640

Phone: 773-334-4747

Hours: Monday - Friday 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Business Rep: Yes Veterans Rep: No

Youth Services Contact: Yes Last Updated: 09/04/2024

6. American Job Center in North Riverside

7222 W Cermak Rd. Suite 301 North Riverside, IL 60546

Phone: 708-222-3100

Hours: 8:30am -5:00pm Monday - Friday

Business Rep: Yes Veterans Rep: No

Youth Services Contact: Yes Last Updated: 10/08/2024

7. Southwest American Job Center at Daley College

7500 S. Pulaski Rd. Building 100 Chicago, IL 60652

Phone: 773-884-7000

Hours: Monday - Friday 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM

Business Rep: Yes Veterans Rep: Yes

Youth Services Contact: Yes Last Updated: 09/21/2024

8. American Job Center in Maywood

1701 South 1st Avenue Suite 10 Maywood, IL 60153

Phone: 708-223-2652

Hours: Monday-Friday 08:30-17:00

Business Rep: Yes Veterans Rep: Yes

Youth Services Contact: Yes Last Updated: 09/06/2024

9. Hammond WorkOne

200 Russell Street 5th floor Hammond, IN 46320

Phone: 219-933-8332

Hours: Mon., Tues., Thurs., Fri.: 8:00 AM - 4:30 PM Weds.: 10:00 AM - 4:30 PM

Business Rep: Yes Veterans Rep: Yes

Youth Services Contact: Yes Last Updated: 09/01/2024

10. Safer Foundation (South Holland)

249 W. 162nd Street South Holland, IL 60473

Phone: 708-596-0037

Hours: Monday -Friday 8:30AM - 4:30PM (Open by appointment only due to

COVID-19)

Business Rep: No Veterans Rep: No

Last Updated: 10/07/2024

11. South Suburban Cook County American Job Center at Prairie State College

202 S. Halsted St. ATOC Building, Suite 148 Chicago Heights, IL 60411

Phone: 708-709-7975 or 855-994-8300

Hours: Monday-Friday 8:30-4:30

Business Rep: Yes Veterans Rep: Yes

Youth Services Contact: Yes Last Updated: 08/23/2024

*Please call resources to see about updated operations hours

Social Service Agency – Overview of Housing & Related Services

Cook County is home to dozens of non-profit organizations and social service agencies that offer additional support resources or services for individuals faced with homelessness or housing insecurity. **Listed below** are some major organizations supporting housing efforts in Cook County and *some* of the resources they have available. Please reference agency websites for a full list of services and conditions of those services.

New Moms

Programs – New Moms

For over 40 years, New Moms has invested in the beauty and power of being a mother. For moms 24 years or younger, it starts by building confidence in what's possible. Our comprehensive approach provides Housing, paid Job Training, College Success, and Family Support for those impacted by systemic and structural barriers.

Services Provided:

 New Moms does not take direct applications for our housing programs and does not maintain a site-based waitlist. We work with the Chicago Housing Authority (and Coordinated Entry) to fill our units.

Chicago House & Social Service Agency

Housing — Chicago House

Chicago House provides housing and resources for low-income individuals and families who have experienced chronic homelessness or unstable housing and are living with or vulnerable to HIV.

Services Provided:

- Community-Based Housing
- Residential Housing

Catholic Charities

Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Chicago

Catholic Charities case managers work with people and families experiencing homelessness and those who are at risk of homelessness. These managers identify households of greatest risk and determine the type of support needed to prevent homelessness. They also help the people we serve develop independent living skills, provide support with treatment, and serve as the point of contact to direct people in need to others in their social and professional support systems. To be successful, case managers need the right skills and adequate community knowledge.

Services Provided:

Services Provided:

- Burial and funeral assistance for support, call (312) 655-7700 (for both Cook and Lake counties)
- Case management services
- Emergency rental assistance
- Utility assistance
- Emergency shelter services
- Stabilization services (pharmaceutical assistance, transportation assistance, clothing vouchers)

Cook County Contact Information

City of Chicago... (312) 744-5000 City of Chicago 24 Hour Hotline...311 Suburban Cook County... (877) 426-6515

Lake County Contact Information

Main Line... (847) 782-4100

Renaissance Social Services

Renaissance Social Services | Housing | Chicago, IL, USA

At Renaissance, our aim is to prevent homelessness among those who are at risk and help build stronger communities by fostering residential stability. We find safe and secure housing, linked with supportive services, to help our participants build self-sufficiency and lead healthier lives.

Services Provided:

- Homelessness Prevention
- Permanent Supportive Housing
- Street Outreach
- Rapid Re-Housing
- Support Services
- Nursing Home Diversion Services

Thresholds

Housing & Residential Programs - Thresholds

Thresholds provides services and resources for persons with serious mental illnesses and substance use disorders in Illinois. We work with many populations, including youth and young adults, veterans, young mothers, deaf, and individuals experiencing homelessness, among others. We believe that everyone deserves the opportunity to live an independent, healthy life.

Services Provided:

Thresholds Housing Opportunities

Special Population: Deaf or Hard of Hearing Special Population: Williams Class Member

Special Population: Private Pay

Chicago Housing Authority Housing Opportunities

Contact Thresholds Housing: HousingAdministration@thresholds.org, 773-572-5272

Trilogy

Programs by Name - Trilogy

Trilogy's approaches are trauma-informed and put the unique experiences of the individual at the center of treatment. Recovery and well-being are different for each of the individuals we serve. We work alongside every person, empowering them to not just participate in their recovery process but to define and guide it.

Services Provided: Residential Programs

Housing Forward

Housing | Housing Forward

Housing is a basic human need. Our goal is to help our clients achieve housing stability. We do that by offering a variety of programs that address our clients' wide range of needs and circumstances.

Services Provided:

- Transitional Housing
- Bridge Housing
- Housing Navigation Services
- Permanent Supportive Housing
- Rapid Re-Housing

Inner Voice Chicago

Home - Inner Voice Chicago

Inner Voice supports people experiencing or at-risk-of homelessness. Services include emergency, transitional and affordable housing, as well as providing support services, case management and workforce development. Designed to help those we serve achieve and maintain enhanced well-being, we work with our participants to support them on their path toward self-reliance, economic stability and in finding a place to call home.

Services Provided:

- Transitional Housing
- Permanent Housing
- Supportive Services
- Veterans Services

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