

Stable Housing

HENNEPIN COUNTY
MINNESOTA

Modify housing supports and pursue additional funding

Stable housing is a foundation on which people build their lives. Minnesotans without stable housing are some of our most vulnerable – people with physical and behavioral disabilities, children, the elderly, or families who are involved with child welfare.

Stable housing profoundly impacts quality of life, health and well-being, educational attainment, access to economic opportunity, and community life.

Minnesota provides services to assist those navigating supports in order to live safely and independently in their communities. Unfortunately, studies show that employment assistance or other supports may not work well when people lack stable housing.

Creating flexibility in current funding models can get more people into stable homes, where our services are more effective.

Hennepin County urges the Legislature to:

- **Expand the Community Living Infrastructure Grant.** This funding supports counties and tribes and encourages them to take a more pro-active role in activities that focus on navigation and housing services, and that are effective at getting and keeping people in stable housing.
- **Increase the Housing Support (formerly Group Residential Housing) Metro Demonstration Project.** It allows for metro-wide access to Housing Support Demonstration units and increases total capacity to serve additional people experiencing homelessness in the region.
- **Create a capital fund for shelter development.** Launch a dedicated funding source for state-wide shelter development.

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Community Living Infrastructure Grant

In 2017, the Minnesota Legislature passed a comprehensive housing package, adding language to the Minnesota Housing Support Act (Chapter 256I), to increase and improve opportunities for Minnesotans with disabling conditions to live in the community. The package included grant funding for counties and tribes aimed at developing and supporting community living infrastructure throughout the state, totaling \$2.8 million for the state through June 2019, \$1.5 million for July 2019-June 2020, and \$2.6 million annually ongoing. Hennepin County currently receives \$375,535 from the Community Living Infrastructure Grant program.

These resources are used to:

- Ensure operated and contracted staff have the knowledge and resources to support people in gaining and maintaining housing stability.
- Launch and expand community-based Housing Support programs.
- Update and innovate Housing Support programs to increase people's choice and maximize our use of all available resources.
- Administer and monitor Housing Support.

Housing Support (formerly Group Residential Housing) Metro Demonstration Project

The Housing Support Demonstration project under 256I.04 Subd. 3(a)(3) allows for the use of Housing Support as traditional rental assistance (30% of income toward rent) and support services for persons experiencing homelessness. Statute currently limits this use to Anoka, Dakota, Hennepin and Ramsey Counties and to 226 total people or "supportive housing units." This has been in place since 1997 and has been successful in providing housing stability.

- Add Carver, Scott, and Washington Counties to expand to all metro counties and align the Housing Support Demonstration Project to the seven participating counties in the Metro Supportive Housing Cooperative Agreement. (Through a cooperative agreement, the metro counties are jointly administering the demonstration project).
- Expand capacity to 650 people across the metro area.
- Remove language requiring discharge from a facility and language requiring 70% people served with a specific disability to align with eligibility under the new Medical Assistance service (256B.051 Subd. 2e).

Create a capital fund for shelter development

The Unsheltered Design Team led by the Minnesota Interagency Council on Homelessness has identified the need for:

- 300-600 new shelter beds for the metro area
- Culturally specific and medical respite specializations
- Recommended 1:20 ratios and maximum sizes of 75 beds per shelter

There is currently no dedicated funding source for shelter development.

