



FY 2014 Annual Report Arlington County 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness



In the Effort to End Homelessness, Collaboration is Key to Success

FY 2014 was another successful year for the many people and organizations working to carry out Arlington's 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness.

A significant amount of behind-the-scenes effort was focused on improving systems, implementing standardized processes across the Continuum of Care, and shifting our collective approach to the housing first and rapid rehousing models that have been so successful here and across the country. With these important items in place, our system is stronger than ever.

This report includes data, trends, highlights and successes from across the Arlington County Continuum of Care. Every individual success -- a father and son leaving shelter for a home, an individual moving off the streets into an apartment, a family on the brink that we prevent from becoming homeless -- tells us the system is working. And so do the numbers: families are leaving shelters for stable housing more quickly than ever before; the Point-in-Time Count numbers are declining; our Home-

lessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Programs are generating terrific outcomes.

What's apparent is that collaboration has improved among the partners and that we are moving forward, in step, toward the shared goal of ending homelessness in our community. They say the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Arlington's Continuum of Care is a testament to that -- we are able to do much more as a system, working together, than we could ever accomplish individually.

We thank every person and organization that has had a hand in making 2014 a great year, and we look forward to continued success in the coming year.

Melissa Bondi
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Co-Chairs, Arlington 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness

Highlights and Trends in the Provision of Homeless Services in FY 2014

100 Homes

The 100 Homes Campaign achieved its goal to house 100 vulnerable, homeless Arlingtonians. In FY 2014 alone, 35 individuals from the campaign were housed. The success of 100 Homes can be attributed to outreach workers, shelter and housing providers, mental health and substance abuse specialists, and others working together to diligently track each homeless individual, assign them a lead worker and bring them off the street or out of shelter. Another important factor in the success of the 100 Homes Campaign was the availability of housing subsidy resources from federal, state and local government.



Shelter for Individuals

In 2014 Arlington contracted with Housing Innovations (HI), a national consulting firm specializing in best practice strategies in the provision of homeless services, to review our practices and identify areas for improvement. HI has recommended that Arlington County implement a unified sheltering approach at the Homeless Services Center, due to open in spring 2015, and at the Residential Program Center (RPC), Arlington's other year-round shelter for individuals.

Moving forward, both the Homeless Services Center, which will feature 50 year-round shelter beds, 25 hypothermia beds and 5 medical respite beds, and the RPC will focus on providing integrated, comprehensive services to facilitate moving individuals out of shelter as quickly as possible into permanent housing or into an alternative safe and stable housing placement.

A number of strategies and recommendations are currently being considered for implementation:

1. Adopting a core purpose to rapidly re-house individuals.
2. Providing housing-focused case management based on a housing plan instead of the traditional individual service plan.
3. Adopting a Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) approach to performance management.
4. Operating both shelters as low-barrier programs serving active substance abusers.
5. Providing frequent training to shelter staff covering crisis management, conflict prevention, case management and clinical skills.

Family Shelters

In FY 2014 the Arlington-Alexandria Coalition for the Homeless (AACH)

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Highlights and Trends (continued)

began the roll out of its new organizational name, Bridges to Independence. The new name is reflective of AACH's commitment to providing area homeless families with the skills and tools they need to sustain themselves independently in permanent housing.

In June 2014, the AACH Board finalized an arrangement to exchange its current administrative office and training building for space in a new housing and retail development that will occupy the same location next to the Sulivan House Shelter. The new space is scheduled to be complete in late 2015 or early 2016. With a new and larger administrative and training facility, AACH will start its next 30 years in a fresh, modern environment and be able to enhance its array of client programs.



In FY 2014, Doorways for Women and Families had its mettle tested by Mother Nature and came through with flying colors. In early January, freezing temperatures caused a pipe to burst at the Doorways Freddie Mac Family Home. All three levels of the house sustained significant damage and clients had to be placed in a local hotel for six weeks. During the time repairs were being made, the Family Home continued providing 24/7, wrap-around services to families, ensuring services were uninterrupted.

Permanent Supportive Housing

Arlington County Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) programs served 181 formerly homeless individuals in FY 2014. PSH is an evidence-based, housing-first model for low-income adults with disabilities, placing them in permanent, affordable apartments integrated in the community. Case managers and behavioral healthcare services help them maintain their housing. Arlington's PSH programs are

run by the Department of Human Services, A-SPAN, and New Hope Housing. The retention rate for the Arlington County PSH Program is excellent -- since program inception in 2004, 81% of PSH tenants have remained in housing.

Rapid Rehousing

Doorways and AACH participated in the 100 Day Rapid Rehousing Challenge sponsored by the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development and the National Alliance to End Homelessness. This effort was in direct response to HUD's HEARTH Act requirement that CoCs use a "housing first" approach instead of requiring "housing readiness."

Rapid rehousing is a best practice model that focuses on providing housing-focused services to families without lengthy shelter stays or extended periods of case management, as provided in the transitional housing model.

From October 2013 through January 2014, Doorways moved six households and AACH moved seven households directly into housing from the shelter. Arlington CoC will continue to monitor and evaluate the implementation of this model. Challenges include households not having access to housing subsidies, and a structural mismatch between rental costs and the typical income among homeless families.

Systems Improvements

The Arlington County Consortium (ACC) spent significant time implementing new requirements under the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act.

The Arlington County Comprehensive Assessment Center (CAS) launched in September 2014 after a planning period involving staff from ACC participating agencies, CAS standardizes intake processes across agencies and provides households who need homeless services with a coordinated assessment that ensures placement in the right program.

CAS is being implemented by the Department of Human Services. Part-

Arlington's 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness

Arlington's 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness was launched in 2008 with a consortium of more than 100 stakeholders from public, private and faith-based community organizations.

The plan's primary goal is that no individual or family who calls Arlington home shall lack access to decent, affordable housing.



ner homeless services agencies are providing improved access to services and information after regular business hours and on weekends, a new service in the County.

Systems planning efforts paid off in FY 2014. In state and federal funding processes, Arlington County Continuum of Care (CoC) applications were highly competitive. We achieved the highest score in the state process, and improved our federal score to within 4.9 points of the top national score. This bodes well for leveraging both federal and state resources in the future.

In FY 2014, the data management system used by CoC agencies was migrated to a new Homeless Management Information System called Efforts to Outcomes. The new system, once fully implemented, is expected to enhance the ACC's ability to implement data-informed decision-making.

Number of People Served in Continuum of Care Programs Comparison FY 2011-FY 2014¹

	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	2013-14 Change
Number of People Served: Family Shelters Freddie Mac Foundation Family Home, Sullivan House	158 56 HH ²	181 63 HH	155 56 HH	195 68 HH	26% increase 21% increase
Number of People Served: Adult-Only Individual Shelter Residential Program Center	170	170	186	173	7% decrease
Number of People Served: Domestic Violence Shelter Doorways for Women and Families Safehouse	41 20 HH	67 36 HH	72 38 HH	71 40 HH	1% decrease 5% increase
Number of People Served: Emergency Winter Shelter A-SPAN Emergency Winter Shelter	385	408	428	464	9% increase
Number of People Served: Outreach and Engagement A-SPAN Opportunity Place and Street Outreach	1,286	835	1,011	934	8% decrease
Number of People Served: HPRP Arlington County DHS, A-SPAN, Arlington-Alexandria Coalition for the Homeless, Doorways for Women and Families, Volunteers of America	267 179 HH	312 198 HH	330 185 HH	423 237 HH	28% increase 28% increase
Number of People Served: Eviction Prevention Arlington Thrive	1,544 607 HH	1,630 659 HH	1,358 614 HH	1,395 612 HH	3% increase 0% change
Number of People Served: Rapid Rehousing³ Arlington-Alexandria Coalition for the Homeless, Doorways HomeStart	72 HH	69 HH	68 HH	259 80 HH	18% increase in HH

¹ Counts are unduplicated.

² HH = households.

³ The rapid rehousing number for FY 2014 includes households served with state funds. Previous years did not include households served with state funds.



Ending Homelessness in Our Community: So Many Ways to Help!

No matter your interests or what skills you have, you can play an important part in helping Arlington residents who are homeless: prepare and serve meals; staff a local shelter or nonprofit; mentor a child, family or individual; volunteer as a handyman; donate artwork, furniture or kitchen utensils; contribute to the Arlington Community Foundation Homelessness Prevention Fund. For a list of organizations that need your help, visit www.arlingtonva.us; keyword: 10YP.

Photo: Volunteers tending to the yard at Doorways Family Home.

Individuals Exiting to Permanent or Stable Housing after Participation in Shelter Program

	FY 2012			FY 2013			FY 2014		
	# Exited	# Achieved Housing	%	# Exited	# Achieved Housing	%	# Exited	# Achieved Housing	%
Domestic Violence Safehouse	54	21	39%	64	16	25%	63	38	60%
Residential Program Center	128	41	32%	141	34	24%	130	44	34%
Family Shelters Family Home and Sullivan House	133	69	52%	100	87	87%	133	111	84%
All Shelter Programs Combined	315	131	42%	305	137	45%	326	193	59%

Shelter Programs: Median Length of Stay in Shelter before Leaving

	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	2013-14 Change
Individuals Includes Residential Program Center	3.0 months	2.6 months	2.2 months	2.2 months	No change
Families Freddie Mac Foundation Family Home and Sullivan House	5.4 months	3.9 months	5.3 months	3.6 months	32% decrease

Employment after Participation in Continuum of Care Programs

	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Rapid Rehousing Programs AACH, Doorways for Women and Families	67%	69%	80%	69%
Family Shelters Family Home and Sullivan House	61%	55%	63%	64%
Residential Program Center	35%	32%	27%	32%

Point-in-Time Count

	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	2013-14 Change
Unsheltered Individuals without Children	137	131	146	51	65% decrease
Sheltered Individuals without Children	131	132	120	127	6% increase
Sheltered Individuals with Adults & Children	193	188	211	113	46% decrease
Total	461	451	479	291	39% decrease

Stories of Success from the Arlington CoC

Julio

Julio and his two children arrived at the Family Home after several months of struggling. Julio had injured himself and had to reduce his work hours while seeking medical treatment. Julio did not have health insurance and his debt increased very quickly. His children Ariel (12) and Ben (9) were having difficulties at school and adjusting to their lives without mom. Julio's wife had passed away a few years previously, leaving him in charge of raising their two children with limited resources and family support.

During the family's stay at the Family Home, Julio took full advantage of the ser-

vice available to him. He received support from the children's staff with setting boundaries with his children, and he was concerned about Ariel's response to becoming homeless. He shared she was crying a lot, and had recently shown self-injury behaviors. Staff worked with the family to address these needs. Julio was connected with the Arlington Free Clinic where his medical needs could

be met, allowing him to gradually increase his work hours. Doorways' financial counselor worked with him to address his high medical debt.

After two months of being in shelter, the family worked with Doorways' HomeStart Program to obtain post-shelter housing. Ariel and Ben were excited to be in their new place and have a new beginning with their father, just in time for the start of the new school year.

Maria and Angela

Maria and her three-year old daughter Angela entered the Safehouse to flee her husband's controlling and abusive behaviors. Maria was terrified by what she

thought her abusive husband would do her and her child if he found them. Maria contacted the hotline and was subsequently accepted into Doorways' Domestic Violence Program.

During the intake process, Maria stated that typically, Angela was very outgoing and bubbly yet was experiencing some fear and anxiety causing her to with-

draw. With the help of staff and children's volunteers, Maria's daughter began to acclimate to the Safehouse. She began to trust staff and volunteers, and became more interactive, playful and verbal as the days went by.

From the beginning, Maria expressed a keen interest in the programs that Doorways could provide. During her time at the Safehouse, Maria worked with a financial counselor to pay off some past debts, saved money, and learned better methods of saving money for when she exited the program. Maria attended a weekly support group, applied for Doorways' Homestart supportive housing program, and attended seminars such as Dinner with Friends and Ready-to-Rent. Young Angela met with Doorways' children's mental health specialist on a regular basis. Together they focused on parenting after abuse and enrolled Angela into the local HeadStart program.

Maria worked with Doorways and found an apartment close to her daughter's school. Maria also found a full-time job, but due to the challenge of finding safe and affordable childcare, she had to turn down the job and continue to search for a higher-paying job. At the time of her transition from the Safehouse into HomeStart, Maria was still looking for a job but is expecting to be able to accept a full-time position in the near future.

Gabe

Gabe is a 50-year-old African American male,

Arlington County resident who entered the Residential Program Center shelter in the beginning January 2013. He had been homeless since 2011. Gabe had no history of substance abuse and or mental health issues, but a criminal history contributed significantly to his homelessness.

Despite this barrier, Gabe was extremely motivated to seek employment and income (as he would say, the "legal way.") Shortly after beginning his employment search, Gabe found full-time employment in the house-keeping department of the Army-Navy County Club. He was very pleased with his employment noting the full benefits, bonus and tips. He was good at saving money, and repaying outstanding debts while he was in the program.

In addition, Gabe was very instrumental in assisting his peers in the shelter with job opportunities at his place of employment. He was able to complete all his service plan goals while at the shelter. In the beginning of this year, Gabe was able to secure a safe and clean room rental in the area. Gabe continues to check in with staff monthly to share his progress and success in maintaining his housing.

James

James had been sleeping in his car for over two years while working 20 hours a week. Since James only worked part time, he did not qualify for the Arlington County Housing Grant. Working with A-SPAN, James was able to sign a





lease for a one-bedroom apartment and keep working part-time. James' case manager connected him to resources that helped him improve his mental and physical health, manage his finances and establish a savings account. James has been able to maintain his tenancy and, in 2014, he got a full-time job -- qualifying him to transition to an Arlington County Housing Grant.

Sierra

Sierra is a young single parent with limited supports in the area. Prior to program participation, Sierra lived in a rooming house with friends. Due to occupancy restrictions, she was required to relocate with her infant son. The HPRP case manager and Housing Locator worked with Sierra to address the housing barrier of a previous eviction judgment by negotiating with the landlord to enter a repayment agreement with Sierra. She made monthly payments and received a landlord letter stating that the judgment was being addressed. With this letter, Sierra was able to secure approval for a one-bedroom apartment. HPRP assisted

with move-in costs and rent as Sierra set up her new apartment and applied for a Housing Grant. After five months of financial, budgeting and resource navigation assistance, Sierra received a Housing Grant. She continues to work full-time and care for her son and hopes to return to school in the near future to obtain a nursing degree.

Ed

Homeless since 2002, Ed had been sleeping in an upright seated position at the local airport for 18 months before being referred to Permanent Supportive Housing in July of 2013. He had been working with his Arlington County Adult Services worker for almost two years.

In December of 2013, Ed moved into his new apartment. He receives weekly case management visits from his DHS case worker. He keeps his apartment clean, pays his rent on time and there have been no tenancy issues identified by his landlord. In a letter that he wrote to the landlord before moving into his apartment, Ed stated, "For me a home is a place of dignity, freedom and pride." It

is good to see that housing has allowed "d to achieve these ideals.

Daria

After receiving an unexpected letter from her husband informing her he was seeking a divorce, Daria and her two sons traveled to the United States from their Asian homeland. Upon arriving in Arlington, she went directly to her husband's apartment and, after not being granted entry, called the police, who negotiated a one-night stay there for her and the children. The next day, Daria met with an Arlington Department of Human Services worker and was referred to Sullivan House.



Even though Daria was a U.S. citizen, she had lived abroad for the past four years and, coupled with her husband's rejection, found it difficult to get re-acclimated to this culture. Despite having a college degree, she had never worked. In addition, she had medical issues which impacted her ability to job search. Through support from DHS, her shelter case manager, Project Extra Step and a volunteer who worked with her on diet and nutrition, Daria began to address her issues and

eventually got a job with Arlington County schools.

Her boys benefited from the children's programs, camps and were enthusiastic summer lemonade stand volunteers. Daria was successful in securing child support payments from her now former husband, and did well managing her money and saving for housing. She was accepted into the Adopt-A-Family program and obtained an apartment in Arlington.

Christy

Christy and her young daughter Joann were referred to Adopt-A-Family from Sullivan House. At the time Christy was just beginning a part-time job at a grocery store earning \$8.50 hourly. Christy has a master's degree in education, but had difficulty finding employment due to her criminal background and past heroin addiction.

Determined to beat her circumstances, Christy worked with her Adopt-a-Family case manager to find housing. Based on her recent criminal history, this was no easy feat. After two months of searching, Christy was able to find a one-bedroom affordable unit for her and her daughter. Once settled in to her new place, Christy then began to search for better employment.

Armed with tools she received from AACH's career development program; she was able to find employment with an hourly wage of \$11.00. Although, her overall circumstance has improved, she still has an uphill battle to attain employment in the area of education.

Key Findings: What Do the Numbers Tell Us?

Data from FY 2014 shows significant increases in the number of people served in family shelters, through the Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program, and through street outreach activities.

For the family shelters, which served 26 percent more people in FY 2014, quicker placement of families into rapid re-housing programs decreased the average length of time in shelters, allowing programs to serve more households.

The number of households served by the Homelessness Prevention and

Rapid Re-Housing Program increased 28 percent, a result of the average amount of funding per household being lower in FY 2014 than in FY 2013.

Exit to Stable Housing

Overall, individuals and families exiting to permanent or stable housing after a shelter stay increased by 14 percent over FY 2013. Contributing factors include improved rapid rehousing strategies and increased Permanent Supportive Housing Program availability.

Point-in-Time Count

Arlington County experienced a sig-

nificant drop in the number of total persons counted in 2014.

For the singles, the contributing factors included community efforts to house homeless individuals, the severe cold and snow the night of the count, and limiting the count period from sundown to sunup, according to HUD requirements.

The significant drop in families in the count was due to a housing category previously counted as homeless being reclassified as housed in rapid rehousing for 2014, resulting in 97 fewer individuals in families.

About the Arlington County Continuum of Care

Arlington County has a core network of interconnected programs and services (called a Continuum of Care, or CoC) to assist people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. The CoC includes County government programs/services and non-profit organizations. It provides a foundation for the broader community partnership working toward the shared goals of preventing homelessness before it occurs and returning homeless individuals and families to stable housing as quickly as possible. Arlington Continuum of Care program areas and operating entities:

Street Outreach and Engagement:

Service workers connect with persons living on the streets, in parks, under bridges and in encampments to help put individuals on the path to stability and housing.

- A-SPAN (Arlington Street People's Assistance Network) operates the street outreach program and Opportunity Place drop-in center

Homelessness Prevention and

Rapid Re-housing: Efforts to prevent homelessness before it occurs are anchored in two programs.

- Arlington Thrive provides same-day emergency financial assistance to Arlington residents facing a financial crisis that could lead to eviction.
- The Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-housing Program (HPRP)

is operated collaboratively by the Department of Human Services, A-SPAN, Arlington-Alexandria Coalition for the Homeless, Doorways for Women and Families, and Volunteers of America-Chesapeake. It provides short-term housing stabilization (financial assistance and case management) to households that are homeless and to those at imminent risk of losing housing.

Shelters: Five Arlington County homeless shelters provide a safe, structured environment for singles and families who are experiencing homelessness.

- Emergency Winter Shelter for individuals (A-SPAN)
- Sullivan House Family Shelter (Arlington-Alexandria Coalition for the Homeless)
- Freddie Mac Foundation Family Home and Domestic Violence Program Safehouse (Doorways for Women and Families)
- Residential Program Center year-round shelter for individuals (Volunteers of America-Chesapeake)

Transitional Housing: Two transitional housing programs provide housing and services to help Arlington families and individuals get ready for permanent housing. These programs are site-based.

- Residential Program for single mothers and children (Borromeo Housing)

- Independence House transitional housing for individuals recovering from substance abuse (Phoenix Houses of the Mid-Atlantic)

Transition-in-Place Housing: Two transition-in-place programs provide housing and services to help Arlington families gain housing stability for the long term. In these programs, households carry a lease in their own name.

- Adopt-A-Family transition-in-place housing for families (Arlington-Alexandria Coalition for the Homeless)
- HomeStart transition-in-place housing for families (Doorways for Women and Families)

Permanent Supportive Housing:

Three permanent supportive housing programs provide rental assistance and case management services for households who are homeless and have members with a disabling condition.

- A-SPAN
- Department of Human Services (this program also serves youth transitioning out of foster care)
- New Hope Housing

Safe Haven: Supportive housing that serves hard-to-reach homeless persons with severe mental illness who are on the street and have been unable or unwilling to participate in supportive services. Arlington's Safe Haven is operated by New Hope Housing.