ISING FORWARD ORWARD HOUS IG FORWARD HO IOUSING FORWARI HOUSING FORW SING FORWARD H WARD HOUSING ORWARD 2024 Annual HOL IG FORWARD IOUSING FORWARI HOUSING FORW

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LETTER FROM BOARD PRESIDENT

26

WE BELIEVE

Housing is a basic human right.

Through impactful services and strategic partnerships, we find innovative, systemic solutions that transition people from housing crisis to housing stability.

Since our founding, we have served more than 25,000 individuals. Our strength is in our determination to **end homelessness**, and our proven record of doing so, one individual at a time.





DEAR FRIENDS,

Every year presents new challenges and new opportunities for Housing Forward, and 2024 was no different. We are driven each day by our commitment to seeing the unsheltered housed and ensuring that those at risk of housing loss regain stability. Last year, 2,586 people were impacted by our services— the highest number we have ever assisted. Every one of those individuals has their own story, setbacks, and unmet needs, as well as hopes, dreams, and successes. By meeting people where they are, we tailored support systems create that empower each person to overcome their challenges and regain stability.

In 2024, we continued to adapt and innovate with intentionality, strengthening capacity and enhancing our continuum of services. In April, we opened the doors of our first Permanent Supportive Housing development. Broadview Legacy Apartments. We launched three new behavioral programs, providing health support, harm reduction services, and housing for survivors of domestic violence. We added dozens of new staff members and have expanded to five (soon to be six) different properties throughout the western suburbs.

Despite the advances we've made this year, our work is not done.

> Ribbon cutting celebration at **Broadview Legacy** Apartments, April 2024.

Homelessness increased by 18 percent nationwide last year. Now is the time to not only celebrate our achievements but also reaffirm commitment our to homelessness and look toward the future of our organization, together. What can we do collectively to help every person in our community lead safer, healthier, and happier lives?

None of this would be possible without the dedication of our staff, the generosity of our donors, the commitment of our volunteers. and the trust of the communities we serve. THANK YOU for standing with us as we continue to create lasting change.

Sincerely,

Lvnda Schueler Chief Executive Officer



STATE OF HOMELESSNESS

In 2024, the number of people experiencing homelessness on a single night was the highest ever recorded.

771,480 people across the country. That represents an **18 percent** increase from the year before.

Several factors likely contributed to this historic number— a lack of affordable housing, rising inflation, the challenge of earning a living wage, and continuing systemic inequalities. We are also seeing the effects of the loss of eviction moratoriums, prevention programs, and historic federal aid during the pandemic.

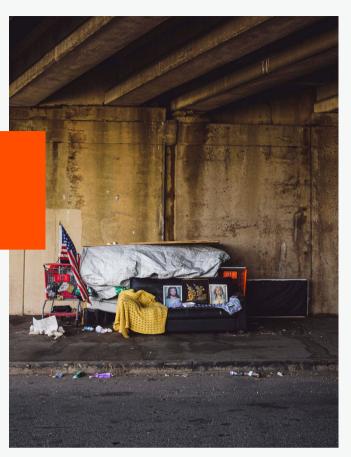
Nearly all populations reached record levels, but families with children had the largest single year increase in homelessness at **39 percent** (nationally).

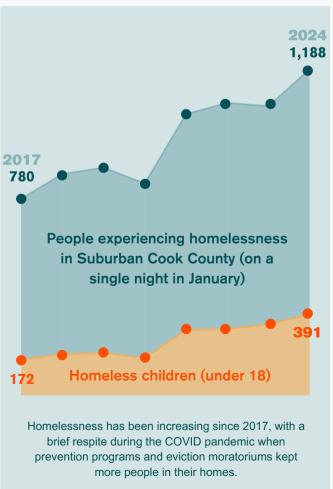
Illinois saw a 116 percent increase in homelessness, and suburban Cook County saw a 12.6 percent increase.

What's next? The federal environment since January 20 has been highly unpredictable. Changes that have real impacts on our clients have been happening at a rapid pace. This includes everything from Executive Orders to reductions in the federal budget. As we continue to navigate a challenging federal environment, your support is more important than ever.



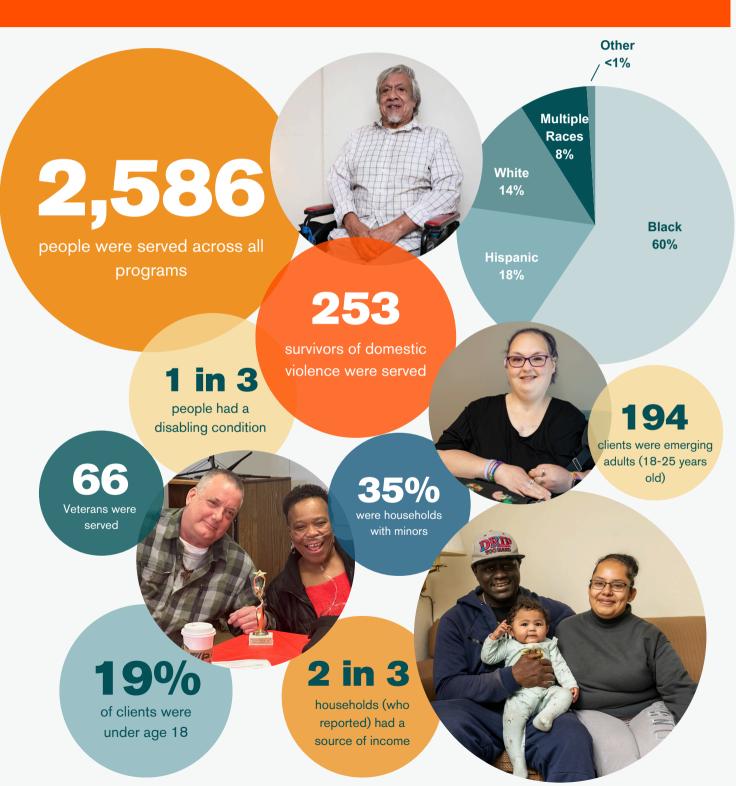
Read more about the consequential 2024 Grants Pass v. Johnson Supreme Court decision.



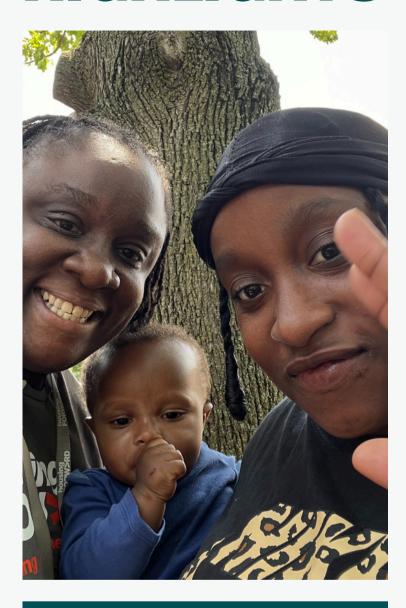


WHO WE SERVE

There is no one "face" or one cause of homelessness. The people we assist are a diverse group of individuals and families who have one thing in common: they have experienced a catastrophic housing or financial crisis. Often, that crisis is precipitated and/or complicated by a physical disability, chronic health condition, or behavioral health disorder, conditions that are exacerbated by the lack of access to proper care and resources.



HIGHLIGHTS



66

We are not in the business of managing homelessness. Our vision is to end it."

-LYNDA SCHUELER, CEO



\$478,000 provided to keep people in their homes



131
households received one time funding, and were able to remain in their homes without returning for more support



480
people assisted through our
Emergency Shelter, Interim
Housing, Medical Respite,
and Transitional Housing
Programs



97,239meals provided to guests in our shelter programs



134
unhoused people moved into housing



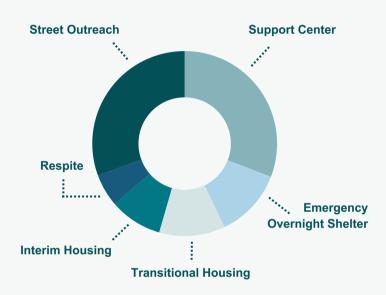
413
units of supportive housing throughout west suburban Cook County



92% remained in supportive housing

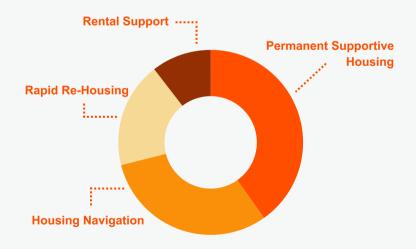
Prevent 606 people assisted

The most humane, cost-effective solution to homelessness is stopping it before it happens. We do this through diversion case management and financial assistance.



Respond 1,083 people assisted

We identify and quickly connect people experiencing homelessness with food and safe shelter, then we link them to services to begin resolving their crisis.



Stabilize 895 people assisted

Safe, affordable housing is the foundation on which people become self-sufficient and rebuild their confidence so they can live, and thrive, in their community.

Wraparound Services

199
people assisted

Comprehensive, personalized support helps people navigate challenges and build a stable future. Includes various supportive services like employment assistance, behavioral health care, community nursing, and more.

OUR SERVICE AREA

Harwood Heights Schiller Park Norridge Franklin Park River Elmwood Grove Park Northlake Melrose Park River **Forest** Berkeley Oak Bellwood Chicago Park Maywood Hillside **Forest** Park **Broadview** Westchester Cicero Riverside **Brookfield** Stickney Lyons Forest View **Housing Forward Properties**

What communities did new clients come from? Here are the top 10:

- 336 Maywood
- 247 Oak Park
- 94 Cicero
- 86 Chicago
- 85 Bellwood
- 75 Broadview
- 66 Berwyn
- 62 Melrose Park
- 34 Forest Park
- 28 Hillside

IN THE COMMUNITY

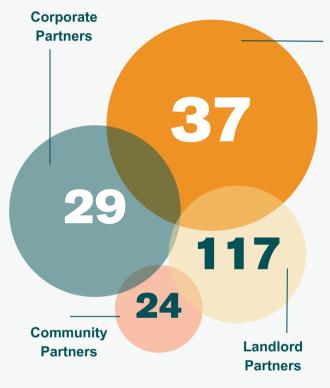
Headquarters & Support Center

Housing Forward is committed to meeting people where they are and addressing the unique needs of each individual we serve. This year, we provided support to clients from 26 different communities and 114 different zip codes.

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PROGRAMS & PARTNERSHIPS

Ending homelessness requires action at every level, and true progress is only possible through strong, strategic partnerships. From our inception, collaboration has been at the heart of our approach, and this year was no different.



In 2024, with the help of eight different partner organizations, we launched three new programs— Housing is Recovery, Building Healthier Communities, and Safe Bridge—expanding behavioral health support, harm reduction services, and housing for survivors of domestic violence. We also deepened our investment in programs that focus on the intersection of health and housing, as well as in our Housing Navigation services, ensuring that more individuals and families can secure stable, permanent homes.

BROADVIEW LEGACY APARTMENTS

On April 25, 2024, we <u>opened the doors</u> of Broadview Legacy Apartments. Our first fixed-site Permanent Supportive Housing building ended homelessness for:

16 households

- Two families with minor children
- Two Veterans

Program

Partners

- Two emerging adults (18-24) leaving foster care
- Four former Medical Respite clients
- · Six adults with disabling conditions



1020 Roosevelt Rd., Broadview



Missed our open house? Check out a virtual tour of the building, narrated by Lynda Schueler!

Every new staff member, property, and program we add creates new possibilities for our neighbors facing housing insecurity or homelessness. Through continued collaboration, diverse funding opportunities, and your support, we are reaching more people than ever— providing individualized solutions to meet unique needs and challenges.





Don't miss a thing—keep up with the latest news, agency updates, and events on our website or by signing up for our newsletter!

housingforward.org /news-events



COMING SOON

Since 2020, the former Write Inn Hotel has been home to two of our central programs— Interim Housing and the RISE Center Medical Respite Program. In 2023, with the help of funding from Cook County, we purchased that building. And over the next three years, we will be working to renovate and update the site, making it a permanent fixture in our response to homelessness. As we continue to strengthen our programs and work to make sure everyone has a safe place to call home, we will be leaning on your support to make this vision into a reality.



211 N. Oak Park Ave., Oak Park

MEET SELENA*

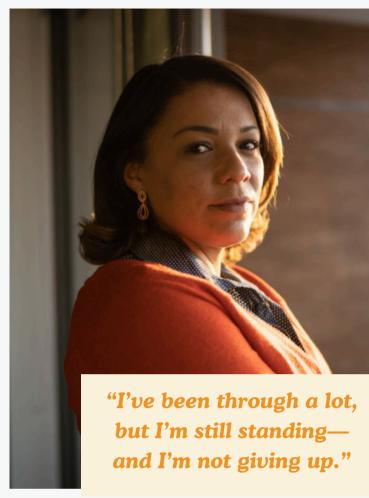
In the summer of 2024, Selena— a single mother of two— found herself facing a series of unexpected challenges. After she was injured at her job with the United States Postal Service, she was unable to work, and relied on worker's compensation to make ends meet. But when a rescheduled doctor's appointment caused a delay in her paperwork, her benefit check for July didn't arrive on time, leaving her unable to pay her mortgage.

In August, Selena finally received her delayed payment. But just as she began to regain her footing, she was met with devastating news: her brother's health took a serious turn, and he passed away just a week later. Selena took on the sole responsibility of paying for his funeral and burial costs— using everything she had to lay him to rest.

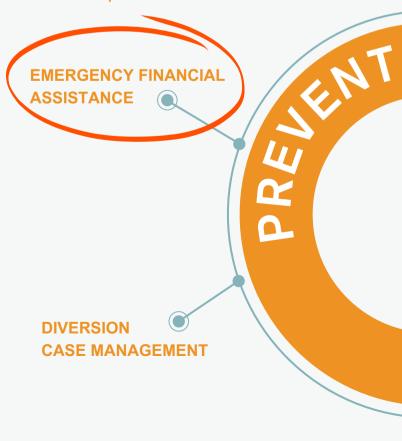
As the financial strain continued to mount, she found herself falling behind on her mortgage, unsure how she would manage to keep her home.

With steady worker's compensation benefits now arriving every month, Selena focused on finding a way forward. She connected with Housing Forward's Homeless Prevention Program, and was provided one-time Emergency Financial Assistance that helped cover her past-due mortgage and avoid foreclosure.

Today, Selena is focused on healing, spending time with her children, and getting back on her feet so that she can return to work.



*At the request of the client, we have changed her name and used a stock photo.



"It's nice just to be in a normal atmosphere, and to be accepted."

RESDOND STREET OUTREACH **EMERGENCY OVERNIGHT** SHELTER RESPITE Medical **Behavioral** INTERIM HOUSING TRANSITIONAL HOUSING

MEET HARRY

In 2012, Harry's life changed when his mother suffered a massive stroke. She needed constant care and called him multiple times a day for help. The demands of looking after her became overwhelming, and eventually he lost his job. "I just couldn't keep up with everything," Harry explains. "I thought to myself, if I can't take care of my mom, who can I take care of?"

For nearly a decade, Harry was his mother's primary caregiver. When she passed away in 2021, he says the weight of grief caught up with him. He found himself struggling with depression, and making ends meet became increasingly difficult. "For three years, I was basically living a semi-homeless life," he says. "I couldn't afford electricity. I couldn't pay for water. My house was just a place where I bundled up in blankets to get through the night."

In the aftermath of the pandemic, having been out of work for a decade, it was hard for Harry to find a steady income. Back taxes on his childhood home piled up, and eventually he was evicted in 2024. Harry says even though he had been struggling for several years, he was not prepared to be on the street. He says, "there's really nothing that gets you ready for that."

Just days after being evicted, a neighbor— who attended St. Catherine-St. Lucy Church— told him about Housing Forward's Emergency Overnight Shelter. Within 48 hours, Harry had a safe place to spend the night. He spent the next six months in the shelter, working to rebuild his life.

In November 2024, Harry was accepted into Housing Forward's Interim Housing Program, where he could stay fulltime while working toward stability. Now, Harry is focused on moving forward. With a background in computers and technology, he is pursuing a certification that he believes will open doors to new job opportunities.

Harry has also found a sense of community volunteering at Beyond Hunger's food pantry. "It's nice just to be in that normal atmosphere and to be accepted," he says. "It feels very much like a little family."

MEET CHARLES

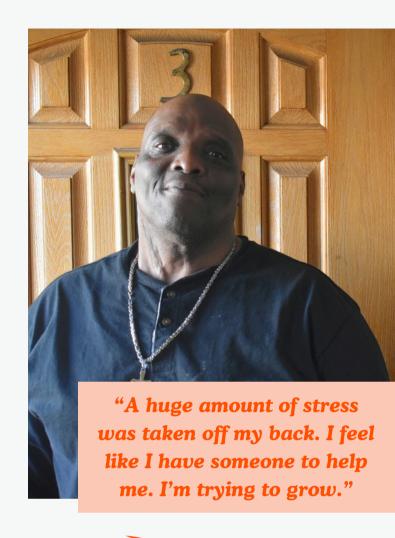
In the summer of 2023, Charles found himself with nowhere to go. After leaving a long-term relationship, he struggled to find a safe place to stay. Then, one day while riding the Green Line with a friend, he stumbled upon an unexpected community at the Metra station in Oak Park. For the first time in weeks, he says he felt a sense of safety and relief, surrounded by people who looked out for one another each night.

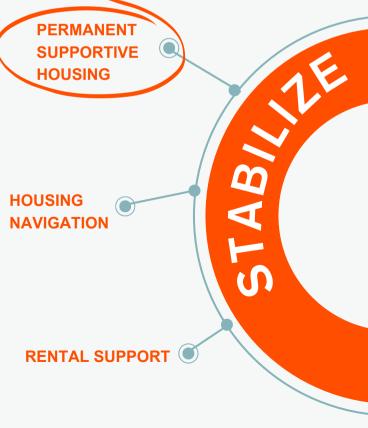
Early in his time at the Metra station, Charles met Maria and Troy from Housing Forward's Street Outreach team. He says Maria took the time to talk with him, ask about his situation, and encourage him to get his ID and Social Security card. Charles followed her guidance, but he was still surprised when, one day, Maria approached him while he was sleeping. "She woke me up and said pack your stuff up, you're going home."

In September 2023, Charles moved into Housing Forward's Interim Housing Program, where he was introduced to Behavioral Health Specialist Donna. That first night, settling into his new space, he says he finally felt a moment of peace. "I watched some TV and took a long shower— I must have stayed in there about an hour," he recalls. "I was thinking, this has got to be heaven."

Over the next four months, Charles worked closely with Donna and his case manager, Agnes, taking steps toward stability. Then, in January 2024, with the support of Housing Navigator Prentice, he moved into his own apartment. He says the first thing he did was call his mother to share the moment with her.

Today, Charles says he enjoys his neighborhood, especially being close to grocery stores and restaurants. With Agnes' help, he has connected to healthcare and dental services and found critical support as he navigates the court system. "A huge amount of stress was taken off my back. I feel like I have someone to help me. I'm trying to grow. A long time I was doing wrong and now I'm doing right... It feels a whole lot better."





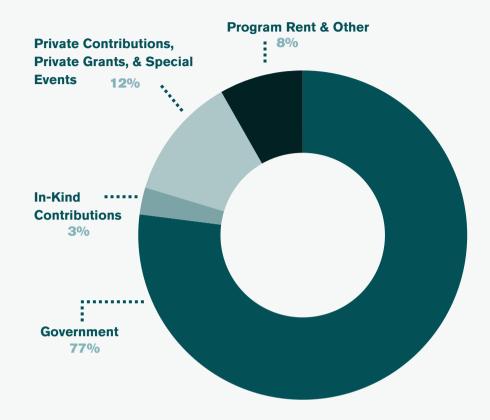
FINANCIALS

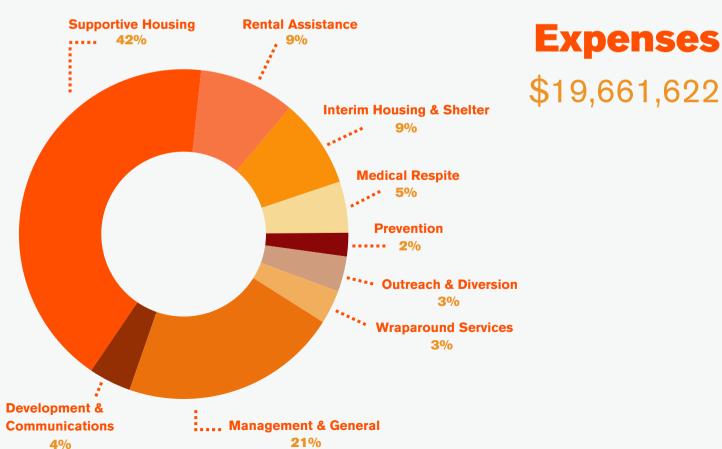
January 1 - December 31, 2024 Consolidated Statement of Activities

*These numbers are unaudited. Audited financials will be available after July 2025.

Revenue & Support

\$19,343,641







VOLUNTEERS

We are grateful to the hundreds of individuals, congregations, clubs, organizations, corporations and local businesses who donated time, clothing, household items, food and more.

404

volunteers

\$566,674

value of in-kind gifts and donated meals

5,410

hours of time





I have been volunteering at the Economy shop for over 3 years. Being involved with an organization that is committed to ending homelessness is invaluable. It is has been an honor and privilege volunteering for Housing Forward."

-MARIA THOMPSON, HOUSING FORWARD VOLUNTEER



"

It's been a pleasure to serve those in need. It's a great opportunity to provide direct assistance and live out my faith. In these times where the federal government is pulling back it's good to know that we can act and show compassion to those in need."

-JASON DESMARAIS, HOUSING FORWARD VOLUNTEER

OUR THANKS

We gratefully acknowledge all of the funders and donors who made our work possible in 2024. This list includes those who made contributions between January 1 - December 31, 2024.

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River Forest Township
Town of Cicero

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\$100,000+

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REFLECTING ON A **DECADE OF GROWTH. INNOVATION, AND SERVICE**

When I joined the Housing Forward Board of Directors in May 2015, it was an exciting time for the organization. After 23 years of work as West Suburban PADS, we had a new identity and a new name. We were ready to show the world our evolution and our expanded programs aimed at ending homelessness.

Over the past decade, I have had the privilege of witnessing and being a part of the growth, innovation, and unwavering commitment that defines Housing Forward. We have more than doubled the number of programs we offer, grown our staff fourfold, and added five additional workspaces - including two that we own- to our work. We have implemented ongoing reviews of our programs, while remaining focused on client outcomes at each step along the way.

One of my proudest moments came at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. We saw immediately how changes in our programming, namely moving from congregate shelter to individual hotel rooms, positively impacted our clients. In this darkest of moments, we stayed true to our commitment that housing is a basic human right. We never waivered from our values or from our desire to serve, and to make people's lives better.

Today, Housing Forward is a recognized leader for our work to end homelessness. Our comprehensive services create real solutions and lasting change as we strive to make homelessness rare, brief, and one-time for every person we serve.

As my time on the Board of Directors comes to an end, I am as passionate as ever, in part because our work is more essential than ever. In 2024, we served more people than at any other time in our 32-year history. As we continue to adapt, and rise to the challenges of an everchanging world, we will continue to lean on your partnership and support. Whether you are a volunteer, staff member, partner, donor, or community member—thank you. We have been on this journey together, and I am forever grateful for all you have done in helping us to end homelessness.

Sincerely,

Steven Glass

President, Board of Directors

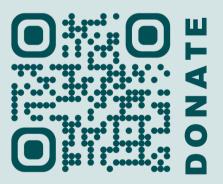


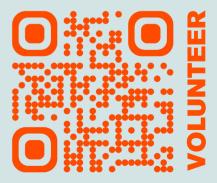
Steven Glass and Illinois Chief **Homelessness Officer Christine** Haley, February 2025



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