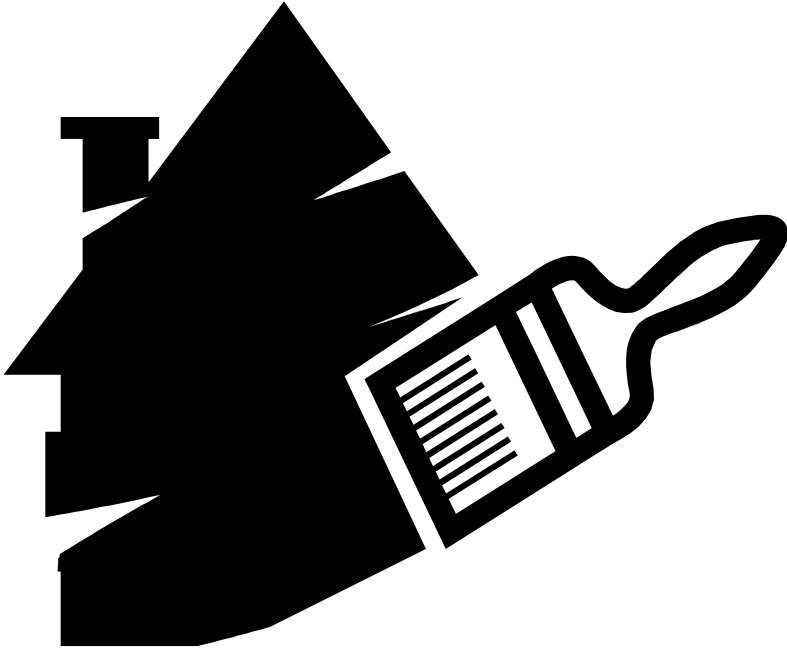


Guidelines for Local 10 -Year Homeless Housing Plans



Temporary guidelines issued to assist counties and local jurisdictions in the development of their 10-Year Homeless Housing Plans

Section 1 – Contact Information

Jurisdiction:	Skamania County
Other Jurisdictions Represented in this Plan:	n/a

Jurisdiction Contact Person		Plan Contact Person	
Name:	Skamania County	Name:	Lori Call
Title:	Commissioners	Organization:	WA Gorge Action Programs
Address:	P.O. Box 790	Address:	115 W Steuben St
	Stevenson, WA 98648		Bingen, WA 98605
Phone:	509.427.3700	Phone:	509.493.3954 Ext 212
Email:	@co.skamania.wa.us	Email:	lori@wgap.ws
Fax:	509.427.3708	Fax:	509.493.4430

2009 Homeless Housing Plan Participants

Name	Agency	Representing
Jamie Tolfree	Skamania County	Skamania County
Nancy Perry	DSHS	Low Income
Jamie Hepner	County Probation	Parolees
Ellen Jensen	Sk Co DV & SA	Domestic Violence
Karen Douglas	School District	Youth
Jan Pearo	Gorge Action Programs	Low Income
Shelly Rabinowitz	Mid Columbia Housing	Homeless
Kelly Walker	Mid Columbia Housing	Homeless
Darice Oliver	Churches	Faith Based
Margie Michaels	Faith Based	Transitional
WD Truitt	Skamania Port	Port District
Tammy Manner	DCFS	Youth
Woody Orr	Jail Ministry	Inmates
Robbi Orr	Jail Ministry	Inmates
Dan Saunders	Jail Ministry	Inmates
Linda Schneider	Gorge Action Programs	
2013 Homeless Housing Plan Participants		
Bob Anderson	Skamania County	Skamania County
Lisa Alexander	Sk Co DV & SA	Domestic Violence
Paul Spencer	Mid Columbia Housing	Housing Authority
Tamara Cissel	Skamania County	Mental Health/ Treatment
Nancy Perry	DSHS	Low Income
Jamie Hepner	County Probation	Parolees
Darice Oliver	Churches	Faith Based
Robbi Orr	Jail Ministry	Inmates
Jan Pearo	Gorge Action Programs	Low Income

Section 2 - Homeless Population and Subpopulations Chart

Table already completed for most counties as part of HUD McKinney Process

Part 1: Homeless Population	Sheltered		Unsheltered	Total
	Emergency	Transitional		
1. Homeless Individuals	39	0	49	88
2. Homeless Families with Children	49	29	0	78
2a. Persons in Homeless Families with Children	146	78	0	224
Total (lines 1 + 2a only)	185	78	49	312
Part 2: Homeless Subpopulations	Sheltered		Unsheltered	Total
1. Chronically Homeless	0		48	48
2. Severely Mentally Ill	0		39	39
3. Chronic Substance Abuse	0		19	19
4. Veterans	0		0	0
5. Persons with HIV/AIDS	0		10	0
6. Victims of Domestic Violence	10		0	97
7. Youth (Under 18 years of age)	0		0	0

Regional Homeless Population Charts

If there are significantly distinct geographic homeless service regions, repeat the above chart for each area (i.e., “West County”, “East County”)

[Table instructions inserted here]

Section 5 - Homeless Services Needs

Skamania County is a rural county located in south central Washington, notable for its scenic beauty and natural resources. The County is largely forested including Gifford Pinchot National Forest and the Mt St Helens Volcanic Monument.

The area's low and moderate income residents are having increasing difficulty finding affordable, standard housing. The increasing popularity of the area has resulted in competition with vacationers and retirees.

Update

Skamania County remains rural and notable for its scenic beauty. Low and moderate income residents continue to have difficulty finding affordable housing. Rents have dramatically increased over the last 5 years. In 2001, the FMR for a 3 bedroom unit was \$672 compared to \$1344 in 2013. That increase is further demonstrated by comparing the Fair Market Rents with neighboring Klickitat County. The FMR for a 3 bedroom unit in Klickitat County is \$920.

Low-income housing, such as Rock Creek Apartments and Cascade Village Apartments are under new management and have instituted new guidelines for acceptance into the units: a criminal background check and credit report. These are excluding many struggling households.

Sixteen units of Workforce Housing were added by Mid Columbia Housing.

There are few rentals in the County's weekly newspaper and those that are advertised often exceed the FMR. The City of Stevenson can present a challenge for low income households to find a place to rent. Low income households find North Bonneville or Carson less challenging.

Coordinating Council

It was determined that a Coordinating Council that would function as a funnel for information and homeless services would best serve residents. This Council would be appointed by the County Commissioners through an application process. There was a list developed of agencies, organizations and businesses targeted for participation. This group will oversee the Skamania County Ten Year Homeless Housing Plan.

Update

The Homeless Housing Council was appointed by the Skamania County Commissioners. The membership is a County Commissioner and representatives from the Department of Social and Health Services, Division of Children and Family Services, Skamania County Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, a local Church, Skamania County Community Health, Skamania County Department of Corrections, Mid Columbia Housing, and Washington Gorge Action Programs

In the last 4 years, the Council prioritized programs selecting a shelter and 2 units of transitional housing which were opened by WGAP. In addition, the Council approved policies and procedures for the newly opened Shelter, Transitional Housing, and Homelessness Prevention Program (rental assistance). As Council members became increasingly aware of homeless issues, they identified three groups that were definitely struggling with homelessness: Offenders released from jail and forced to return to the County of the original offense; Sex Offenders; and young parents with small children.

Offenders A State law was passed requiring offenders to return to the County of the original offense. Offenders were returning to Skamania County with no employment, no housing and no support system. This put a strain on the Department of Corrections, Probation and Parole, and the County Commissioners because of the safety issue. Fortunately, there were not a large number. Working with Probation and Parole, WGAP has been able to find emergency shelter for some of these individuals. A few have been helped with homelessness prevention funds.

Sex Offenders This group is very difficult to house because their access to areas is limited. One Sex Offender, who had a trailer, was moved out of the local RV Park due to the close proximity of children. WGAP was able to help one Sex Offender find housing. There is one local landlord willing to rent to Sex Offenders.

Young Parents with Children The Council identified several young parents wandering the street and/or couch surfing with their small children. This homeless population is increasing because of the bad economy, difficulty finding employment, burned bridges, no credit history, no rental history, etc, etc. The Council identified the need for young parents to have secure housing before they can access the services they need to stabilize the family. More heart wrenching was the knowledge that their children were not receiving the services they need either. Developmental Disability Services, Early Intervention, Head Start are some of the available services for children which are not being accessed. Increased transitional Transitional Housing was not the answer due to the sobriety requirement. A Housing First Program was necessary. The Council supported WGAP's application for the Washington Families Fund. Unfortunately, the application was not funded.

Resource Directory and Access Card

The list of resources available to assist the homeless was fairly extensive for a small rural County. The service providers, however, were not consistently aware of what services were available by whom. The group did not feel a single point of contact was the type of solution best fitting their needs. In order to assure accurate information to anyone assisting the homeless, it was determined an interactive, internet Resource Directory was necessary. A wallet size access card including all homeless services will be developed for distribution to clients.

Update

After several revisions a wallet size access cards specifically listing services for the homeless was finalized. The access card was distributed to law enforcement, DSHS, churches, Children and Family Services, various treatment providers, and various other Community Partners.

The interactive, internet Resource Directory was not attempted. At the update meeting, a volunteer offered to pursue this possibility. Currently WGAP is involved with 211 and lists all available resources through that Directory.

Transitional Housing and Self Sufficiency

The diverse group developing the Homeless Housing Plan felt Transitional Housing with a Self Sufficiency Program was needed for a variety of different groups: young women between 16 – 24; released inmates; families with children; single individuals; adults involved with substance abuse treatment (Oxford House) and mental health clients.

Update

Three units of Transitional Housing are in operation in North Bonneville. Currently, all units are occupied by couples with children. The couples are involved in the Family Development Specialist model Self Sufficiency Program. WGAP administers the Consolidated Homeless Grant. It includes both short and medium term rental assistance with a self sufficiency component.

Affordable Housing

As the County's popularity grows and property prices increase, affordable housing will also grow as an issue. Affordable Housing development is necessary.

Update

Mid Columbia Housing has completed the White Caps project which is Workforce Housing. It has 16 Units.

Shelter Services

A determination as to the need for short term (30 to 90 days) shelter once accurate data collection occurs.

Update

In February 2010, WGAP opened a small 2 bedroom Shelter in Skamania County. It was 100% occupied from opening until October. Statistically 83% of the households occupying the Shelter found housing upon exiting. One household went to another Shelter. In February 2013, the Shelter moved to a new facility with 5 rooms.

Enhanced Homeless Services

A list of other services targeting homeless populations that are considered essential:

- Treatment Services in Jail with continuing resources and housing after jail or prison releases;
- Post treatment housing for adults completing a substance abuse treatment program;
- Increased Transportation within the County and out of the County;
- Services for Homeless Veterans;
- Housing for Mental Health clients such as congregate care
- Tenant based Rental Assistance

Update

Treatment Services in Jail with continuing resources and housing after jail or prison releases;

Provided through Jail Ministries; At the Cross; Private Individuals

Post treatment housing for adults completing a substance abuse treatment program;

Provided through At the Cross and Private Individuals

Transportation within the County and out of the County;

Skamania County Transportation fixed route bus service

Services for Homeless Veterans;

Incorporated into provided services

Housing for Mental Health clients such as congregate care

None at this time

Tenant based Rental Assistance

HOME

Community funding that provides short term motel stays, food vouchers, and bus tickets.

Available through National Food & Shelter Board Program

Section 6 - Local Plan to for Ensuring the Health and Safety of Homeless Housing

Describe the methods used in your county to ensure that homeless housing is healthy and safe, including housing provided through temporary encampments.

There are two shelters in Skamania County. Holly House is inspected by staff daily and management on a regular basis. The facility is inspected by State agencies that provide funding to assure compliance with all regulations. The Skamania County Shelter is also inspected by staff daily and management regularly. The facility was inspected by the City of Stevenson prior to occupancy.

Section 7 - Public Notification Procedures for Proposed Homeless Housing

Describe the public notification process required in your county for proposed homeless housing projects, including housing provided through temporary encampments.

There is no "special" public notification procedure for proposed homeless housing. If a Conditional Use Permit is necessary, that procedure is followed.

Section 8 - Recommendations for State Legislative and Policy Changes Needed to Address Homelessness

Describe the state-level changes in policy and law necessary to achieve the goal of a 50% reduction in homelessness in your county.

The Jail Ministries have recognized a Policy Change that could impact the ability of reformed felons to become productive members of society. If an individual is convicted of a felony, it stays on their record forever. It limits their ability to get a job, HUD housing assistance, and some private housing opportunities. If a felony conviction could be erased after a number years when no additional arrests or convictions occur, it would help individuals.

Update

WGAP researched this through the court system and found there is a way for felonies to be expunged. It is very technical and requires retaining an attorney.

Appendix A – Performance Measures

WGAP collects and reports the following performance measures annually. The Skamania County Homeless Housing Plan contains strategies to address these measures, and support the infrastructure to ensure data needed to report on these measures is collected accurately and completely.

Performance Measures

<i>Measure</i>	<i>Data Source</i>
For each of the following populations, total number, percentage reduction from baseline count, and percentage reduction in per-capita of homeless persons:	Point in Time Count (PIT)
All homeless	PIT (direct)
Single persons	PIT (indirect)
Homeless families with minor children	PIT (indirect)
Homeless Families with no minor children	PIT (indirect)
Senior Citizens	PIT (indirect)
Youth	PIT (indirect)
Farm workers	PIT (direct)
Physically disabled	PIT (direct)
Mentally disabled	PIT (direct)
Persons with substance abuse problems	PIT (direct)
Dually diagnosed	PIT (indirect)
Domestic violence victims	PIT (direct)
Chronic homeless	PIT (indirect)
Veterans	PIT (direct)
HIV/AIDS	PIT (direct)
Registered	Local Law
Sex	Enforcement
offenders	Registry
Percentage of each of the following homeless populations covered by point in time count of homeless persons:	
All homeless	Estimate
In emergency shelter	Housing inventory/PIT
In transitional housing	Housing inventory/PIT
Living outside/in car	Estimate
Percentage of homeless persons identified in a calendar year placed in transitional housing (stay ranging from 91 days to 2 years).	HMIS
Percentage of homeless persons identified in a calendar year placed in affordable permanent housing (no stay limit, no more than 30% of income used for rent and utilities).	HMIS

Average and median days between identification of a homeless person and their placement in either transitional housing or permanent housing in calendar year.	HMIS
Percentage of total need for transitional housing beds met.	Housing inventory
Percentage of total need for permanent supportive housing met.	Housing inventory
Percentage of need for affordable housing not met.	HUD CHAS data
Satisfaction of homeless persons receiving housing/services.	Local focus groups
Number of households at immediate-risk of homelessness who maintain their housing in calendar year (i.e., those provided sort-term rent assistance, landlord mediation, etc.).	HMIS
Percentage of homeless persons exiting the service system in one calendar year reentering the system as homeless in a subsequent year.	HMIS
Assessment of system collaboration.	Subjective narrative
Assessment of community support.	Subjective narrative