

Progress Report: First 6-months (July 1 through Dec 31, 2024)

Thank you to Ann Arbor City Council for renewing the **Rising Hope for Housing Program** for a second year of funding. This program continues its work to provide trauma-informed services for housing voucher households involved in the criminal legal system through funding from the marijuana tax excise rebate. The agencies contracted by the City of Ann Arbor through the Ann Arbor Housing Commission to provide the direct services covered under this grant funding are A Brighter Way, Catholic Charities (formerly Catholic Social Services) Offender Success, Shelter Association of Washtenaw County, and SOS Community Services. The Washtenaw Housing Alliance, with support of the Ann Arbor Housing Commission, are facilitating the overall grant coordination and management.

Between July 1 through December 31, 2024, the Rising Hope program assisted 43 households, averaging 7 per month. Most referrals continue to be new applicant households with only about 7 households returning for an additional service through the program.

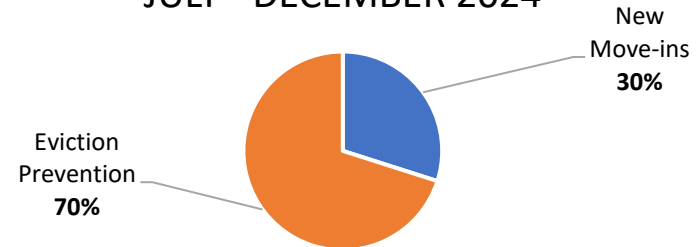
58% of head of households applying identified as female and 41% as male. About 82% identified as Black, 5% as white, and 13% as bi-racial.

The majority were between the ages of 45-54 years old and 42% reported having children in the home. At least 5 households applying were a family size over 5, one being a size of 9.

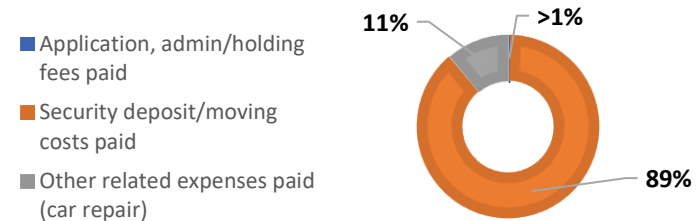
All households participating in the program were able to maintain their housing with their current vouchers. A total of 15 households were able to use their vouchers to lease up and move into new housing in the county.

To the right are charts depicting the following housing assistance provided by grant partners to qualified program households in Washtenaw County.

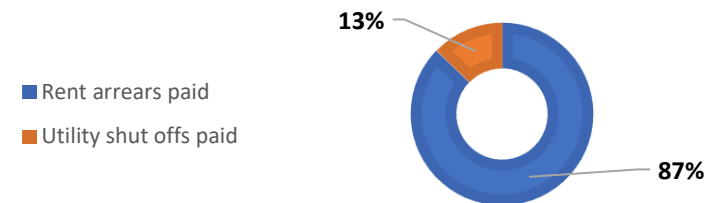
HOUSING ASSISTANCE PROVIDED JULY - DECEMBER 2024



MOVE-IN ASSISTANCE JULY - DECEMBER 2024



EVICTON PREVENTION JULY - DECEMBER 2024



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A notable success of the program continues to be the flexibility of the funding in what it can pay for and quick in the time it takes to make the payment for the qualifying household. Here are two success statements shared by Rising Hope partners:

Housing Access for Washtenaw County (HAWC): "Rising Hope is an extremely helpful resource for the HAWC Call Center and the HAWC Court Liaison. As funding is very limited, having another financial support resource is priceless. Knowing there is help out there for families and individuals who have the additional barriers that Rising Hope clients face is a very good thing. The HAWC Call Center and the HAWC Court Liaison have been able to refer many families and individuals to their program to help keep folks housed."

Legal Services of South Central Michigan: "Rising Hope provided vital support to several clients this year. Their resources helped eliminate multiple barriers and keep a 3-generation family from becoming homeless. In another case, they covered the expenses of a youth who had aged out of the foster care system until his social security benefits were straightened out. These are just two examples of their excellent work."

Every month the WHA facilitates check-in meetings with program grant partners as well as community partners in the county who refer clients to the program. These partners include Washtenaw Community Mental Health, HAWC, Washtenaw County Sheriff's Office Re-entry Program, Avalon Housing. Other community partners providing referrals to the program include Legal Services of South Central Michigan and Michigan Ability Partners. At the meetings, case conferencing of services is discussed (excluding client sensitive information), particularly if an agency is needing advice on how to navigate a service or providing more in-depth support to a household who has returned to the program. What is especially helpful about these meeting is the time we can take as a group to decide how to intentionally draft and implement program policies and share recommendations of outside funding sources an agency can leverage when addressing client needs that exceed our program's capabilities.

WHA staff continues to outreach to additional partners to educate about the program's services and find new partners to receive referrals from. Recent presentations have been made for Life After Incarceration: Transition and Re-entry which hosts a Life Skills Community Group in the County Jail, Barrier Busters' January 2025 community meeting as well as Friends In Deed. Recently, Rising Hope assisted an applicant who is a veteran. We will look to connect with the Washtenaw County Veteran Affairs office and Michigan Ability Partners to bridge any gaps between our program and those that provide specific wrap around services for veterans.

One significant change between last grant year and this second year is the use of the Homeless Management Information System, or HMIS, to help us better streamline client tracking. Another difference was the Michigan State Housing Development Authority, or MSHDA, deciding to close the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Homeless Preference Wait List in July 2024. Fortunately, the closing of the wait list has not impacted how the Rising Hope program operates mostly because MSHDA's last pull of names from the wait list has not been since October 2023. It is anticipated that MSHDA will reopen the Homeless Preference Wait List soon, possibly this spring.