

STATE OF VERMONT
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 03-16

[Publicly Funded Housing for the Homeless]

WHEREAS, homelessness has been a persistent and growing problem within Vermont for more than 30 years, affecting children, young adults, working families, and veterans;

WHEREAS, both the financial and human costs of homelessness strain public services including health care, mental health care, and education;

WHEREAS, as federal housing resources have declined, affordable housing production in Vermont has slowed and homelessness has increased;

WHEREAS, Vermont has a commitment to the quality of life for all of its citizens, including through the launch of a statewide initiative to end child and family homelessness in Vermont by 2020;

WHEREAS, State investments targeted to Vermonters experiencing homelessness – including the Vermont Rental Subsidy, Family Supportive Housing, Housing Opportunity Program, and Subsidy and Care Program – have shown effectiveness at breaking the cycle of homelessness;

WHEREAS, housing partners such as the Vermont State Housing Authority, the Vermont Housing Finance Agency, and the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board have targeted and coordinated resources to create supportive housing opportunities for Vermonters who are homeless;

WHEREAS, the 2015 annual point-in-time count showed a modest decrease in homelessness statewide, and housing partners across Vermont should commit to building on successes to date; and

WHEREAS, in addition to increasing access to affordable housing, success in ending homelessness requires a coordinated continuum of supports and services including Short-Term Emergency Shelter, Targeted Transitional Housing, Rental Subsidies, Targeted Homelessness Prevention Activities, Rapid Re-Housing, and Supportive Housing.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT I, Peter Shumlin, by virtue of the power vested in me as Governor, do hereby establish a goal that owners of publicly funded housing make available at least 15% of their affordable housing portfolio to homeless families and individuals, including those with special needs who require service support and rental assistance to secure and maintain their housing.

To implement this goal, I hereby direct that:

1. Housing organizations and homeless service providers that receive state funds, state-allocated grants, and/or state tax credits shall work together to coordinate rental subsidies, services, and economic support such that, when publicly supported housing units become available, homeless families and individuals have the assistance and support needed to make use of those units. These organizations are encouraged to adopt Memoranda of Understanding or other mechanisms as tools to plan for achievement of this goal.
2. To ensure that homeless Vermonters have both the necessary supports and affordable housing to achieve success, the Agency of Human Services (“AHS”) shall prioritize and coordinate services and subsidies to homeless families and individuals, and shall encourage recipients of AHS grants to work together with housing partners to meet the 15% goal.
3. Public housing authorities and owners of privately owned publicly supported affordable housing are encouraged to work towards the goal of making at least 15% of their units available to homeless families and individuals as units change hands and are developed.
4. The Vermont Community Development Program (“VCDP”), the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board (“VHCB”), and the Vermont Housing Finance Agency (“VHFA”) shall work together to develop funding criteria that requires applicants for housing grants or tax credits to describe plans and tools to achieve the goal of making at least 15% of their permanent, publicly supported housing units available to the homeless. These funding criteria shall apply to all applicants for housing grants or tax credits, subject to limited exceptions. Applicants will also be asked to describe any “non-permanent” assistance, such as shelter beds or transitional housing units. VCDP, VHCB, and VHFA shall report annually to the Agency of Commerce and Community Development and AHS on the results of this effort.
5. AHS shall provide training to housing managers and housing and homeless service providers on how to successfully work with formerly homeless households.
6. State agencies and housing agencies are encouraged to seek new sources of federal and philanthropic funding for housing development, services and subsidies.
7. In working towards the 15% goal, owners of age-restricted housing shall not be required to make units available to individuals who do not meet their age restrictions.

This Executive Order shall take effect upon signing.

Dated April 20, 2016.

Peter Shumlin
Governor

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