

# Statewide Permanent Supportive Housing Workgroup

Agenda – May 18, 2023

## 1. Florida Supportive Housing Coalition presentation.

The [Florida Supportive Housing Coalition's](#) presentation provides a brief history of the Coalition and an overview of Evidence-based Best Practices that are being implemented in Florida. The presentation expands to highlight innovations throughout the state, specifically four key pillars: cross-sector collaborations, co-locating services in residential settings, flexibility in services funding, and the importance of rental assistance.

## 2. Charge of the Workgroup.

The State's Permanent Supportive Housing Workgroup has been identified as a group of key policy makers for the purpose of developing a statewide Action Plan that will bring together State Agencies for the purpose of identifying efficiencies, improving existing efforts, and charting a course of future collaboration and coordination.

## 3. Definition of Permanent Supportive Housing.

Affordable rental housing leased to households for continued occupancy. Tenancy is based on a lease for term as long as the tenant complies with lease requirements. Permanent Supportive Housing shall support housing stability, access to activities of daily living, community-based services, and inclusion in the general community through voluntary participation in supportive services.

## 4. Reflection of Current Florida Efforts.

During the March 27 Workgroup meeting examples of housing initiatives were discussed among Workgroup members present. Examples of Permanent Supportive Housing efforts discussed during this meeting are described here.

- [High Utilizer Housing and Services Pilot with Housing Providers and Managing Entities.](#) Florida Housing Finance Corporation awarded \$40 million in financing to three Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) properties for a new pilot. A small portion of the units – 20% or a minimum of 15 units – will house “High Utilizers” of public behavioral health crisis services or individuals that are a high priority for diversion from acute health care services and institutional settings. The focus of this new 3-year pilot is on those High Utilizers who part of the state's behavioral healthcare system through the Managing Entities and are facing housing instability due to their behavioral health care situation. The long-term objective of the pilot is to create a collaborative approach to state-administered funding for both housing and services to build a replicable model for the future.
- [Housing Stability for Chronically Homeless Persons with High Needs.](#) In consultation with state agencies, Florida Housing Finance Corporation funded the development of three pilot properties to evaluate whether cost savings to public services were possible when persons experiencing chronic homelessness who were high utilizers of crisis services received

permanent supportive housing. A final report was published in April 2021, summarizing the findings of the three pilot sites. Conclusions showed savings to public service costs after formerly homeless people moved into supportive housing, along with better resident personal outcomes.

- [Pathways to Prosperity](#). The Hope Florida: A Pathway to Prosperity program is designed to provide individualized supports to ensure economic self-sufficiency. Staff of this program help connect individuals and families to supportive services in the private sector, faith community, and nonprofit organizations while developing long-term goals to address the needs identified by the participating households.

Following the March 27 Workgroup meeting, examples of current projects being implemented were submitted for informational purposes. Staff supporting the Workgroup reviewed these examples and identified Permanent Supportive Housing efforts which are outlined below.

- [Housing Options for Youth Aging Out of Foster Care](#). An example of Permanent Supportive Housing for Youth Aging Out of Foster Care includes scattered site placement into individual apartments throughout the community. These efforts are aimed at supporting youth exiting the foster care system that are Extremely Low-Income. The Community Based Care agencies support youth through continual communication with the property, as well as offering supports for the specific youth.
- [Housing Stability for Homeless Schoolchildren](#). This initiative pairs federal rental assistance with wrap around supports from a network of local providers including the Public Housing Authority, the School District's homeless liaison, and a case management organization. A local network of providers supports families with school-aged children through improved employment opportunities, access to community-based supports and services, and educational supports. Participating households have seen marked improvements in school attendance, academic performance, and increased housing stability.

As of May 3, written Public Comments were received by Florida Housing Finance Corporation, posted on the [Statewide Permanent Supportive Housing Workgroup page](#) on Florida Housing's website, and shared with the Workgroup.

## 5. Framework for State Action Plan.

As noted above the purpose of this Workgroup is to develop an Action Plan that examines three key components:

- a. Recognize Current Models and Identifying Efficiencies
- b. Strategize Ways to Improve and Enhance Existing Efforts
- c. Discover Opportunities for Future Collaboration and Coordination

Within each component Workgroup members must examine the key tenets of Permanent Supportive Housing as defined above.

- i. Housing is leased for continued occupancy.

- ii. Tenancy is based on compliance with lease requirements.
- iii. Efforts shall support housing stability.
- iv. Residents shall have access to activities of daily living.
- v. Residents shall have access to community-based services.
- vi. Resident participation in supportive services is entirely voluntary.

Additional comments were also provided after the March 27 Workgroup meeting by a member with a series of recommendations to consider. Topics included in the additional notes: leverage current and new resources to provide Permanent Supportive Housing and accompanying supportive services, retain affordable housing for vulnerable populations, provide guidance and technical assistance for special purpose and braided funding, policy changes that will allow for the flexible use of funding, among many others. A full listing of these comments can be found later in this agenda.

Specific recommendations that were provided during the first Workgroup meeting included things such as data analysis and data sharing agreements, exploring strategies for creating new Permanent Supportive Housing units as well as preserving the existing supply, looking at an ongoing needs assessment, increasing supportive services capacity, and exploring knowledge of and examples of national and international best practices that can be implemented in Florida.

## Statewide Permanent Supportive Housing Action Plan

	Current Models & Efficiencies	Enhancements for Existing Efforts	Opportunities for Future Collaboration & Coordination
<b>Housing leased for continued occupancy</b>			
<b>Tenancy based on compliance with lease requirements</b>			
<b>Efforts to support housing stability</b>			
<b>Access to activities of daily living</b>			
<b>Access to community-based services</b>			
<b>Voluntary participation in services</b>			
<b>Other related recommendations</b>			

## 6. Notes from Workgroup Members.

### Statewide Housing Strategic Plan Workgroup

The relationship between housing and health is well established.

- The individuals SAMH serves by definition have low or no incomes and are uninsured or underinsured, and have mental health and/or substance use concerns.
- Supportive housing model is a proven solution that helps vulnerable individuals and families live in the community with dignity and autonomy.
  - Populations may include individuals experiencing chronic homelessness, severe behavioral health disorders, homeless youth, youth aging out of the foster care system, and survivors of domestic violence.
- Housing services and supports include outreach and engagement, locating housing, housing and tenancy supports, minor home modifications, etc.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) Define Supportive housing and identify target populations.
- 2) Leverage SB102 funding for supportive housing projects for special needs populations  
<https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2023/102/?Tab=Analyses>
- 3) Develop one statewide database of affordable rental units by 2027 (to include indicating subsidized units, potential roommate matching, landlord accepting vouchers, marketing strategy, and landlords who will work with applicants with housing barriers). Within this time period, have landlords/properties from at least 75% of the state included in the database.
- 4) Leveraging current and new resources from all partners to streamline access to and fund housing and/or housing supports to:
  - Prioritize and support supportive services and the development and preservation of supportive housing for persons with special needs.
    - Set aside funding for supportive housing and supportive services
  - Develop a data use agreement (DUA) to facilitate data sharing across state agencies and organization
    - Establish a standardized consent form
    - National Coordinator Permitted Uses and Disclosures Fact Sheets – provide a guidance related to the disclosure of protected health information by covered entities under HIPAA.
    - Georgia and Louisiana are states identified as having model DUAs.  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Data Use Agreement Practices Guide
  - Share access to existing data system/create and sustain a new data system (will require sustainable funding)
  - Leverage 2-1-1 / Hope Navigators (or establish a statewide 1-800)
    - Designate as an Access Point or facilitate referrals to the nearest one
    - May require funding for initial and ongoing training
    - Training: resources, support programs and services, and housing options
  - Entities that receive funding from DCF:
    - Participate in data sharing consent and agreements for DCF consumers

- Annually set aside a percentage of funding to support housing services and supports for DCF consumers – with regular increases based on the cost of living/inflation etc.
  - Prioritize and leverage existing and new funding such as SB102, HOME, HOME ARP, Sadowski Trust Fund and partner resources and funding to:
    - improve quality of private market units and preserve affordability -- creating a statewide pool of funds for rental rehabilitation activities (pulling best practices from other state and local rental rehab programs).
    - Provide a statewide flexible pool of funds for landlord risk-mitigation, landlord incentives, and landlord outreach.
      - Also, provide legal assistance for those needing it regarding housing quality (and illegal evictions?) issues.
    - Develop a renovation loan program for existing small rental owners/landlords to create PSH set-asides (up to 20%) and explore partnering with existing local programs to create set-aside PSH units. (Note: requires securing additional resources)
    - Create a capacity-building fund to nurture and support smaller, existing non-profit housing creators to undertake 9% and 4% LIHTC financed housing projects – pay for consultants, hiring developer, training staff with a commitment that these developers will include 20% PSH set-asides and have lower barrier tenant selection plans
- 5) Prioritize providing technical assistance and supports for ongoing provider and Agency staff education and technical assistance
- 6) Increase the use of peer support services within housing programs
- 7) Work with developers, and other stakeholders to identify known expiring properties/units and existing properties nearing their end of affordability and identify resources to ensure that the properties remain affordable.
- 8) Promote “[gentle density](#)”: mixed-use development, with single-family homes alongside small multi-family homes, businesses and commercial buildings.
  - refers to the development of duplexes, triplexes, accessory dwelling units (ADUs), stacked townhouses, semi-detached homes and small-scale apartment and condominium buildings within and among single-family zoned neighborhoods.
- 9) Creating a toolkit for local governments to generate more PSH development projects focusing on braiding funding, land banking, partnering with PHAs and larger landowners
- 10) Develop and employ a PSH fidelity tool adaptable to reflect uniqueness of communities
- 11) Establish a supportive housing learning community
- 12) Education and information to community and non-profits who serve vulnerable populations/special needs on local housing codes and whom to contact with housing code issues.
- 13) Educate and incentivize local Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) to increase the percent of public housing units for Nonelderly Disabled (NED) by helping with federal applications for regular and “special purpose” Housing Choice Vouchers (HCV),

- 14) Leverage/gain commitments of Housing Choice Project Based Vouchers (PBV) with local PHAs in 20 priority Counties/Geographic Areas to support PSH set-asides and Extremely Low Income (ELI) units. -- addressed in SB102?
- 15) Provide a Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) (or some type of analysis and adjustment as decided to increase the “payment standards” for ALFs. Evaluate “payment standards” and COLA needed every other year (at least)
- 16) Policy changes, creating flexible funding (including ability to easily shift funding depending on need and use), and enhancing current funding to increase housing supportive services and opportunities for individuals with special needs who have housing instability.
- 17) Initiate a State-Local PSH Partnership Initiative with the counties and Continuums of Care (CoC)s and secure the adoption of the state PSH policy framework at the local level to expand SH across the state within [X number] of months.
- 18) Engage managed care organizations in supporting permanent supportive housing as a value-added service for individuals with disabilities
- 19) Improve opportunities for self-sufficiency for PSH tenants in order to support housing stability or graduation from PSH
- 20) Develop and define standard/common housing outcome measures across all populations to measure the success of all PSH programs including
  - Number of persons served
  - Increases in income
  - Occupancy rates of PSH units
  - Housing stability for persons served (e.g. number of moves within a period of time)
  - Housing retention (number who remained in housing for six months/twelve months)
  - Cost savings on emergency services

## RESOURCES

City of Anacortes WA

[Affordable Housing Strategic Plan- City of Anacortes \(anacorteswa.gov\)](https://www.anacorteswa.gov/affordable-housing-strategic-plan)

MassLandlord

[Gentle Density Increases Nearby Property Values, Evidence Shows, Contrary to Popular Belief - MassLandlords.net](https://www.masslandlords.net/gentle-density-increases-nearby-property-values-evidence-shows-contrary-to-popular-belief)

New Mexico State Plan for Supportive Housing

[New Mexico STRATEGIC plan for supportive housing \(state.nm.us\)](https://www.state.nm.us/new-mexico-strategic-plan-for-supportive-housing)

New York

Make New York’s Housing More Affordable, Equitable, and Stable

[Make New York’s Housing More Affordable, Equitable, and Stable | Governor Kathy Hochul \(ny.gov\)](https://www.ny.gov/make-new-yorks-housing-more-affordable-equitable-and-stable)

North Carolina Strategic Housing Plan

[North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services Strategic Housing Plan \(ncdhs.gov\)](https://www.ncdhs.gov/north-carolina-department-of-health-and-human-services-strategic-housing-plan)

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration (SAMHSA) Permanent Supportive Housing  
Evidence-Based Practices Tool Kit  
[Permanent Supportive Housing Evidence-Based Practices \(EBP KIT\) | SAMHSA](#)



# HOUSING





## POST 18 OPTIONS

**Presenters:**  
Cal Walton, III- Youth and Young Adult Transition Services Specialist- DCF  
Keri Flynn- Director of Youth Services- Embrace Families  
Meinrad John- Housing Manager- Embrace Families

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### TYPES OF PLACEMENT / HOUSING

- § Traditional Foster / Group Homes
- § Transitional Homes (approved but not licensed)
- § Residing with host families / friends / relatives (approved placement)
- § Corporate leases (negotiated with apartment complexes)
- § Extremely Low Income Apartments (ELI)
- § Pregnant / Parenting
- § Mental Health / Substance Abuse
- § Offender Housing



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## FOSTER HOMES – KEY POINTS TO CONSIDER

- q The Most Preferable Option
- q Youth's transition plan should include plans for the youth when they turn 18 in a licensed care.
  - q Review criminal history of the youth prior to making the plan to remain
  - q Talk to the foster parent about options if the youth has a delinquent background

q References:

**65C-45.001 Background Screening Requirements for all Levels of Licensure.**

**39.0138 Criminal history and other records checks; limit on placement of a child.**

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### HOUSING

- Provide safe and secure housing with established supervision, house rules, curfew, visitation etc...
- All homes must go through an inspection / home assessment prior to any child being placed there.
- Goal is to create a bank of homes that can be used when needed and not to scramble at the last minute.

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HOST HOMES  
Residing with host home / friends / relatives - approved placement

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## HOST HOMES – STEPS TO IMPLEMENT

- q Collaborate with your agency's Foster Home Recruitment Team (coordinate plan to approach local churches, community groups, schools, etc)
- q Inform Foster Parent Trainers about the Need for Older Youth to have a Family Home Setting
- q Talk to the Marketing Team – news spots, newspaper articles, social media posts, etc.
- q Add a place on your CBC's Website to inquire about housing older youth from foster care that emails you directly
- q Meet with Potential Host Homes to outline the support they will receive (when placing specific kids - complete a shared living assessment agreement and shared living plan to outline services needed, rules and payment rates)
- q Support the Homes and Staff by Communicating with them Personally (not through the case manager or IL specialist)

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## TRANSITIONAL HOMES – STEPS TO IMPLEMENT

- q Talk to your Host Homes that are interested in helping more
- q Connect with Nonprofits in your service area to ask if they are interested in serving the population
- q Work with your CBC's Contract Manager to come up with a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or Contract template for the Homes that outlines expectations, insurance and payment rates
- q Meet with Transitional Homes to outline the support they will receive
- q Support the Homes and Staff by Communicating with them Personally (not through the case manager or IL specialist)

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**MENTAL HEALTH HOUSING**

- 24 Hour Supervision
- Medication Management
- Collaborate with Targeted Case Manager concerning mental wellness services.

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**MENTAL HEALTH HOUSING– STEPS TO IMPLEMENT**

- q Connect with Nonprofits in your service area to ask if they are interested in serving the population
- q Work with your CBC's Contract Manager to come up with a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or Contract template for the Homes that outlines expectations and payment rates
- q Meet with Providers to outline the support they will receive
- q Providers should be equipped to provide the services that are necessary to support the youth including in-house therapy, medication management, transportation, food purchasing and prep, and education/employment assistance
- q Support the Homes and Staff by Communicating with them Personally (not through the case manager or IL specialist)
- q For young adults that receive SSI, the provider is able to be appointed as Representative Payee and use those funds to cover a portion of the agreed upon cost of care

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**APARTMENTS**

- **Extremely Low Income Apartments (ELI units) (PESS only)**
- **Apartment Rental (negotiated with apartment complexes)**
- **Scattered sites**

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**APARTMENTS - STEPS TO IMPLEMENT**

- ∅ *Extremely Low Income (ELI)*
  - q Connect with the liaison in your area
  - q Screen Youth Applicants to Ensure they are a Good Candidate to Live Alone
  - q Stay in Touch with the Apartment Complex **Frequently**
  - q **Note:** youth renters must go through all screenings including criminal, credit and rental history checks and must meet income limits reviewed annually but can stay as long as they meet it.
- ∅ *Corporate Leasing*
  - q Talk to the Finance Lead for IL in your CBC to get Approval First
  - q Approach Apartment Complexes in Convenient Areas – Lots of Leg Work and Knowledge about your Agency is Needed for this Task
  - q Find the Right Youth to Move in, they will Have Financial Issues and Not Pay Rent – Be Prepared to Pay up to 6+ Months.

v *Make sure when identifying apartments, they are scattered and not all in the same complex or building*

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**OFFENDER HOUSING**

- Community partners that assist youth with offender registry
- Placement meets state and county restriction criteria
- Assist case managers and young adults navigate the registration process

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**OFFENDER HOUSING – STEPS TO IMPLEMENT**

- q Same as Mental Health Population, except the location of the house has to be in a state approved location (away from schools and playgrounds)
- q Connect with Nonprofits in your service area to ask if they are interested in serving the population
- q Work with your CBC's Contract Manager to come up with a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or Contract template for the Homes that outlines expectations and payment rates
- q Meet with Providers to outline the support they will receive
- q Support the Homes and Staff by Communicating with them Personally (not through the case manager or IL specialist)

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**PROVIDER REQUIRED SERVICES**

- \* Housing
- \* Transportation (limited)
- \* Food (emergency pantry)
- \* Support & Supervision
- \* Independent Living Skills
- \* Provider Training

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## HOW TO GET A PROVIDER TO DO MORE

- ü Provide Support:
  - visits, phone calls, small gifts or tokens of appreciation (without them calling first)
- ü Collaborate with a Community "Village"
- ü Have a team that supports them in addition to the IL specialist:



Education      Housing      Employment

- Mentoring
- Cars for Kids
- Youth Advisory Board/Council
- Therapeutic Services

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## HOW TO GET MORE SUPPORT AT YOUR CBC

- q Identify a CBC IL Point of Contact/Champion
- q Meet with your CBC's Finance Director for IL to understand the Funding and Budgeting
- q Use KR OCAs to add Additional Specialty Positions or Take from IL Case Management Positions to Cover Extras

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## SUPPORT AND SUPERVISION

- Provide support to the young adults
- Collaborate with the case managers
- Provide monthly updates and life skills documents
- **COMMUNICATION IS KEY!**



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### CONTACT INFORMATION

- **Cal Walton, III – DCF, Youth and Young Adult Transition Services Specialist** [Cal.Walton@myflfamilies.com](mailto:Cal.Walton@myflfamilies.com)
- **Keri Flynn- Embrace Families, Director of Youth Services,** [Keri.Flynn@embracefamilies.org](mailto:Keri.Flynn@embracefamilies.org)
- **Meinrad John- Embrace Families, Housing Manager,** [Meinrad.John@embracefamilies.org](mailto:Meinrad.John@embracefamilies.org)

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## 7. Public Comments Received.

**From:** [Shannon Nazworth](#)  
**To:** [Zach Summerlin](#)  
**Subject:** workgroup handout  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 28, 2023 8:39:01 AM  
**Attachments:** image001.png  
[We sent you safe versions of your files.msg](#)  
[ERHC-StatePlanWorkgroupHandout.pdf](#)

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Zach,

Attached is a handout I brought yesterday for the workgroup members. I realized it was not the venue to distribute so am asking you to share.

Thank you.



**Shannon Nazworth**

President & CEO

**Ability Housing, Inc.** | [abilityhousing.org](http://abilityhousing.org)

3740 Beach Blvd, Suite 304 | Jacksonville, FL 32207

904.359.9650 x. 106

*building strong communities where everyone has a **home***

**Due to COVID-19 the Ability Housing offices are closed to visitors**

# FLORIDA SUPPORTIVE HOUSING COALITION



## **Supportive Housing**

- Truly affordable, independent housing of indefinite duration provides the base of stability
- Self-directed, comprehensive services provide needed support in a coordinated way

The Florida Supportive Housing Coalition is a statewide advocacy organization comprised of other statewide advocacy organizations, affordable and supportive housing developers, service providers, homeless coalitions, local governments and other likeminded businesses and individuals who understand the role of stable housing to the health and wellbeing of individuals with special needs or experiencing homelessness.

## **Mission**

To rebuild lives through the integration of housing and services for persons with special needs or experiencing homelessness

## **Vision**

A Florida where people with special needs can live, work and prosper in the communities of their choice with the supports they need

## **What We Do**

- Advocate with local, state and federal policy makers
- Educate as to best practices and how to access, develop and provide supportive housing
- Provide technical assistance for communities to create actionable plans to develop supportive housing

Supportive Housing Need  
12,811 units

## 2022 POLICY DAY CONVENINGS

In May and September 2022, the Florida Supportive Housing Coalition convened the Executive Office of the Governor, nine state agencies and key stakeholder organizations to hold strategic dialogues regarding supportive housing in Florida. The facilitated meetings explored common purpose, traced the history of Florida's supportive housing policy and examined how best to: increase availability, improve access to services and create data-driven solutions across multiple state agencies and systems of care.

The convenings led to the creation of a working group to develop a State Supportive Housing Action Plan.

Attendees agreed that it was critical to have senior state agency leadership involved with development of the plan. And that stakeholder groups should be engaged in the process.

### **Key Strategies to Include in State Supportive Housing Action Plan**

Attendees identified the following key strategies to be included in the State Supportive Housing Action Plan:

- Data sharing and data-driven decision making
- Interagency communication, coordination and resource leveraging
- Long-term sustainable funding; creation of a supportive housing trust fund
- Streamlined access to housing navigation and supportive housing units
- Development of agency and stakeholder capacity
- Evaluation and accountability for State Supportive Housing Action Plan implementation



[fshc.org](http://fshc.org)

**From:** [amyimcclellan@gmail.com](mailto:amyimcclellan@gmail.com)  
**To:** [Zach Summerlin](#)  
**Cc:** "Debra Webb"  
**Subject:** New Supportive Housing Model in Miami  
**Date:** Monday, May 1, 2023 4:41:27 PM

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Good morning, Mr. Summerlin,

We participated in the March 27 Statewide Supportive Housing Workgroup. Our organization, The Key Clubhouse of South Florida, is located in a 80-unit supportive housing building in Miami called Northside Commons, which was developed by Carrfour Supportive Housing. The building was built with financing from the FHFC and completed in July 2021. Forty-two of our clubhouse members who have serious mental illnesses live in apartments above our clubhouse. It is the first supportive housing project in Florida with a clubhouse program operating in the same building.

This project has made it possible for 42 of our members, many of whom experienced homelessness or were at risk of homelessness, to have dignified, permanent apartment homes right above their clubhouse, where they participate in our work-based and employment placement program and where they will receive ongoing support throughout their lives. It has created a close-knit community of peers helping peers both downstairs in the clubhouse and upstairs in the apartments. We have often have visitors coming to see the building and our clubhouse who are amazed that such a thing exists for people living with serious mental illness.

Northside Commons came out of a close partnership that we've had with Carrfour Supportive Housing over several years. We feel that this is a model that should be considered by other communities that have clubhouses because it offers an perfect umbrella of support services for residents with SMI. There are 16 clubhouses currently operating in Florida and new ones are starting to form.

On the Key Clubhouse website ([www.keyclubhouse.org](http://www.keyclubhouse.org)) we have a short video that highlights the new building, clubhouse and apartments our members live in. It's also viewable through YouTube: <https://youtu.be/YOcT9jbiWzw>.

We would be happy to present more information on this model to the workgroup if invited. Please let me know if you would like any further information.

*Amy McClellan*

Board President  
The Key Clubhouse of South Florida  
8301 NW 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Suite 102  
Miami, FL 33147

**From:** [Olga Golik](#)  
**To:** [Zach Summerlin](#)  
**Subject:** Public comment for Statewide Permanent Supportive Housing Workgroup  
**Date:** Friday, May 5, 2023 4:16:58 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image002.png](#)  
[image003.png](#)  
[image004.png](#)  
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Citrus Public Comment letter to FSHC.pdf

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Hello Zach, thank you for all your hard with the Statewide Permanent Supportive Housing Workgroup! Attached is a letter from Citrus Health Network with our comments. Thank you!

**Olga Golik**

Privacy Officer/In-House Counsel



**Citrus Health Network, Inc.**

4175 W 20th Ave.  
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 305-424-3010

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 <https://www.citrushealth.org>

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May 10, 2023

Florida Housing Finance Corporation  
c/o Zach Summerlin  
227 North Bronough Street, Suite 5000  
Tallahassee, FL 32301  
VIA email: Zach.Summerlin@floridahousing.org

RE: Support for Supportive Housing State Plan

Citrus Health Network (Citrus) would like to provide this letter of public comment to support the State's effort to develop a State Supportive Housing Plan. As a Community Mental Health Center (CMHC), Community Based Care (CBC) Lead Agency for child welfare services in Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties, housing provider and a Federally Qualified Health Center, we have seen the housing needs of our client populations for many years. Though affordable housing has always been a challenging resource, the current needs are especially dire for the vulnerable groups we serve.

Our crisis units serve persons with disabilities related to mental illness and substance use, that cycle in and out of crisis units and shelters due to their homeless status. Our mental health and child welfare teams work with families at risk of entering the child welfare system who have severe housing challenges. Our Florida Assertive Community Treatment (FACT) teams face huge challenges finding housing for persons exiting state hospitals. Our youth that are survivors of commercial and sexual exploitation have challenges leaving their traffickers due to lack of housing resources. Finally, for our youth aging out of foster care whose placement is subsidized with State dollars, we are unable to find sufficient affordable housing.

Citrus has used every available housing resource to help meet these needs. The Department of Children and Families (DCF) currently funds housing through many of our programs. We try to utilize all federal funds available to assist with the housing needs of these populations, including HUD CoC, HOME, Section 811, Family Unification Program (FUP) funds and Department of Justice OVC funds. We also serve as a referral and service provider for Florida Housing Finance Corporation LINK units and Pilot Programs.

As an agency that receives funding through multiple sources including DCF, AHCA, DHHS, and HUD, we support efforts to blend and bridge service dollars with housing funds. We support the development of a Supportive Housing State Plan and the creation of a Supportive Housing Trust fund to help address the unprecedented needs faced by our community. We are very pleased with the efforts of the State of Florida Workgroup members in this regard and are open to helping the State Agencies in the development of these programs. For more information, please contact Olga Golik, In-House Counsel at OlgaG@citrushealth.com.

Sincerely,

  
Mario Jardon, L.C.S.W.  
President and CEO

Accredited by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations





**From:** [Gayle Giese](#)  
**To:** [Zach Summerlin](#)  
**Subject:** Public Comment on State PSH Workgroup  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 10, 2023 4:52:58 PM  
**Attachments:** [We sent you safe versions of your files.msg](#)  
[Public Comment Letter on State PSH Workgroup.pdf](#)

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Hi Mr. Summerlin,

Thank you very much for putting this important workgroup together!

I've attached a letter of public comment from the Florida Mental Health Advocacy Coalition.

With appreciation,

Gayle Giese  
President, FLMHAC



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May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023

Florida Housing & Finance Corporation  
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Re: Support for the Statewide Permanent Supportive Housing Workgroup

The Florida Mental Health Advocacy Coalition (FLMHAC) heartily thanks the Florida Housing & Finance Corporation for establishing, overseeing, and inviting stakeholders to participate in the statewide permanent supportive housing workgroup to create a State Plan to provide supportive housing for Florida's vulnerable populations, including those with serious mental illness.

FLMHAC is a coalition of 29 local behavioral health advocacy organizations. Most are affiliates of NAMI Florida, which partners with FLMHAC to provide legislative advocacy in our state. We are family members and peers with lived experience. We consistently identify the critical need for more permanent supportive housing as a top priority.

The *2022 Florida Cultural Health Disparity and Behavioral Health Needs Assessment, An Analysis of the Managing Entity Behavioral Health System of Care*, p. 27, identified 676,982 adults with serious mental illness living in Florida in 2020. Many receive only Social Security income of \$914 per month and are unable to pay affordable housing rental rates. They may not meet the HUD criteria for homelessness, but are *at risk* of homelessness. Supportive housing is the cornerstone for their recovery, allowing treatment to be effective.

Long-term sustainable funding through a Supportive Housing Trust Fund that includes some funding for health and wellness services would:

- Reduce homelessness
- Decrease hospitalizations
- Prevent incarcerations
- Encourage re-entry into the workforce and volunteerism
- Significantly reduce costs of behavioral health care
- Reduce stigma of mental illness by integration into the community
- Support recovery and restore lives

As evidenced by 2018 results from the pilot programs in Miami-Dade, Duval, and Pinellas Counties, providing supportive housing to individuals experiencing housing instability and utilizing an abundance of crisis services showed success in avoiding the costs of victimization, criminalization, hospitalization, emergency, and homeless services. Appropriately placed, individuals with SMI have opportunities to live lives of dignity and productivity. Additionally, state and local governments may reinvest the savings in rental assistance and other community housing supports.

Again, thank you for leading this important endeavor!

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