

Position Statement

For 2022 Session

Housing Support Demo Project

Proposal

Issue: MACSSA recognizes that the increase in homelessness and a lack of affordable housing is a statewide issue that cannot be solved only by counties but must seek a collaborative response at all levels of government, the private sector, people with lived experience, service providers and local communities. As part of this greater issue, there is a lack of available housing subsidies for homeless adults/families who struggle with mental illness; substance abuse; or human immunodeficiency virus or acquired immunodeficiency syndrome, with extremely low income. Since 1996, the counties of Anoka, Dakota, Hennepin, and Ramsey have had access to a Housing Support Demonstration Project under 256I.04 Subd. 3(a)(3) that allows for the use of Housing Support as a traditional rental assistance (30% of income toward rent) and support services for persons experiencing homelessness. This Demonstration Project has shown to provide long term housing stability for participants. The seven Twin Cities metro counties have a cooperative agreement that allows for the joint administration of housing and homelessness programs. Dakota, Scott, and Ramsey counties are co-sponsoring legislation to expand the Housing Support Demonstration capacity to all seven metro counties (including Carver, Scott, and Washington), expand the capacity of housing units to 500 households, and fund two Financial Workers dedicated to program administration through the state eligibility system.

Implementation Strategy: MACSSA supports the Dakota, Ramsey, and Scott county efforts to expand the Housing Support Demonstration Project capacity to all seven metro counties, expand the number of available beds and fund two Financial Workers dedicated to program administration through the state eligibility system.

- Add Carver, Scott, and Washington Counties to expand to all metro counties and align the Housing Support Demonstration project to the seven participating counties in the Metro Supportive Housing Cooperative Agreement. Through this Cooperative Agreement, the metro counties can jointly administer the Housing Support Demo Project.
- Expand capacity to allow for increased capacity across the metro area from 226 to 500 supportive housing units.
- Remove language requiring discharge from a facility and language requiring 70% of the people served have a specific disability to align with eligibility under the new MA service (256B.051 Subd 2e).
- Add two Financial Workers dedicated to program administration through the state eligibility system for the entire Demonstration Project.

**Systemic Priority Alignment
(highlight all that apply and explain why)**

- Equity
- Integrated Services
- Fiscal Framework

Comments: It will increase access to stable, affordable housing for individuals and families who are living on the street or in a shelter and have no appropriate housing available and lack the resources and support necessary to access appropriate housing.

**Relevant Committee
(highlight all that apply and explain why)**

- Adult Services
- Behavioral Health
- Children's Services
- Modernization
- Policy
- Self-Sufficiency

Why: Access to affordable supportive housing is a key barrier to individuals and families leading stable and productive lives.

Rationale/Background:

The Housing Support Demonstration project under 2561.04 Subd. 3(a)(3) allows for the use of Housing Support as traditional rental assistance (30% of income toward rent) and support services for persons/families experiencing homelessness. Statute currently limits this use of Housing Support to Anoka, Dakota, Hennepin and Ramsey Counties and to 226 total people or "supportive housing units". This has been in place since 1996 and has been successful providing housing stability. MACSSA's support of this proposal is motivated by the need to develop successful service models that have potential to be scaled statewide.



MACSSA
Minnesota Association of County
Social Service Administrators

Submitted by:

Approved on: