Volusia/Flagler County Coalition for the Homeless

Lead Agency and Collaborative Applicant for the Commission on Homelessness and Housing (FL 504-CoC)

Annual Report for 2018—2019

Executive Director
Jeff White
The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has designated over 400 identified areas throughout the United States to serve as continuums of care. A Continuum of Care (CoC) is a regional or local planning body that coordinates housing and services funding.

The Volusia/Flagler County Coalition for the Homeless (VFCCH) is the lead agency for the Commission on Homelessness and Housing which represents the HUD designated FL-504 Continuum of Care for Volusia and Flagler counties. The Commission of Homelessness and Housing via the lead agency (VFCCH) is responsible for conducting the annual count of the homeless, for identifying the gaps in available housing and services to the subpopulations of homeless, and strategically planning and organizing the expansion of housing and supportive services to meet the needs. These “gaps” are missing services that are needed to ensure that clients can successfully exit homelessness.

VFCCH goals and objectives as listed are in alignment with The Commission on Homelessness and Housing’s 5 Year Strategic Plan (2017-2022), are in accordance with HUD’s updated Federal Strategy to Prevent and End Homelessness, “Home Together”, and are as set forth in HUD’s National Performance Objectives for Continuums of Care.

Implementing Strategies

By implementing strategies addressed by “Home Together” and the Florida Office on Homelessness, the vision and intent of Commission on Homelessness and Housing’s 5-year strategic plan efforts is ultimately to:

- Re-house or shelter people the moment they ask for help, where no one has to sleep outside who doesn’t want to;
- Permanently house people as quickly and efficiently as possible; and
- Effectively connects homeless households to mainstream self-sufficiency services in order to minimize returns to the homeless system.

Goals:

- Prevent Veteran homelessness: At functional “zero” in Volusia and Flagler Counties as of 2015
- End chronic homelessness
- End Unaccompanied Youth Homelessness
- Prevent and end homelessness for families and children
- Set a path to ending all types of homelessness

Objectives:

- Enhance the Coordinated Entry System
- Assure the Provision of Homeless Prevention, Early Intervention Services and Human Services.
- Increase Services, Retool Existing Services and Enhance the Provision of Housing Services
- Assure Access to Health Services
- Assist Clients to Achieve Economic Stability
Stakeholders from different avenues of the community who represent categories outlined by HUD make up the VFCCH Board of Directors. As required by HUD, there is at least one homeless individual or formerly homeless individual who participate on the Board of Directors. In addition, the President of the Board also serves on the Commission on Homelessness and Housing’s Board of directors as the HMIS representative for VFCCH as well as Co-Chair of the HMIS committee. Several other Board members participate on various committees which support the Commission on Homelessness and Housing to include the Strategic Planning committee, Coordinated Entry committee and HMIS committee.

VFCCH Board of Directors 2018-2019

Board President: Chet Bell
Board Vice President: Carl Epley
Treasurer: William Clark
Secretary: Kat Pontiac
Director: Dr. Stephen Bickel
Director: Sarah Shepard
Director: Christine Sikora
Director: Loretta Wilary
Director: Sharon Warriner
Clients Served

- Total Served: 14,903
- Family Members Served: 8,090
- Households Served: 2,690
- Veterans Served: 341
- Chronic Homeless Served: 431

The number of clients served through Permanent Supportive Housing in Volusia/Flagler over the past year increased from 123 in 2017-18 to 147 in 2018-19. Our participating agencies continue to work to flow individuals and families through PSH units which allows newly identified chronically homeless families to enter into subsidized housing. Additionally, the local housing authorities have begun utilizing their homeless preference vouchers in partnership with the CoC to place homeless and chronically homeless individuals into permanent housing units provided by these vouchers.

The number of unduplicated individuals and families that were provided with prevention services as tracked in HMIS was 8,480. Prevention services may include case management, assistance with rent, utilities, emergency food, emergency hotel/motel stays, and rapid rehousing into another unit prior to an actual eviction.

The number of individuals and families served through CoC and ESG RRH in Volusia/Flagler has increased year to year as shown below. This continued increase demonstrated the participating agencies growing expertise in facilitating Rapid Rehousing for homeless individuals and families in our area.
Grant Awards 2018-2019

- HMIS I Grant $71,645
- HMIS II Grant $50,489
- Coordinated Entry Grant $58,250
- FL-504 Planning Grant $54,373
- My Place Apartment Permanent Supportive Housing Grant $193,170
- Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) $227,500
- Additional ESG Allotment based on Performance $57,000
- Temporary Assistance for Families (TANF) Grant $51,000
- Challenge Grant $143,386
- Staffing Grant $107,142

FUNDING

Over the last year, VFCCH has successfully implemented five HUD CoC grants and four state of Florida grants. This overall increase of VFCCH’s grant capacity has allowed VFCCH to take a proactive role in providing grant funding to sub-recipient agencies who provide the direct services as well as the full implementation of the Coordinated Entry System. Coordinated Entry is not only required by HUD, but more importantly it is essential to the prioritization and placement of individuals and families into permanent housing or referral to prevention services for those at risk of homelessness and homeless individuals and families in our two county area.

Through the Department of Children & Families, VFCCH administers the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG), Temporary Assistance for Families Grant (TANF) and the Challenge Grant. Within these funding streams, allowable components include Prevention, Rapid Rehousing, Emergency Shelter and Street Outreach. For 2018-2019, the ESG funding flowed directly through entitlement districts such as the County of Volusia and non-entitlement areas (Deltona, Port Orange, Daytona Beach and Flagler County) as identified by the state of Florida based on population and need. Moving forward, VFCCH will facilitate the non-entitlement ESG funding under the Unified Funding contract for all DCF/State of Florida Contracts.

The County of Volusia which is an entitlement district for ESG, consults with the CoC in formulating its agenda for ESG funding. The County holds community development meetings which are open to the public and requests stakeholders to attend in order to provide the needed input necessary to determine the means by which the funding will be used. Over the last funding cycle (2017-18), the County of Volusia has funded the Neighborhood Center of West Volusia for Rapid Rehousing and Family Renew Community for Prevention in alignment with HUD’s goal of ending family homelessness.

VFCCH is also the lead agency and facilitates the Children and Family Advisory Board (CFAB) Basic Needs, Emergency Assistance and Homeless Prevention Grant administered through the County of Volusia. This grant adds support where prevention efforts are essential assisted with this funding.

United Way funds were awarded to VFCCH in 2017 for two years for the Coordinated Entry Outreach Program.
### DCF 2019-2020

**Staffing Grant:** $107,142.00  
**ESG:** $200,000  
- Neighborhood Center (Prevention): $10,000  
- Family Life Center (Emergency Shelter): $50,526  
- Salvation Army (RRH/Outreach): $50,500  
- HUM (RRH): $49,500  
- Catholic Charities (Prevention/RRH): $29,474  
- VFCCH Admin: $10,000  
**TANF:** $46,582  
- Neighborhood Center: $22,613  
- Family Renew Community: $22,613  
- VFCCH Admin: $1,356  
**Challenge Grant:** $148,500  
- Neighborhood Center: $84,175  
- Halifax Urban Ministries: $31,725  
- Family Renew Community: $21,600  
- VFCCH Admin: $11,000

### HUD

#### The Neighborhood Center of West Volusia
- PH-18W $130,248  
- PH-13EU2 $49,366  
- PH-29 $73,614  
- PH-HYP $84,980  
- PH-16WS $133,749  

#### Halifax Urban Ministries
- Rapid Rehousing Families $159,727  
- Permanent Supportive Housing for Families $51,034  
- Permanent Supportive Housing for Individuals $100,418  
- Rapid Rehousing Individuals and Youth $92,019

#### Volusia/Flagler County Coalition for the Homeless
- My Place Apartments $193,170  
- FL 504 Coord Entry DV Housing Navigator $171,753  
- FL 504 HMIS Consolidated $122,134

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### VFCCH Funding Trend

![VFCCH Funding Trend Graph](image)

### Annual Renewal Demand Trend

![Annual Renewal Demand Trend Graph](image)
The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires local Homeless Continuum of Care (CoC) agencies to follow strict guidelines when planning and conducting the PIT. Locally, the Volusia/Flagler Coalition for the Homeless (VFCCH) is the CoC agency responsible for conducting the PIT. Each year VFCCH strives to get an accurate count of homeless persons using guidance and strategies that have proven successful for our and other CoC’s in the past.

- The preparation, planning, mapping of areas and training of volunteers for the 2019 PIT was more intensive, directive, informative and surpassed preparation and training done in any of the prior years.
- More than 88 volunteers participated in the PIT this year. VFCCH had outstanding participation from local non-profits and faith based organizations who provide housing related services, including the Veteran Administration, Salvation Army, Halifax Urban Ministries, SMA Healthcare, Neighborhood Center of West Volusia, City of Daytona Beach Housing Authority; and numerous professionals who are leaders in the community.
- Law enforcement was engaged to a greater extent than in the past, not only with the planning process but provided (in some areas) volunteers for the PIT as well.
- VFCCH reached out to and engaged local colleges to assist with unaccompanied youth count which increased our ability to identify this population.
- The PIT was inclusive to a greater extent than ever before, while maintaining adherence to HUD’s guidelines, reaching out to jails and institutions in an effort to identify those who came into the system as literally homeless on the night of the PIT.

**Sheltered:** 368  
**Unsheltered:** 507  
**Total:** 875
The PIT numbers increased in 2019 after a steady down turn over the last 5 years.

Possible reasons for uptrend in Point in Time

The Point In Time count for 2019 totaled 875, an increase of 28% over last year’s count of 683 which was the lowest count on record for the FL-504 CoC. Even with this increase the number reflected in this year’s count is still a 63% decrease from the highest level for 2012 of 2,384.

The Point in Time Count is a reflection of what has been implemented over the last year and captures the rate of progression of our communities in addressing the efforts to prevent and end homelessness. One must keep in mind it is a snapshot or an indicator of homelessness that can be compared over time. It does not reflect an absolute accurate count of the number of homeless individuals (this is an impossible task) but gives us a good idea of the direction we are moving. Factors which may have been a contributed to an increase in homeless numbers are as follows:

Sheltered Count went from 277 in 2018 to 368 in 2019:
The Halifax Urban Ministries transitioned its Family Shelter from the North Street Star Shelter Location to “Hope Place” in May of 2018. The opening of Hope Place accounted for an additional 108 shelter beds. Additionally, Hope Place added 28 transitional housing beds for unaccompanied homeless youth, 17 family shelter beds, 20 VA Grant Per-Diem Safe Haven Transitional Housing Shelter beds and the Neighborhood Center of West Volusia added 12 transitional housing beds. The increase in shelter beds capacity accounted for the significant spike in the sheltered homeless count. Note: that not all of these beds were utilized to full capacity on the night of the count.

With the awaited addition of the First Step Emergency Shelter and Neighborhood Center Emergency Shelters for single Individuals later this year and next year, it is anticipated that the Sheltered Point in Time count will continue to increase significantly.

Unsheltered Count went from 406 in 2018 to 507 in 2019:
A percentage of the increase in unsheltered count was attributed to the two communities that offered greater participation in previously undercounted areas. South East Volusia, specifically New Smyrna Beach went up by 39 and the count in Flagler County increased by 68, (with a significant increase in the Mondex area). This increased support and diligence from the community in conducting the counts in these areas was a factor which added to the increased accuracy of the count, increased numbers in those areas and the total increase in the numbers of the unsheltered count.

Additional assistance from law enforcement was also noted as a contributing factor to a better count and more accurate numbers in all communities.
VFCCH Programs

Number of People Referred into Coordinated Entry for 2018-2019: 3,050

Number of People Receiving Services for Prevention, Transitional or Permanent Housing: 2,259

COORDINATED ENTRY AND HOUSING FIRST

VFCCH continues to enhance the Coordinated Entry system for Volusia and Flagler counties. The coordinated entry system is the key component that links homeless/at risk of homeless families and individuals to appropriate resources covers the entire geographic area for the FL-504 CoC. The coordinated entry effort of existing programs, strategic collaborations within the two counties and throughout the several municipalities/communities helps achieve its’ success. The overarching goal is to provide coordinated entry by leveraging existing resources and aligning mainstream resources and existing systems.

Under the current system, specific agencies that are linked to the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) act as the single points of entry or coordinated access points of entry in geographically relevant areas of the continuum (most of which have already been established; coordinated access points are located in areas which have a high need for homeless services as indicated by the Homeless Count). VFCCH continues to reach out to and expand the scope of agencies who are participating into HMIS in order to extend coverage to the fullest extent possible.

Each coordinated entry site also serves as a housing resource within its respective area. Outreach programs, Emergency Shelters and Transitional Housing programs and agencies providing housing services as well as Housing providers in each area access housing assistance through direct referrals within the HMIS system and as monitored by the Systems Navigator. The System Navigator manages a central prioritization “By Name” list based the Vulnerability Index - Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT) & Family SPDAT assessment tools conducted by the various agencies in order to identify the most vulnerable population with the longest duration of homelessness and provide assistance for direct and immediate entry into different housing options. In addition the system Navigator may directly assist with utility deposits to facilitate entry into housing where no other subsidy is available. The system provides for the following:

- Standardized assessment
- Prioritization utilizing the VI-SPDAT & Family SPDAT
- Referral/placement in or diversion from emergency shelters
- Referrals/placement in Rapid re-housing
- Referrals/direct placement in interim housing
- Referrals/direct placement in permanent housing
- Coordination and referral to direct financial assistance
- Ongoing follow-up services commensurate with the household’s need
COORDINATED ENTRY AND HOUSING FIRST

Coordinated Entry conducts bi-weekly providers meetings and break out groups to identify hard to place clients, barriers to entry into permanent housing or resolve issues related to barriers to entry with landlords in order to identify solutions for entry into permanent housing. VFCCH works very closely with Veterans Administration staff with their new Coordinated Entry positions to assist in placing Veterans.

In cases involving Domestic Violence and the need for confidentiality, the CoC educates all providers on the DV programs available for referral and the need for confidentiality. DV clients who present to agencies can be referred to a DV provider by initiating contact on their own or through confidential outreach. No identifying information is exchanged other than the need for services. Based on client preference, referring agencies also have the option to assess the DV client for direct services for available housing in the area.

HOMELESS MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS (HMIS)

VFCCH is the HMIS Lead Agency for the Commission on Homelessness and Housing. Current and prospective grantees have agreed to enter data into this database. The HMIS database is the basis of and provides for coordination of services. Participating agencies can view available resources offered through other CoC agencies and make the appropriate referrals in “real time” when services are actually needed. System users can view client information, reducing duplication of efforts by clients and agencies which in turn will improve outcomes for clients and agencies alike.

VFCCH is currently pursuing an HMIS expansion Volusia and Flagler counties to increase participation in the database and increase communication between agencies and therefore coordination of services across providers, a requirement of the Hearth Act and Interim Rule (CFR 24 Part 78). With the implementation of the coordinated entry (assessment and intake) system which uses the HMIS system as its central point of reference, the importance of HMIS cannot be understated. Agencies who have access to the HMIS database will be able to identify families in need and match them with available openings in the various housing components as indicated in the HMIS by the participating agencies. VFCCH provides ongoing training, updates and software to providers who utilize HMIS.
My Place Apartments targets chronically homeless individuals with severe and persistent mental illness. VFCCH, as the HUD CoC Lead Agency, is tasked with being the model for all other permanent supportive housing projects targeting chronically homeless individuals and therefore ascribed to the Housing First model. VFCCH partners with SMA Healthcare, who provides case management services for the tenants in this housing. In accordance with the Housing First model, VFCCH accepts all referrals through Coordinated Entry and therefore does not screen out based on substance use, instability of mental health, current or past legal issues, credit history, income status, sexual identity, or domestic abuse issues. My Place Apartment Annual progress report for the grant year 2018 to 2019 demonstrated an 88% Housing Stability Measure which in essence meant that 36 out of the 41 individuals who were tenants in My Place either remained stably housed at “My Place” or transitioned into permanent housing of their own. With the “Home for the Holidays” initiative, eight individuals were moved into Section 8 housing.
ACCOMPLISHMENTS

**MONITORING**

HUD has tasked VFCCH with the oversight of all service agencies directly funded by HUD. In addition, the State of Florida has assigned the responsibility for monitoring to VFCCH. Monitoring programs have become a critical piece of VFCCH’s responsibilities as the collaborative applicant and lead agency. In the upcoming year, the VFCCH Monitoring Team will facilitate more intensive monitorings.

**ACCOMPLISHMENTS for 2018-2019**

Home for the Holidays was an opportunity between the Daytona Beach Housing Authority and VFCCH. This initiative went from November 16 to December 31, 2018. The result was 38 households received vouchers and went into section 8 housing for a total of 78 individuals housed. It was truly an inspiring collaboration where all agencies involved stepped up and made housing happen for 78 persons in a matter of less than six weeks.

Commission on Homelessness and Housing for Volusia Flagler (FL 504 CoC) 2019 Point in Time Count totaled 875, an increase of 28% over last year’s count of 683, however the 2018 count was the lowest count on record for the FL-504 CoC. Even with this increase the number reflected in this year’s count is still a 63% decrease from the highest level for 2012 of 2,384. Increase in the count was largely attributed to the increased participation from area volunteers that has previously been resistant to the process resulting in a more accurate count.

HUD 2018 CoC Competition Score of 164.25 was a 14-point increase from the 2017 score and above the median score necessary for increased funding. The CoC was competitive in the process which resulted in the award of a Domestic Violence Bonus Grant to VFCCH of $57,285.

VFCCH consolidated the two HMIS Grants into one during the 2018 competition for a total HMIS award of $122,334.

VFCCH expanded the Coordinated Entry grant though the addition of a Housing Locator reallocation position and the additional DV Bonus funding for a DV Navigator for a total funding award of $171,753, which will increase the effectiveness of the Coordinated Entry system. With the addition of these two new grant funded positions, the total amount of HUD grant awards to VFCCH increased by 30%.

VFCCH completed its 2nd full year of HUD CoC Coordinated Entry System August 1, 2018 utilizing the HUD Coordinated Entry Grant in conjunction with the HMIS II grant.

VFCCH’s United Way Coordinated Entry Outreach Grant was renewed for the two-year grant cycle. VFCCH served 1,820 in the first two years of the grant.

VFCCH was awarded $65,000 a year for two years to implement a new United Way grant for a Health Resource Care Coordinator who will work to house the most vulnerable, chronically homeless high utilizers of services.
Thanks to Our Funders