Please Increase the FY2026 Appropriation for HOP Financial Assistance by $1,322,141.

The Housing Opportunity Program's Financial Assistance is designed to prevent people falling into unsheltered homelessness or to help people get into permanent housing. Financial assistance is provided to households who would become or remain homeless ***but for*** financial assistance.

Financial assistance may be used to meet a variety of essential needs, so long as it supports immediate housing stability for eligible households. In all cases, it must be determined that, ***but for*** financial assistance the household would become or remain homeless. Eligible expenditures include:

- Short-term, tenant-based rental assistance for up to 3 months
- Security deposits (including last month's rent), not to exceed the value of 3 months of rent
- Utility deposits (where it is standard practice by the utility)
- Rental arrears as a one-time payment, not to exceed the value of 3 months rent
- Program fees (one-time or up to 3 months) for recovery housing or other non-traditional housing option
- Transportation costs to live with family/friends, including in another region or state

The household must attest that they have not applied for and/or received any other federal or state funding to cover any financial assistance applied for under this program.

We have collectively seen a high level of demand for this program for years, and it is critical to helping people stay in permanent housing or move into permanent housing. If we do not collectively get an increase in funding for FY2026, we will run out of funding before the end of the fiscal year.

HHAV Housing & Homelessness Alliance of Vermont

VCAP VERMONT COMMUNITY ACTION PARTNERSHIP

Michael Redmond, HHAV Interim Executive Director - MRedmond@hhav.org
Jenna O'Farrell, VCAP President, jofarrell@nekcavt.org