



IMPACT REPORT 2024-2025

MISSION STATEMENT

The Community Shelter of Union County provides Emergency Shelter, Food, and Rehousing. Our low-barrier services support equitable opportunities because safe, affordable housing and access to food are basic human rights.

EMERGENCY SHELTER
DINING HALL
DRIVE THRU PANTRY
SENIOR FOOD PROGRAM
ECONOMIC MOBILITY
EMPLOYMENT LAB
REHOUSING
STREET OUTREACH
HOME AGAIN
STEP IT UP

WHAT WE DO

The Housing First philosophy is one of our core beliefs at the Community Shelter. Housing First is a homeless assistance approach that prioritizes providing permanent housing to people experiencing homelessness, thus ending their homelessness and serving as a platform from which they can pursue personal goals and improve their quality of life. This approach is guided by the belief that people need basic necessities like food and a place to live before attending to secondary needs, such as getting a job, budgeting properly, or attending to substance use issues.

Additionally, Housing First is based on the understanding that client choice is valuable in housing selection and supportive service participation and that exercising that choice is likely to make a client more successful in remaining housed and improving their life. Our leadership team functions collaboratively and uses this philosophy to influence our program design and service delivery.

CRISIS RESPONSE

EMERGENCY SHELTER

Our Shelter is the "front door" for those experiencing hunger and homelessness in Union County.

Neighbors in need can access services at the Shelter in person or via phone. The demand for services is growing compared to the previous year.

We have presented a case for years that the face of homelessness is changing. The inflated costs of basic needs and the affordable housing crisis are pulling an even broader population group to require our services.

The goal is to move participants quickly from homelessness to housing, and the average length of stay was 58 days.

FOOD PROGRAMMING

We have always used our food services for more than feeding hungry Union County residents. Food services are an important tool to fight homelessness. Helping with meals and groceries makes it easier for households with stressed budgets to make their rent. We also provide hygiene supplies, which can stretch a monthly budget by \$100-\$150.

Our Dining Hall is open seven days a week, three meals a day, with 1,095 meal opportunities each year. We host our mobile pantry monthly, and each grocery box has an average of 100 pounds of food. Our monthly senior food box program assists our aging community in getting high nutritional value food.

STREET OUTREACH

We also serve those living unsheltered in our community. Through grants we write, we secured funding to supply food, hygiene supplies, solar showers, tents, sleeping bags, tarps, and other supplies that served 75 unique individuals living outside. Additionally, we partner with a local provider for day-to-day case management services for our unsheltered neighbors.

HOUSING STABILITY

To truly transition an individual or family out of homelessness, they must have access to affordable housing, appropriate services, and an adequate income.

RAPID REHOUSING

Our rapid rehousing programming has created and maintained relationships with local landlords, property managers, and owners throughout the community since 2012. These entities trust that our support can benefit both parties during the rental experience.

We financially assist with deposits, moving expenses, and short- to medium-term rental assistance. Our Home Again program even handles the moves to help save money, and we collect donated furniture to help a household get back on track in independent living. When you're living on razor-thin budgets, every bit helps.

Our case managers stay with participants for up to 12 months post-housing to help navigate strategies to maintain housing, even when their housing costs take up a disproportionate amount of their monthly income.

ECONOMIC MOBILITY

Our Economic Mobility Program immediately addresses income and education disparities for people experiencing homelessness. The program is staffed with a case manager who works with shelter participants to secure or improve income to help participants move swiftly out of economic and housing crises and to support a pathway to thriving security. Activities include career counseling, GED programming, enhancing job search skills, application and resume writing, employer recruitment, and matching participants to available area jobs and/or education opportunities. Many of these opportunities can be found in certification-based careers offered at our community college; careers such as Medical Assistant, Phlebotomy, Cosmetology, Heating/AC, Welding, etc.

IMPACT

In fiscal year 2023 - 2024,

- **27,608** overnight **Emergency Shelter** stays were provided to **545** unique individuals
- **117** unique individuals moved to independent housing through **Rapid Rehousing**
- **75** unsheltered individuals were identified and assisted through **Street Outreach**
- **84** households received donated furniture through **Home Again**
- **49** individuals obtained employment, and **62%** sustained employment for at least six months via our **Economic Mobility Program**
- **78,395** prepared meals were served in our **Dining Hall** to **1085** individuals
- **170,470** meals were served through our **Mobile Pantries**
- **3,425** unique individuals were assisted through **Community Shelter Programming**