



Whatcom County Housing Advisory Committee Meeting Agenda

Date: Thursday, February 12, 2026

Time: 8:30 – 10:00am

Location: Hybrid –110 Unity St., Bellingham & Zoom

Agenda Items		Time
1.	Call to Order, Roll Call of Members, and Approval of Minutes (Dan)	8:30 – 8:35
2.	Chair and Vice-Chair Elections (Dan)	8:35 – 8:40
3.	Bylaws Update Proposal (Chris)	8:40 – 8:45
4.	Severe Weather Shelter Update (Michaela)	8:45 – 8:55
5.	5 Year Plan Implementation Plan Update (County Staff)	8:55 – 9:05
6.	Request for Proposals Development Support (Chris)	9:05 – 9:30
7.	Development Update (Samya)	9:30 – 9:35
8.	City Update (Samya and Jason)	9:35 – 9:40
9.	Whatcom Homeless Service Center Update (Teri)	9:40 – 9:45
10.	County Update (County Staff)	9:45 – 9:50
11.	New items (Dan)	9:50 – 9:55
12.	Public Comment – 2 Minutes Per Person	9:55 - 10:00
13.	Adjourn (Dan)	

Next meeting: Thursday, April 9th, 2026, 8:30-10:00 AM

Community members who require special assistance to participate in a committee meeting are asked to contact the meeting facilitator at least 4 business days in advance.
housing@co.whatcom.wa.us



Whatcom County Housing Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: 12/11/2025

Time: 8:30 AM PST- 10:30 AM PST

Location: Hybrid –110 Unity St., Bellingham & Zoom

Participants: Kerri Burnside, Von Ochoa, Dan Dunne, Ashley Thomasson, Paul Schissler, Teri Bryant, Tony Casale (in place of Andrew Calkins), Samya Lutz, Mary Lou Steward, Ann Beck

	Agenda Item	Discussion/Action
1	Call to order, introductions and roll call, minutes approval, agenda review	<p>Dan completed a role call. A quorum was present.</p> <p>Dan called for a vote on the October 9th meeting minutes.</p> <p>October 9th, 2025 meeting minutes were approved. Yes: 10, No: 0, Abstain: 0</p>
2	Year Review	<p>Ann led a discussion on metrics and achievements regarding the WCHAC, housing, and homelessness throughout 2025:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 total meetings were held, comprising 6 regular meetings and 2 special meetings • The YWCA shelter opened in March with up to 50 beds for families and children comprising of 19 units • The '24-'25 shelter season successfully closed, and the '25-'26 shelter season successfully launched • The City of Bellingham daytime shelter came online with help from Jason and staffing coordination between the shelters • The Mercy Housing project totaling 74 units for senior housing developments and 9% tax credits was greenlit for Old Town neighborhood • The 2025 Snapshot on Homelessness was released • Council approved the five-year housing plan, with the charge led by Janie. The vote was 7-0. • Shelter Subcommittee met at the request of Council to share recommendations for potential shelter operations moving forward.
3	Five-Year Plan Implementation Overview	<p>Chris opened the discussion outlining the next steps for realizing the Five-Year Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal team working together to better outline and organize 90+ performance measures as outlined in 120+ page document



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program evaluation and metrics need to be specified and developed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Plan to discuss potential program evaluation pieces in February meeting ○ Accountability and reporting pieces in particular need fleshed out in terms of frequency and standardization ○ Quarterly report to be ready by February meeting ○ Information from some partners needs to be collected sooner; proactive communication required • RFP planned for Summer '26: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Providing another opportunity for service reshuffling ○ Waiting to determine funding scenario • Evaluating current process for intakes and assessments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How are referrals moving through Coordinated Entry Governing Body/System? ○ What's the basis and strategy for referrals? ○ Are we serving the populations that we as a community want to serve? ○ Characteristics of households vs. categorizations of households ○ Would like more collective input <p>Ann followed up regarding quarterly reports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting planned for 12/11/25 with Data & Epidemiology Team to discuss reporting improvement strategies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Assessing right amount of discretion regarding public presentation of data ○ Many asks at Council for presentation of information/data ○ Potential for public-facing dashboard that provides right level of transparency
4	<p>Updating Intakes, Assessments, and Prioritization</p>	<p>Ashley provided an explanation of the current landscape for intakes and assessments for Coordinated Entry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinated Entry Governing Body (required by Dept. of Commerce) has oversight of CE processes and community-level policy development • Aware of need to update intakes and assessments for CE • WCHAC serves in an advisory capacity regarding prioritization and vulnerability criteria • WCHCS is responsible for ensuring that CE is operational at the community level and as such has final



	<p>approval for community-based CE decisions but works collaboratively with community partners involved in CE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Outline of two strategies to implement, in coordination with Governing Body and Homeless Service Center:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Updating Prioritization Policy and Processes through 2030○ Updating Intake and Assessment Tools and Procedures through 2030○ Guiding assumptions on updating these include more emphasis on lived experiences with homelessness, equity, and refining information collected during intake and assessment in order to better assess a household’s vulnerability and need○ Program eligibility and availability will affect prioritization for referrals• Ashley has created an outline for the CEBG’s first phase of this plan so the work can continue while she is on leave:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ December 2025- February 2026: Research, review, discuss<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Determine whether subpopulations need varying prioritization criteria○ March 2026- June 2026: Draft proposals of standard prioritization policies<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ How should assessment criteria be weighted?○ Outline as exists does go through the rest of 2026 as well• Later phases include possibly investing in a technology system to streamline and improve CE processes <p>Samya expressed gratitude that this process is underway, noting that the need exists for robust dialogue about CE in the community.</p> <p>Teri asked if there is a community agreement on the definition of vulnerability.</p> <p>Ashley noted that there isn’t clarity or consensus on the definition of vulnerability. Ann seconded that this is an ongoing conversation in other groups, as well.</p> <p>Samya added a question in the chat about looking at CE as utilized in communities outside of Washington. Ashley noted that CE is implemented a little differently in each CoC, but that there</p>
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		<p>may be value in looking outwardly. Teri added that she sent research on different CoC structures to Melissa.</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>Severe Weather Shelter Update</p>	<p>Michaela provided an update on the shelter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 26 on-call staff as opposed to 12 for the '24-'25 shelter season • Overview on supervisory staffing structure for operational efficiency, including leads • Reduction in number of beds in order to prevent disease outbreak and provide more rest • Fencing around building and conexes provide community buffers • Tours provided for community; Open House was well-attended and neighbor relations have been good so far • First activation happened weekend after Thanksgiving: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 11/29/25 served 49 people ○ 11/30/25 served 54 people ○ Being under capacity at the beginning of the season is normal ○ Over 200 meals served; donations from Sustainable Connections, Maple Alley Inn ○ Wound care for 7 people ○ Transportation provided for 13 people <p>Ann added that community members have responded positively to community tours.</p> <p>Michaela added that 70 volunteers also assist between the SWS and the Day Shelter (run by CoB). Chris added that Ferndale Community Services operates a 15-bed shelter in Ferndale, and that some funding, reduced from last year's amount, is available to provide families with children motel rooms. Ann added that part of the reduced funding for motels rooms stems from funding the YWCA operations.</p> <p>Michaela discussed flood response; Ferndale Shelter is serving in that capacity at the moment.</p> <p>Von asked about how transport works regarding the shelters. Michaela outlined how guests choose from a location list and are transported by Whatcom County staff, particularly from Response Systems Division. RSD doing transport in the mornings allows guests to have an additional point of contact with people familiar with their cases.</p>



		<p>Kerri asked in the chat if Walmart is considered a service provider or if they have offered to be a drop-off location for guests. Michaela clarified that drop-offs are proximal to Walmart but not at the store itself, who does not serve as a drop-off location in any formal capacity.</p>
<p>6</p>	<p>Update on HUD NOFO</p>	<p>Chris outlined how federal funding to community partners providing services in tandem with the county has recently been thrown into question.</p> <p>HUD's Continuum of Care (CoC) program has existed for the past few decades and funds a lot of permanent housing programs in the community. One particular grant funds a significant portion of our local permanent supportive housing; it is administered by Opportunity Council and currently funds additional community partners like Lake Whatcom Treatment Center, Lydia Place, and Pioneer Community Services. The grant's yearly renewal is a source of vulnerability for funding permanent supportive housing, which is intended to be a long-term project</p> <p>HUD's new NOFO specifies that no more than 30% of funding should go to permanent supportive housing projects. Across our CoC (which comprises the 34 small and medium-sized counties across WA) upwards of 80% of these funds are used for permanent supportive housing, meaning that many of our currently used rental assistance vouchers would cease to be funded come summer 2026, leading to a drastic reduction in permanent supportive housing and a need to either exit current residents or secure approximately \$2M annually to continue supporting their rent.</p> <p>As of early December, HUD has rescinded the NOFO and it is unclear as of this meeting when and how the NOFO will be changed and re-released. This confusion is leading to anxiety in the community and among community partners due to uncertainty in being able to continue funding permanent supportive housing and a reluctance to fill vacancies, which has a ripple effect of curtailing program revenue for several agencies.</p> <p>Chris outlined how transitional housing is being emphasized as a solution by some parties despite its comparative lack of effectiveness in solving problems related to permanent housing due to lack of effective further support and financial challenges when tenants attempt to re-enter the pricey private market.</p>



Teri added that this general uncertainty is leading to difficult questions around leasing or hiring property managers and bearing potential failures towards addressing homelessness. Language in applications for federal funding has shifted towards penalizing the vocabulary of equity and inclusion, leading to confusing processes and possible rejection of funds.

Ann asked a clarifying question regarding who is served in permanent supportive housing programs, and Teri answered that there is a difference between rapid rehousing programs and permanent supportive housing programs. Teri expressed anxiety around not knowing if HUD's Shelter Plus Care grant would renew given its prevalence in funding permanent supportive housing. Ann and Teri added that decreasing supportive care puts people with mental health disabilities at risk.

Kerri asked if there was any possible legal recourse to take that would ensure continuity of funding given the uncertainty of if and when the NOFO will be re-released, since it may overlap with the time frame in which funding expires. Teri added that the timing is bad, and Ashley noted that previous planning around the NOFO could now no longer apply.

Von asked about the demographics of permanent supportive housing since there is a specific vocabulary and argument around wanting served populations to "graduate" from programs. Von articulated that demographics could help in creating precise language for educational materials and in measuring vulnerability. Ann added that there is some value in respectfully sharing stories from both providers and community members who have been served.

Paul asked about the scale of funding about to be lost in Whatcom County. Chris clarified that \$4 million annually could be impacted at the county level, with \$3.9 billion at stake. Teri pointed out that other funding, particularly from the Dept. of Commerce, is impacted by the potential loss of being able to securely fund permanent supportive housing. The loss of that \$4 million could mean a cascading loss due to the intricacy and matching requirements of funding streams.

Samya noted that even if funds are auto-extended for another year, uncertainty will remain regarding these funding streams. Samya proposed thinking through the programming offered at the moment due to how the uncertainty will be long-term. She observed that different people need different interventions and



		<p>that a healthy community has diverse approaches to interventions in housing, including transitional housing in addition to permanent supportive housing.</p> <p>Samya asked Tony how the uncertainty around federal funding streams is impacting the Housing Authority. Tony responded that HUD had not made decisions as of yet regarding funds from HUD's <i>Office of Public and Indian Housing</i> for 2026, leading to optimism about being able to fund the program through the year. He also noted that nothing was decisive and that funding for low-income housing is made up of at least two funding sources. Nothing is final at the moment due to some ongoing uncertainties and the ending of COVID-era emergency housing vouchers, but at the moment it is not realistic for the Housing Authority to expand its current reach.</p> <p>Ashley added that OMS funds contributes \$500,000.</p> <p>Kerri pointed out that the lack of a concise, common vocabulary contributes to elected officials not understanding the complexity of housing issues and the actual capacity that communities have in addressing housing issues. Kerri noted that personal stories do have an impact in being able to get points across to people who may be on the outside looking in.</p>
7	Development Update	<p>Samya stated that the Opportunity Council's Bellis Family Housing Project is 80% complete with a projected completion date around May. The companion Bellis Senior project is trying to close on the financing as of this meeting. The funding is committed, it's merely a matter of dotting i's and crossing t's.</p> <p>The other project that is fully committed and awaiting contracting and construction is Lake Whatcom Center's Lincoln St. project. It is slated to be under construction in 2026.</p> <p>A few projects are in holding pattern with the State, including those related to State Dept. of Commerce Housing Trust Fund. The Mercy Housing Old Town project and the Bellingham Housing Authority Unity Street project are under review. The Lynden Station project applied for funding as well and these projects are awaiting allocation.</p>
8	City Update	<p>Samya informed that Jason and CoB have worked to stand up a Day Shelter for the '25-'26 winter season in partnership with Lighthouse Mission. They activated for the first time in late November in tandem with the County SWS shelter and served 8 guests. The volunteer pool and HOT were an appreciated presence. The city will continue to coordinate with the county on shelter activations.</p>



		<p>The city has two signed HUD grant agreements for funding from July through next June. The city has published some additional notices of funding availability, including for prevention services for agencies that have been doing prevention services through ARPA funding, and for community facilities (funding for infrastructure expansion, rehabilitations for nonprofits/orgs). These NOFAs are due in February. More will be coming regarding production of housing and homeownership development. There is some uncertainty regarding some funding sources, but more certainty around others.</p>
9	Homeless Service Center Update	<p>Teri shared that a behavioral health consultant has been onboarded and focusing on a trauma-informed needs assessment of the Homeless Service Center’s system. Client support services are scheduled to begin next year.</p> <p>The Way Station is hiring and may perpetually hire due to the nature of the job, but things are going smoothly with 8 guests there. HOT has a couple of openings at the moment, as well.</p>
10	County Update	<p>Ann noted that some county staff are starting to be pulled for emergency management due to the flooding. She also updated that there is a new director and that staffing at the county level is currently at an adequate level.</p> <p>Ann also acknowledged that, despite unique and complex challenges, the community is working cooperatively and compassionately towards finding solutions.</p>
11	New Items	<p>Chris reminded everyone that the February meeting will include voting for the Housing Advisory Committee Chair and Vice Chair, and that there are no anticipated membership changes.</p> <p>Dan added that the Tribal Nation Representative position is still vacant, and that if anyone knew someone qualified who was interested in filling the position to let him know.</p>
12	Public Meeting	<p>Rebecca Judd, Library Director for the City of Bellingham at the Bellingham Public Library, expressed appreciation for being included in the five-year plan to address homelessness. She also updated that budget cuts have caused reduced hours for the library, particularly Sundays. She updated that renovations for the main library are nearing the public engagement stage and that it will cause closure of the main branch starting in the fall for an estimated period of 9-12 months.</p>



13	Adjourn	<p>Rebecca introduced Christy Van Ness, who is on the library Board of Trustees, who highlighted the impact the library closure will have on warm shelter spaces for the unhoused community.</p> <p>Jessica Silver commented on the confusion and lack of transparency and consistency regarding her family's [sic] exit from the Opportunity Council's Homeless Prevention Plan. She stated that she was able to file a grievance with the offer of a hearing, but that no hearing was actually offered and that a program supervisor informed her that no hearings were offered. She stated that this leaves families unsure of their rights or how to advocate for themselves and that they didn't receive adequate case management or a clear exit plan, and now stand to lose their home. She suggested reaching out to her to better understand where communication breakdowns happen in the process of case management.</p> <p>Von described current actions by the Coalition to End Homelessness, including the creation of care bundles with encouragement cards. Von also noted that community members sometimes have mixed reactions to the perceived success or failure of programs that address homelessness, and that the Coalition hopes to transmute some of that negativity into driving more positive impacts.</p>
		Meeting adjourned at 10:36 am

Next Meeting: February 2026

Proposed Bylaws Updates for Whatcom County Housing Advisory Committee (Feb 2026)

1)

Current Language:

REIMBURSEMENT

Members shall not be compensated for their duties as members of the WCHAC, but may be reimbursed for Whatcom County approved training and related travel costs (for example: registration fees, overnight accommodations, meals, mileage) as per Whatcom County “Employee Travel Policy”.

Proposed Language:

REIMBURSEMENT

Members shall not be directly compensated for their duties as members of the WCHAC, except for the representative serving as “Homeless Advocate/person with lived experience” when that person is serving in their individual capacity and is not representing nor being compensated by an employer for time spent participating in committee or subcommittee meetings. Compensation shall be provided in accordance with Whatcom County Health and Community Services policies. ~~but~~ Members may be reimbursed for Whatcom County approved training and related travel costs (for example: registration fees, overnight accommodations, meals, mileage) as per Whatcom County “Employee Travel Policy”.

2)

Current Language:

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The officers of the Committee shall be nominated and elected by a majority vote of the membership present at a pre-determined Committee meeting during the first quarter of the year and shall serve for a term of one calendar year. Officers can be re-elected for a second calendar year.

Proposed Language

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The officers of the Committee shall be nominated and elected by a majority vote of the membership present at a pre-determined Committee meeting during the first quarter of the year and shall serve for a term of one calendar year. Officers can be re-elected for ~~a second~~ subsequent calendar years.

Severe Weather Shelter Update February 10, 2026

Activation Number	Activation Date	Beds Used	Meals Served	Wound Care and Medical Services	Transportation Service
1	11/29/2025	49	98	6	6
2	11/30/2025	54	108	1	7
3	12/24/2025	48	96	4	10
4	12/25/2025	60	120	5	16
5	12/26/2025	62	124	4	21
6	12/27/2025	65	130	4	21
7	1/21/2026	57	114	6	41
8	1/22/2026	58	116	6	32
9	1/23/2026	61	122	6	27
10	1/24/2026	62	124	6	24
11	1/25/2026	60	120	6	0
12	2/10/2026				
13	2/11/2026				
Cumulative		636	1272	54	205

Development Support and Draft RFP Schedule for Housing Program 2026

Task	Approximate Dates
<i>WCHAC Support for Contract Development</i>	<i>February – August</i>
Describe goals of new RFP and form workgroup	February 12
Development Support Workgroup: Research and discuss less-defined housing strategies to improve understanding and help contract development of key service models. Work will culminate in final recommendations presented to WCHAC at August meeting. Key strategies to include <i>Homelessness Prevention, Rapid Rehousing, and Diversion/Services Only</i> .	Late February – Early August
<i>Internal Whatcom County RFP and Contract Schedule</i>	<i>April – December (dates are approximations)</i>
Complete RFP draft and send for internal review	April 17
Internal review complete and sent to Purchasing Dept.	April 24
Purchasing publishes RFP for public engagement	May 13
Applicant conference	Week of June 1 st
Question and Answer period closes	June 10
Applications due	June 30
Application review completed and awards announced	July 22
Contract Development	August and early September
Contracts submitted by housing program for further review	September 18
Contract review completed (internal/legal/finance)	October 30
Contracts go to council for authorization	November 10
Contracts start	January 1, 2027

Proposed sample meeting agenda for WCHAC workgroup:

- In advance of subcommittee meetings: Members are encouraged to share any *Homelessness Prevention, Rapid Rehousing, or Diversion/Services Only* studies or projects that they'd like to highlight and discuss during the meeting
 - Materials should be shared in advance so members can read studies prior to the meetings
- Meetings will offer summaries of studies/programs reviewed to ensure shared understanding
- Guest speakers: subject matter experts on homelessness programs (such as researchers, experienced operators, or policy analysts) may be invited to improve group understanding
- Group should conclude each meeting with consensus regarding how information should inform contract development process with specific input in the following areas:
 - Best practices,
 - Key performance measures,
 - Pitfalls to avoid,
 - Considerations specific to local context, and/or
 - Recommended level of resource commitment relative to other interventions

WCHCS HOUSING PROGRAM

Quarterly Report Quarter 3, 2025

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Executive Summary

The homeless crisis response system in Whatcom County consists of capable nonprofits and dedicated staff, yet remains unable to perform at the scale necessary to meet our community's growing need for services. Nearly 1,000 homeless households have sought services and completed intakes over the last 12 months, which has increased the long queue of households waiting for services. New requests for assistance far outpace the system's ability to respond. Although 100 households were referred for new service enrollments in the third quarter of 2025, this number is only 13% of the number of households (788) that were waiting to be served on the last day of the quarter.

The housing program's four key intervention types, Emergency Shelter, Homelessness Prevention, Rapid Rehousing, and Permanent Supportive Housing combined for 680 service engagements for Whatcom County households over the most recent quarter. This number includes households who may have engaged in more than one intervention type (for example, a referral into an Emergency Shelter program and then a referral into a Permanent Supportive Housing program).

Administratively, Quarter 3 saw meaningful progress on several projects important to the housing program. Stakeholder input for the local homeless housing plan was incorporated into a complete draft and made available for public feedback. For this winter's severe weather shelter, operating procedures were updated and a team of more than 30 staff was recruited as logistical groundwork was laid ahead the seasonal operation. A new system of reporting requirements was put in place for contracted partners, and the program team continued improving administrative functions to increase oversight and communicability of the work.

Background

During Quarter 3 of 2025, WCHCS housing program staff actively managed 28 contracts and initiated a facility lease for the severe weather shelter site. The program served a continuum of housing stability needs, including the following program types:

- Outreach services for unsheltered or otherwise vulnerable individuals,
- Long-term supportive services for people with disabilities in subsidized housing,
- Financial and social support for households at-risk of becoming homeless,
- Financial and social support for households re-entering the private housing market from homelessness,
- Overnight and day-time shelter to provide safety and support while pursuing housing stability

Performance Measures and Outcomes

Consolidated Homeless Grant (CHG) State Benchmarks

The Consolidated Homeless Grant (CHG) is a recurring grant from the Washington State Department of Commerce that provides resources to fund homeless crisis response systems across the state. Recipients of these funds establish and oversee housing assistance programs to support local governments and organizations in reducing homelessness in their communities. The Washington State Department of Commerce sets target benchmarks for CHG recipients including rates of positive exits and housing retention for key interventions. The benchmarks below cannot account for the unique challenges or advantages present in each county of the state, but are useful to guide general performance expectations for the work funded by WCHCS.

- Emergency Shelter (ES) = 50% exits to permanent housing
- Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) = 80% exits to permanent housing
- Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) = 95% retention or exits to permanent housing

Quarterly Outcomes and Outputs for County-Funded Partners

Table 1: Household Exits to Permanent Housing Destinations or Retention of Permanent Housing by Intervention Type

	Target	Q3 2024	Q4 2024	Q1 2025	Q2 2025	Q3 2025
Emergency Shelter exits to permanent housing (does not include hotel/motel stays)	50%	62%	33%	68%	43%	27%
Rapid Rehousing exits to permanent housing**	80%	78%	74%	78%	74%	82%
Permanent Supportive Housing retention (quarterly)	95%	94%	96%	94%	93%	99%

Source: Local agency data (only includes county funded projects) sent to WCHCS and/or uploaded to Homeless Management Information System database.

**These numbers were revised for Q3 2025 to correct an error in previous reporting

The above table shows high variability of emergency shelter exits from quarter to quarter with successful exits ranging from 27% to 68%. Quarter 3 saw a particularly low rate of successful exits from shelter to permanent housing. However, only 4 of the 59 exits were reported to be to unsheltered locations, indicating that shelter exits are not leading to a direct resolution of homelessness, but in many cases are moving people towards reconciliation with family and friends, into medical or psychiatric institutions, and into transitional housing projects. Rapid Rehousing

was more consistent over the last year, with successful (permanent housing) exits for about 3 out of 4 participants. Quarterly housing loss remained low among Permanent Supportive Housing tenants. In Quarter 3, only 2 out of 218 households in Permanent Supportive Housing exited to homelessness.

Table 2: Number of Households Served with Whatcom County Funding by Intervention Type

	Q3 2024	Q4 2024	Q1 2025	Q2 2025	Q3 2025
Emergency Shelter (includes motel stays)	50	131	403	106	98
Eviction Prevention (<i>not including Healthy Children’s Fund</i>)	88	90	92	108	145
Rapid Rehousing	150	140	150	119	168
Permanent Supportive Housing	263	264	266	268	278

*The Emergency Shelter numbers are typically higher in winter due to increased capacity and high turnover at the severe weather shelter. There was also an increase in Q2 2025 when the new YWCA shelter for women with children opened in late March. Not including the winter shelters, Permanent Supportive Housing serves the greatest number of households at a time (aside from severe weather shelter operations).

Table 3: Rental Assistance and Motel Funding Distributed Quarterly

	Q3 2024	Q4 2024	Q1 2025	Q2 2025	Q3 2025
Rental Assistance / Motel Funding Distributed	\$720,574	\$1,099,528	\$816,693	\$1,039,851	\$676,660

Rental assistance makes up a significant portion of program funding, and includes motel rent, homelessness/eviction prevention programs, and rental assistance used as a component of Rapid Rehousing programs. The majority of this category is for monthly rent and motel costs, but it also includes utility payments, security deposits, and other administrative fees charged by landlords. Quarterly variation in these numbers is influenced by increased motel use during winter. In July of 2025 a modest reduction was made in overall rental assistance available due to ongoing budget constraints. Seasonal motel funding for fall and winter did not begin during Quarter 3.

Table 4: Number of Eligible Households in Housing Pool at end of each Reporting Quarter (by Intervention Needed)

	Q3 2024	Q4 2024	Q1 2025	Q2 2025	Q3 2025	Q3 2025
					HHs	People
PSH or Housing with Services	515	457	511	591	619	887
Rapid Rehousing	181	186	166	137	164	382
Not Yet Assessed	21	18	27	8	5	11
Deposit Assistance	10	7	6	5	0	0
Total Number of Households	727	757	710	741	788	1280

The number of households awaiting service shows small variation from quarter to quarter as a whole. The number of households in need of Permanent Supportive Housing increased steadily over the last twelve months and remains the most needed intervention. Compared to Q3 of 2024, there are about 100 more households needing this intervention, an increase of approximately 20% as compared to Q3 of 2024. The number seeking Rapid Rehousing is the second largest group and also had an uptick since the previous quarter, although it remains below Quarter 3 from a year ago (2024). The number of households awaiting assessments has reduced to just 5, showing greater

administrative strength and quicker processing of intakes. Total number of households waiting for services in Q3 of 2025 was higher than it has been in the last year.

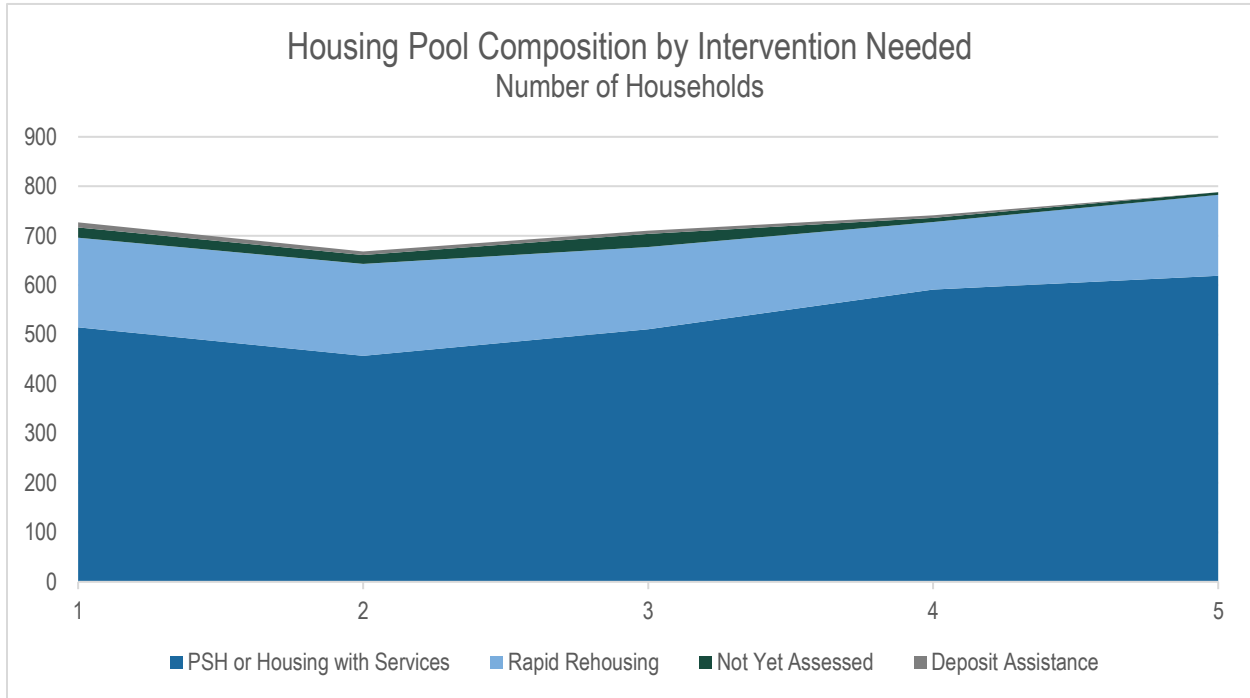
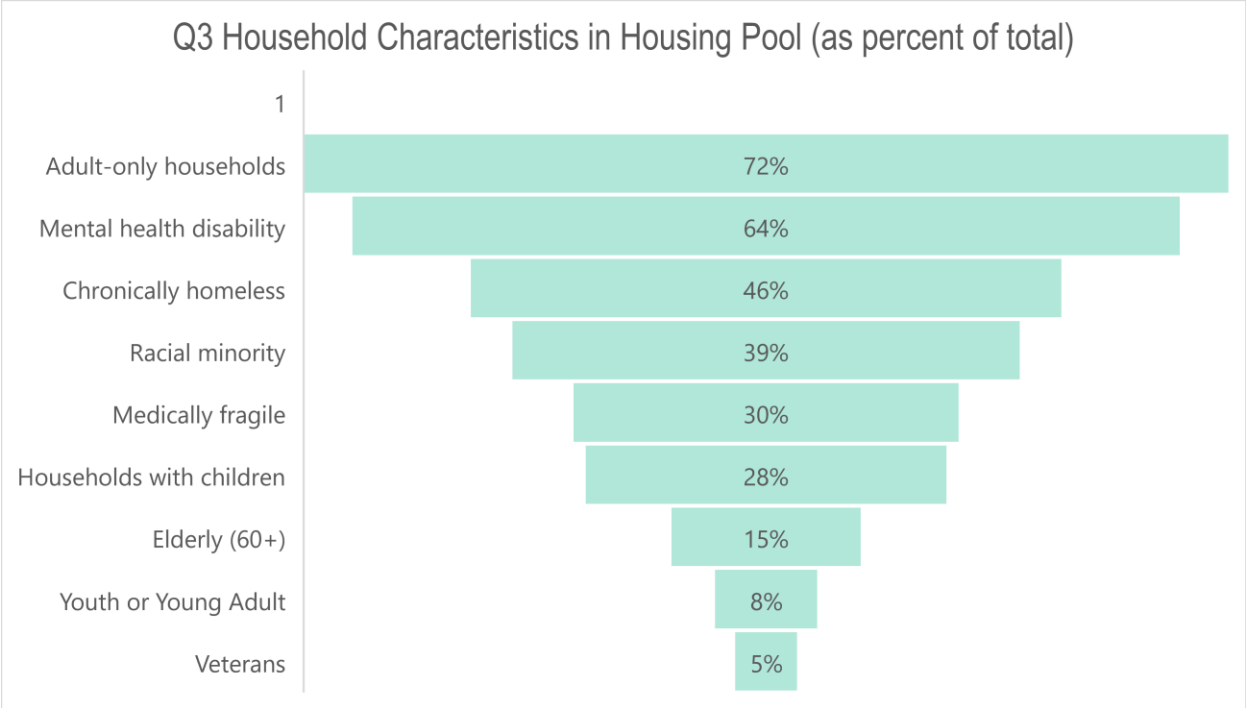


Table 5: Characteristics of Households Seeking Housing Assistance (Number of Households, may include duplicates who fit more than one category)

	Q3 2024	Q4 2024	Q1 2025	Q2 2025	Q3 2025	Q3 2025
					HHs	*People
Adult-only households	523	562	514	561	593	641
Mental health disability	468	514	457	470	494	742
Chronically homeless	334	336	308	339	330	454
Racial minority	287	300	300	273	311	561
Medically fragile	218	214	215	228	269	351
Households with children	204	195	196	180	195	639
Elderly (60+)	107	110	103	113	134	148
Youth or Young Adult	58	64	48	49	54	96
Veterans	35	34	25	30	29	51

*The number of people shown are members of these households but do not necessarily identify individually with these categories.

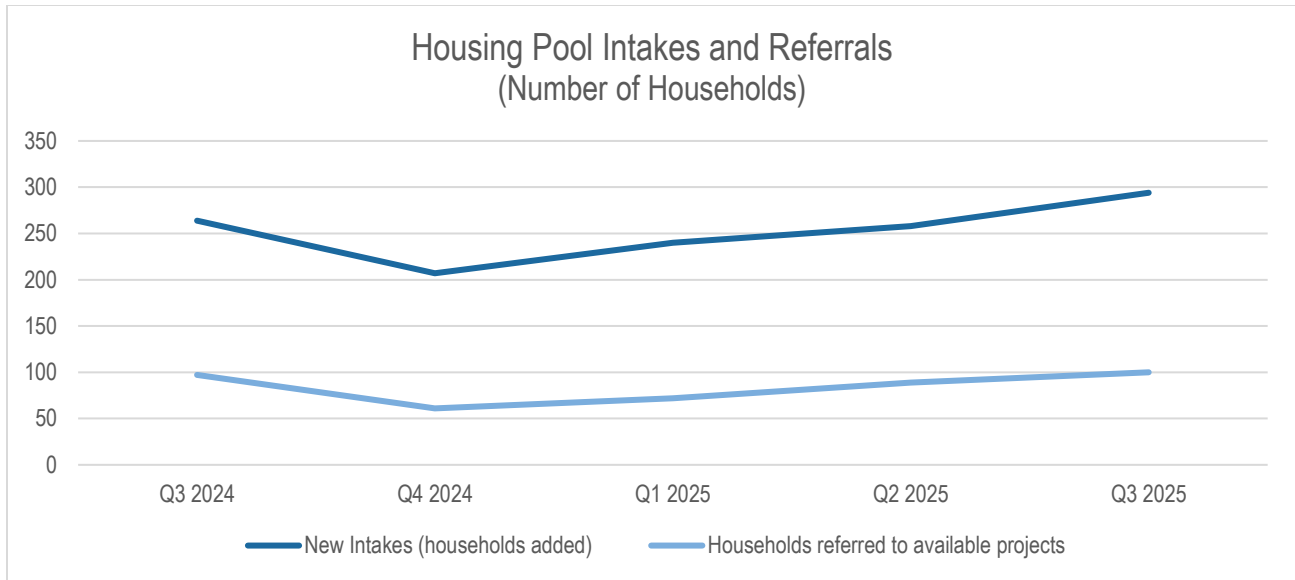


The Housing Pool includes basic demographic information about the households seeking services. Most households identify with several of the above characteristics that describe their overlapping identities and barriers to housing stability. Households comprised of only adults were consistently the largest subpopulation within the Housing Pool, followed by households that included a member with a mental health disability. The third and fourth most common characteristics were chronically homeless households (those that include a person who has experienced extended periods of homelessness (12+ cumulative months) and is impacted by a disability in their household) and households that include a person from a racial/ethnic minority. Medically fragile, households with children, and elderly households (60+) increased significantly in Q3 to more than 130 households waiting for services at the end of the reporting period. There remained close to 50 youth and young adult households, while veteran homelessness has stabilized with between 25 and 35 households.

Table 6: Housing Pool Entries and Exits

	Q3 2024	Q4 2024	Q1 2025	Q2 2025	Q3 2025
New Intakes (households added)	264	207	239	257	294
Households referred to available projects	97	61	72	89	100
Difference between intakes and referrals	167	146	167	170	194
Households in Housing Pool last day of Quarter	727	757	710	741	788

Although the rate of referrals exceeded one per day, the intakes into housing pool continued to outpace available housing programs and the number of households waiting for services increased by 47 over the course of the quarter, a steeper increase than in the previous few quarters.



The chart above shows the gap between the housing system’s ability to serve homeless households (household referrals resulting from program availabilities) and system demand (new intakes of eligible homeless households seeking services). The relatively consistent number of households in the housing pool (Table 6, above) is the result of households being removed from the housing pool without referrals due to loss of eligibility, self-resolution of housing crisis, leaving the area, death, or otherwise discontinuing contact with the referral system.

Table 7: Housing and Homelessness Contract Status (as of 10/1/2025)

Contract	Contract Term (months elapsed / months total)	Contract Amount	Total Billed	Total Remaining	Percent Billed
CCS Francis Place PSH	3/6	\$277,723	\$115,045	\$162,678	41%
DVSAS Safe Emergency Shelter	3/12	\$131,052	\$32,759	\$98,293	25%
Ferndale Community Services – Community Resource Center & Outreach Services	9/12	\$500,643	\$282,690	\$217,953	56%
Ferndale Community Services Thriving Families (Healthy Children’s Fund)	12/15	\$376,416	\$202,446	\$173,970	54%
Lake Whatcom Center Community Leasing Scattered Site PSH	9/12	\$49,467	\$37,100	\$12,367	75%
Lydia Place Emergency Shelter	3/12	\$436,352	\$40,085	\$396,267	9%
Lydia Place Rapid Rehousing and DVSAS on-site housing services	3/12	\$473,162	\$117,739	\$355,423	25%
Lydia Place Permanent Housing Program	3/12	\$258,976	\$84,178	\$174,798	33%
Lydia Place Healthy Children’s Fund	12/15	\$1,155,524	\$491,605	\$663,919	43%

Contract	Contract Term (months elapsed / months total)	Contract Amount	Total Billed	Total Remaining	Percent Billed
Lydia Place PSH for Chronically Homeless Families	1/21	\$50,000	\$1,634	\$48,366	3%
Mercy Housing Stability & Healthy Children's Fund Services	9/12	\$240,870	\$159,814	\$81,056	66%
NWYS Street Outreach	3/6	\$75,000	\$18,390	\$56,610	25%
NWYS Case Management	3/6	\$198,565	\$96,367	\$102,198	49%
NWYS Ground Floor Day Center	3/6	\$85,000	\$40,559	\$44,441	48%
NWYS PAD Shelter for Minors	3/6	\$70,000	\$34,372	\$35,628	49%
OC 22 North PSH	9/12	\$648,568	\$402,238	\$246,330	62%
OC Access ID	9/12	\$45,803	\$43,616	\$2,187	95%
OC Case Management	9/12	\$2,007,866	\$488,073	\$1,519,793	24%
OC HEN (Housing & Essential Needs)	3/24	\$2,611,906	\$513,509	\$2,098,397	20%
OC WHSC Coord Entry	3/12	\$544,577	\$147,358	\$397,219	27%
OC WHSC Rent & Motel Funds Distribution	3/24	\$7,274,164	\$448,236	\$6,825,928	6%
OC Community Leasing Scattered Site PSH	9/12	\$428,074	\$324,467	\$103,607	76%
Pioneer City Gate Apts. PSH	9/12	\$670,010	\$464,225	\$205,785	69%
Sean Humphrey House PSH for people with HIV/AIDS	9/12	\$59,000	\$29,421	\$29,579	50%
Sun House (Emergency Shelter)	9/12	\$640,070	\$500,522	\$139,548	78%
Village Reach PSH Evaluation	13/13	\$86,046	\$86,046	\$0	100%
Whatcom Dispute Resolution Center Housing Mediation Service	9/12	\$71,759	\$71,759	\$0	100%
YWCA Combined Operations for Shelter and PSH	3/12	\$910,503	\$222,872	\$687,631	24%

Note: Many of the above contracts are subject to seasonal variability and other limitations that contribute to inconsistent spending levels from quarter to quarter.

Table 8: Contract Funding Summary:

	Total Contract Value	Amount Spent	Amount Remaining	Percent Remaining
Total of Active Contracts in Quarter 3	\$20,377,096	\$5,497,124	\$14,879,972	73%

Although a mix of calendar and state fiscal years complicates this table, housing program staff are monitoring spending levels and satisfied with current rates. Modest budgetary lapse is expected at the end of 2025 and will be reallocated following year-end closeout in January or February.

Additional Updates

Severe Weather Shelter

Housing program staff began recruiting additional help for the severe weather shelter operations, and also finalized a lease for a shelter facility. Approximately 30 staff were hired and early logistical preparations for the season began with significant assistance from Human Resources and WCHCS administrative staff.

Local Plan Development

Housing team staff continued gathering community input for new 5-year strategic plan. Plan was drafted and shared with key stakeholders and public.

Capital Projects

Two projects with funding derived from RFP 23-88 are receiving ongoing support:

- Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Services is receiving rehabilitation support for two of their safe shelters for survivors of domestic violence.
- Lydia Place is working through a county-supported renovation process to create a new Permanent Supportive Housing unit for large families exiting homelessness.

Budget Drafted for 2026

Housing program staff created a budget for 2026 contracts with modest reductions to the overall program in order to decrease deficits and promote sustainability. Raising costs of services and rental units is putting strain on current contracts and will likely lead to decreased services in 2026 and 2027. Additional work will take place in early 2026 ahead of the next major round of contract amendments planned for state fiscal year 2027.

Contract Updates

Contract # 202412036 with Mercy Housing Northwest is being allowed to expire without a renewal amendment for 2026. The contract provided on-site resident support services for low-income tenants but was not included in the 2026 budget due to programmatic misalignment and increasing budget pressure in response to decreased program revenue.

Catholic Community Services successfully completed a corrective action plan that was created following a monitoring visit earlier this year. Satisfactory improvements to that program have been made and documented.

Glossary

Coordinated Entry

A coordinated entry system assesses households in need of housing services to determine each household's urgency of need as well as the intervention type that would be most appropriate. The coordinated entry system refers households from the Housing Pool to fill project vacancies as they occur. The system links individual households with partner agencies who provide direct services for those clients.

Diversion

Assistance for people seeking shelter or other services by helping them identify immediate alternate housing arrangements and, if necessary, connecting them with services and providing one-time financial assistance to help them return to permanent housing.

Emergency Shelter

Short-term, temporary housing for people experiencing homelessness (drop-in night-by-night or continuous stay). May serve general population of adults or a specific subpopulation(s).

Eviction Prevention

Assistance for households who are at risk of homelessness to maintain or obtain stable housing and avoid homelessness. May include arrears, rental assistance, and supportive services to promote stability.

Housing Pool

Registry of clients who are eligible and waiting for housing services. This registry is drawn upon to issue referrals for housing programs based on client needs and available resources instead of a first come, first served basis.

Housing with Services (HwS)

Housing with services in an intervention similar to PSH but that does not require a disability as criteria for eligibility. Households enrolled in HwS projects are expected to be matched with long-term subsidies to permanently reduce the household's rent costs and with supportive services to help maintain stability.

HMIS

HMIS is a local information technology system used to collect client-level data and data on the provision of housing and services to individuals and families at risk of and experiencing homelessness.

Permanent Supportive Housing

A long-term evidence-based best practice housing solution for vulnerable families and individuals with persistent challenges to stable housing. At least one member (adult or child) in the household must be living with a disability. This intervention pairs a rental subsidy with case management to support long-term stability and increase wellbeing of the household.

Rapid Rehousing

A best practice housing solution for homeless families and individuals to regain stable housing through short- to medium-term rental assistance paired with case management.

Transitional Housing

Transitional Housing (TH) provides temporary housing with supportive services to individuals and families experiencing homelessness with the goal of interim stability and support to successfully move to and maintain permanent housing. TH projects can cover housing costs and accompanying supportive services for program participants for up to 24 months.

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