

# Supportive Housing

Trust  
Alaska Mental Health  
Trust Authority



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***Housing and support services for Alaskans with behavioral health conditions and disabilities provide opportunities for people to live independently and productively in their communities.***

Access to housing and housing with support services improves lives, saves money, and reduces the likelihood that people with disabilities will experience homelessness or need more expensive care in emergency rooms, nursing homes, psychiatric hospitals, out-of-state institutions, or prisons.

## **Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)**

Permanent Supportive Housing is long-term, community-based housing with ongoing rental assistance and optional supportive services for people experiencing both homelessness and mental health conditions, addiction, and/or multiple disabilities. PSH is an evidence-based housing intervention that can prevent more costly interventions.

## **Rapid Re-Housing (RRH)**

RRH rapidly connects people experiencing homelessness with short term financial assistance and case management that helps them access the services needed to maintain stable housing and meet other goals. RRH is an evidence-based practice, optimally informed by a Housing First approach, that serves veterans, families, and individuals, and reduces the instances of future homelessness.

## **Evidence-Based Approaches**

Approaches that offer safe and stable housing for people experiencing severe and chronic substance misuse concerns and chronic homelessness without requiring sobriety or participation in a treatment program are evidence-based. The Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority and community partners have supported these types of projects in Anchorage, Fairbanks, and Juneau.

## Environmental Modifications

Alaska includes Environmental Modifications (E-MODs) as a Medicaid home and community-based waiver service to increase independence and/or to meet accessibility needs of seniors and individuals with disabilities. E-MODs include but are not limited to ramps, lifts, and roll-in bathtubs/showers. They are critical environmental enhancements that address challenges with independence and community integration for many older adults and individuals with disabilities. Eligible individuals under Alaska's Medicaid waivers are entitled to this service, subject to a cost cap of \$40,000, which is renewable every 3 years.

### Key Points

- Obtaining safe and stable housing is the most important first step for a person experiencing homelessness to work on treatment, recovery, employment, and other goals.
- Supportive housing can result in a reduction in alcohol use, improvements in self-perception of physical health, wellbeing, and safety, and an increase in the use of community-based services and employment.
- **Evidence-based housing interventions save money across systems**, reducing the use of police interventions, nights in jail, nights at sleep- off centers, ambulance rides, and emergency room visits.
- Community supports and housing are often complimentary; some people may only be able to live independently with certain supports.



### Success: Forget-Me-Not Manor

Juneau's Forget-Me-Not Manor, a Housing First facility, first opened to tenants in 2017. Since then, Forget-Me-Not Manor has housed more than 70 participants with co-occurring disorders of active addiction or alcoholism and who experienced an average length of homelessness ranging from 5-10 years.

Community outcomes related to residents, following a year of residency include:

- **Emergency room visits were reduced by 45%**
- **Encounters with law enforcement (for any reason) were reduced by 60%**
- **Ambulance usage was reduced by 48%.**
- Residents who have lived at Forget-Me-Not Manor for a year or more also indicated that they now think about their future with more hope, that their physical health has improved, and, for some, that their substance use has either reduced or stopped.

Source: "Forget Me Not Manor, Final Outcomes Report & five Year Data Summary" Brocious, Erisman, Xilegg Demientieff 8/2022.