

## Reality of the Housing Crisis and Help Available

### About the Housing Crisis in New England

The number of people experiencing homelessness across the nation rose 18.1 percent between 2023 and 2024 according to the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development Annual Homelessness Assessment report. In Rhode Island, homelessness grew by 35 percent, the sixth highest growth among states. Vermont has the fourth highest rate of homelessness in the country.

According to the New England Council “The New England region faces an unprecedented shortage of housing at all levels – everything from affordable rental units, to middle-income single-family homes.”

### About Housing Assistance

There is not enough subsidized (reduced rent) housing to meet the need, and little turnover in the programs that do exist. One example, from the New Hampshire Housing website “since the demand for vouchers is greater than the supply of vouchers available from HUD, there is a 6-8 year waiting list.” Not everyone waits that long (there are sub-lists and preferences that might move you higher on the waitlist), and there are other types of assistance (such as project-based subsidies), but most programs have waitlists. While it can be discouraging, if you may be eligible, we encourage you to apply.

### How We Can Help

- **We can** explain your rights if you are facing eviction and if there are any actions you can take that may help you keep your housing.
- **We can** refer you to local agencies to see if there are rental assistance or homelessness prevention funds you may qualify for to help you keep your housing.
- **We can** give you information about where to learn more about subsidized housing and where you may be able to get help to apply.
  - **We cannot** apply for you or get you housing.
- **If you are unhoused (or about to be) we can** refer you to local emergency shelters.