Home For Good
Annual Program Evaluation

Legislative Report
Pursuant to 22 M.R.S. § 20A(7)

Maine Department of Health & Human Services

Maine State Housing Authority

2025 Annual Report
02/1/2025 to 01/31/2026

Contents

Executive Summary

The Maine Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and Maine State Housing Authority (MaineHousing) are jointly submitting this report pursuant to 22 M.R.S. § 20A(7). The statute requires DHHS and MaineHousing to submit a report annually to the Joint Standing Committee on Housing and Economic Development to provide the committee with necessary data and information to evaluate the effectiveness of the Housing First Program. DHHS and MaineHousing have begun implementing this program under the branding "Home for Good," and as such, refer to efforts contained within this report under this branding.

This report, and subsequent annual reports, will provide updates to the initial report filed on February 1, 2025, which included the number of housing units and the scope of services needed to serve persons who are experiencing chronic homelessness, to serve as a baseline against which the effectiveness of the program and other services will be measured. Additionally, starting on February 1, 2026, and in all annual reports going forward, this legislative report is statutorily required to provide:

- **A.** An accounting of the services facilitated using money from the fund at properties that provide 24-hour, On-Site services and properties that provide housing stability services;
- **B.** An accounting of services provided at properties under the program funded under the housing outreach and member engagement provider program and services reimbursed under the MaineCare program;
- **C.** The number of residents served by the program and the number of months residents avoided returning to homelessness or maintained stable housing;
- **D.** The amount of money from the fund transferred to the Maine State Housing Authority pursuant to Title 22, §20-A: Housing First Program subsection 4, paragraph D that is used for the purposes of providing technical assistance to housing developers to help with capital and planning issues associated with developing properties consistent with the model, and developing affordable housing projects with the established housing model; and
- **E.** Information requested by the committee considered necessary to evaluate the effectiveness of the program.

Due to the projects just beginning their development, and with occupancy anticipated to start in 2027, there is no activity or data to report regarding items A-D. In the 2027 Legislative Report, DHHS and MaineHousing will be able to report on Section (D) as the first financial transfer from DHHS to MaineHousing will occur on or after July 1, 2026. Sections A-C are anticipated to be reported in the 2028 Legislative Report, as occupancy is slated for 2027 for a portion of the first five (5) Home for Good Projects. For the 2026 Legislative Report, DHHS and MaineHousing will provide information on the status of the projects, technical assistance that has taken place over the last year, and other pertinent updates.

The Need for Housing for Individuals Experiencing Chronic Homelessness

The Legislature and the Mills Administration developed the statutory framework for what is now known as Home for Good to effectively end chronic homelessness in Maine. The number of individuals experiencing chronic homelessness at the time was the basis for the funding provided. This number also informed the initial steps taken by DHHS and MaineHousing in planning the future programming of Home for Good. The main sources of data used are the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) mandated Homeless Management Information System and Point-In-Time count, as well as Coordinated Entry Assessment data, all of which are reported to MaineHousing by the nine (9) Homeless Service Hubs, homeless shelters, and service providers around the State. The 2023 Maine Continuum of Care Point-In-Time Count indicated that a total of 370 individuals were experiencing chronic homelessness in the State of Maine. Knowing that the data is imperfect, the initial goal of the Home for Good program was to create 350 to 400 units of permanent supportive housing with On-Site, 24-hour services. The additional $1,000,000 in funding, as described in the II. Legal and Regulatory Background and VIII. Housing Stability Services (HSS) sections below, would provide services for additional individuals in programs not necessarily provided at the site where they live or for twenty-four (24) hours per day.

The 2024 Maine Continuum of Care Point-In-Time Count noted that although the data reflects a decrease in the overall number of people experiencing homelessness in Maine, this was not due to fewer people facing housing crises and homelessness, but rather a decrease in count in emergency motel rooms, for which pandemic-related funding was no longer available. Despite the decrease in the overall number of individuals experiencing homelessness in the 2024 Maine Continuum of Care Point-In-Time Count, the number of individuals experiencing chronic homelessness increased.[1] The data revealed that a total of 494 individuals were experiencing chronic homelessness in the State of Maine. Seventy (70) of those 494 individuals experiencing chronic homelessness were unsheltered.[2]

DHHS and MaineHousing recently reviewed the same data points from the 2025 Maine Continuum of Care Point-In-Time Count and found that 549 individuals were reported as experiencing chronic homelessness. Part of this 11% increase from 2024 can be attributed to the lack of available and affordable housing, which in turn results in individuals remaining in shelter or unsheltered for longer. According to the 2025 Point-In-Time Count data, 95 of the individuals experiencing chronic homelessness were unsheltered. As the emergency shelter system is overwhelmed, more individuals are staying outside or in places not meant for human habitation.

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[1] Per 22 M.R.S. § 20A, chronic homelessness involves an individual living in a place not meant for human habitation for at least 12 months and for whom homelessness is correlated with a condition that makes accessing services and maintaining housing a significant challenge.

[2] In general, for purposes of the Point-in-Time (PIT) count, HUD considers individuals and families sleeping in a place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation (e.g., abandoned buildings, train stations, or camping grounds) as “unsheltered” homeless. Additionally, HUD would generally consider individuals and families sleeping in a garage, shed, or other location outside of a housing structure, but on the property of a housing structure as “unsheltered” homeless for purposes of the PIT count.

Legal and Regulatory Background

On October 24, 2023, the Home for Good program became effective. The statute outlines the overall structure of the program and can be found at [22 M.R.S. § 20A](22 M.R.S. § 20A).

Regarding eligibility for the program, the statute defines chronic homelessness as "a situation in which a person is living in a place not meant for human habitation, including emergency shelters, for at least 12 months and for whom homelessness is correlated with a condition that makes accessing services and maintaining housing a significant challenge such as substance use disorder or a behavioral health condition." Additionally, chronic homelessness "includes a situation in which a person has been living intermittently in an institutional care facility, including but not limited to jail or a health treatment facility, but is otherwise living in a place not meant for human habitation."

The statute establishes two (2) models of services for DHHS and MaineHousing to implement. First, the statute establishes an On-Site model, in which services are available to chronically homeless tenants 24 hours per day and are designed to build independent living skills and connect individuals with community-based services. Second, the statute establishes another model referred to as Housing Stability Services, for which services are available to tenants at properties under the program at least twenty (20) hours per week but not necessarily provided on site or 24 hours per day.

The statute established a Housing First Fund (Fund) for administration of the program that is funded by a percentage of the Real Estate Transfer Tax (RETT). The statute establishes allocations from the Fund in the following categories:

- Funding to support two (2) permanent, full-time positions at DHHS to administer the programs;
- $1,000,000 annually to support Housing Stability Services; and
- All additional funding, which is projected to be the majority of the Fund annually, is allocated to support the On-Site model.

The statute establishes that, on an annual basis, DHHS is to reserve the amount needed to fund the On-Site housing and support services for these programs in the next fiscal year. All dollars in excess of that amount are then transferred to MaineHousing at the end of the fiscal year, so that MaineHousing can support the physical construction of Home for Good properties that will provide On-Site, 24 hour per day services.

This statutory distribution formula means that most Fund expenditures in the early years will be used to build new properties. As these new properties begin to open, an increasing proportion will then be allocated to help pay for the supportive services that are so critical to the model's success. The Fund is expected to be able to help finance about 350 new units of permanent supportive housing by the time all the projects are built out, putting Maine on the path to end or significantly reduce chronic homelessness in the State.

The statute also required DHHS and MaineHousing to enact Joint Rules to administer the program under the law and to specify which elements of the program are administered by DHHS and MaineHousing individually and which elements are administered jointly. MaineHousing's Rule can be found at 99-346 C.M.R. ch. 36. DHHS's Rule can be found at 14-118 C.M.R. ch. 20. Both rules are substantially the same. Finally, the statute requires that DHHS and MaineHousing file annual reports with the Maine Legislature.

Home for Good

DHHS and MaineHousing developed the branding of "Home for Good" for the site-based properties as this is a specific model developed in partnership between MaineHousing and DHHS, resulting in the divergence in nomenclature from other Housing First models across the nation. Maine's Home for Good Program is a model that has been proven to be successful in the State of Maine through the three (3) existing Site-Based Properties owned and operated by Avesta Housing with on-site services provided by Preble Street. The Home for Good Program focuses on services that are available to participants in a frequency and manner driven by the participant. Home for Good emphasizes that housing is not predicated on the acceptance of services and those who are eligible for the available Home for Good housing opportunities are able to access permanent housing with minimal barriers.

Real Estate Transfer Tax (RETT)

Per statute, RETT payments to the Fund became effective as of July 1, 2025. DHHS received its first RETT payment on September 10th, 2025 for taxes collected in August 2025. The first few months of payments were lower than projected due to LD 698 going into effect in September. LD 698 required the State Controller to deposit into the General Fund the first $1,491,000 in revenue slated for DHHS in fiscal year 2025-26, as a result of the increase in the Real Estate Transfer Tax enacted in Public Law 2025, chapter 388, Part V. This transfer does not impact the total revenue projected for the Fund in fiscal year 2025-2026. For ease of reference, see table below of RETT payments to the Fund thus far.

Real Estate Transfer Tax (RETT) Fund Payments (July 2025 – January 2026)	
Month	**Transfer Amount**
Jul-2025	$0
Aug-2025	$0
Sept-2025	$588,090.50
Oct-2025	$131,213.46
Nov-2025	$1,243,777.34
Dec-2025	$1,509,441.50
Jan-2026	$1,189,258.38

Home For Good Projects

1. DHHS Pre-Qualified Vendor List (PQVL) for Service Providers

DHHS established and maintains a Pre-Qualified Vendor List (PQVL) of eligible behavioral health Service Providers that will provide Home for Good services at an On-Site property as part of a Home for Good Team. DHHS administered the Request for Proposals to establish the PQVL at the beginning of the 2025 calendar year. As a result of the 2025 RFP, ten (10) Service Providers received conditional awards for placement on the PQVL. The current list of Qualified Service Providers can be found at Pre-Qualified Vendor List for Home For Good, updated 4/10/2025.

The PQVL allows for annual enrollment of new interested Service Providers. Any Service Provider can submit a proposal throughout the year until the submission deadline of 11:59 p.m. on the 1st business day of August to be considered for that annual enrollment period. The annual enrollment will require providers already on the list to confirm they are still interested in remaining on the list. Providers must reapply once the five (5) year period for being on the list has ended. At its discretion, DHHS may remove a provider from the list that is no longer in good standing.

2. MaineHousing Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for Home for Good Teams

MaineHousing initiated the first Request for Qualifications (RFQ) process for Home for Good Teams in October 2024. MaineHousing's RFQ requires that all Home for Good Teams presenting their qualifications to MaineHousing for review and approval include a Service Provider that is on DHHS's Pre-Qualified Vendor List. Proposals must indicate a unified team that includes a developer, an owner, a property manager and a Service Provider. The reason that Home for Good development projects must come in as a unified team is due to the nature of low-income housing development: in order for a low-income housing development to attract an equity investor and be financially viable, the owner and investors must ensure that all members of the Home for Good Team are unified and vetted not just by MaineHousing, but also by the investors themselves. Additionally, the unified team must demonstrate strong partnership and ability to work collaboratively amongst all parties throughout the development and operation of the property.

MaineHousing initiated a second round of the 2025 Request for Qualifications Developer/Owner/Service Provider/ Property Management Teams to Develop and Operate Site-Based Home For Good Projects in November 2025. The 2025 RFQ targets project proposals in the following areas: Greater Portland, Augusta/Waterville, Bangor, and the Mid-coast. These target areas are based on the needs identified by the Point-In-Time Count[3] data, Homeless

[3] The state's annual assessment of homelessness, done in collaboration between the Maine Continuum of Care and MaineHousing, is a requirement of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and is an important component used to determine Maine's share of federal homelessness funding.

Management Information System (HMIS)[4] data, and Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH)[5] data. The identified target areas of project proposals for 2025 were adjusted with the consideration of the first five (5) project locations awarded as a result of the 2024 RFQ (Sanford, Portland, Auburn, Augusta and Bangor). MaineHousing anticipates selecting three (3) Teams in early 2026 to develop Home for Good Projects through the 2025 RFQ.

The selected teams from the 2024 RFQ are indicated below:

Maine Housing 2024 RFQ Selected Teams				
Location	**Developer**	**Owner**	**Property Manager**	**Service Provider**
Sanford	Avesta Housing	Sanford Housing Authority	Sanford Housing Authority	York County Community Action Corporation
Portland	Avesta Housing	Avesta Housing	Avesta Housing	Preble Street
Auburn	Developers Collaborative	Auburn Housing Authority	Auburn Housing Authority	Spurwink
Augusta	Developers Collaborative	Volunteers Of America	Developers Collaborative	Volunteers Of America
Bangor	Bangor Housing Authority	Bangor Housing Authority	Bangor Housing Authority	Preble Street

3. Project Status Update

Sanford Project

The Sanford team is currently working on site control, as their originally planned site fell through due to complexities. This has significantly pushed back timelines for this project as they will still have to complete their planning board approval, site surveys, environmental review, and address any additional items that may come up as a result. The team is working through the design of the building with their architect, Gawron Turgeon Dillon Architects. In December 2025, the developer went out to bid for a civil engineer.

Number of anticipated units: 30 units

[4] The Maine Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) is an online database used to collect client-level data and data on the provision of housing and services to individuals and families experiencing homelessness. HMIS provides unduplicated counts of clients served, tracks services used by homeless persons, captures information from multiple agencies, and gauges community progress towards ending homelessness.
[5] PATH is designed to support the outreach, engagement and delivery of services to eligible persons who are homeless and have serious mental illnesses and/or co-occurring substance use disorder.

Vouchers: Sanford Housing Authority has committed 100% of the project-based vouchers to their Home for Good project.

Property's anticipated occupancy: late 2027 / early 2028

Portland Project

The Portland team identified a new site on Forest Ave. in Portland in October 2025 as their initially identified site on Oxford St. in Portland was not feasible for the project. Since Avesta identified their new site, they have also increased their occupancy of the site to 35-units, which is the maximum allowable by Home for Good at this time.

Number of anticipated units: 35 units

Vouchers: The team indicated in December 2025 that they are trying to navigate the project-based voucher allocation, as Portland Housing Authority may not be able to commit the standard vouchers as originally pledged.

Property's anticipated occupancy: late 2027 / early 2028

Auburn Project

As of December 2025, the Auburn team was completing the preliminary survey and working on siting the building. The team indicated that there was a minor soil disturbance, have had an engineer working on it, and have applied to the Department of Environmental Protection for a V-RAP, which is a Voluntary Response Action Plan allowed under Maine law.

The Auburn team has been identifying pre-development costs and are beginning conversations with The Genesis Fund regarding a Pre-Development Loan. The team has been waiting to move forward with design until the title work was completed, which was underway in December 2025.

Number of anticipated units: 30 units

Vouchers: Auburn Housing Authority is currently working on the project-based vouchers for this property.

Property's anticipated occupancy: late 2027 / early 2028

Augusta Project

The Augusta team identified 57b Oxford St. in Augusta for their Home for Good project location. Developers Collaborative has received the municipal approvals for this site. The site's environmental review public comment period ended 12/16/2025 and has been submitted to HUD for approval.

The Augusta team's capital stack is comprised of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds from Kennebec County, HUD Continuum of Care funds, 4% Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC), below-market debt from MaineHousing, and the Home for Good subsidy. The team also has a Pre-Development Loan through The Genesis Fund. This project will be using Ryan Senatore as their architect and recently completed 50% of their design drawings. The Augusta team indicated that their construction closing is slated for July 2026.

Number of anticipated units: 25 units

Vouchers: Augusta Housing Authority has committed ten (10) project-based vouchers and MaineHousing has committed fifteen (15) project-based vouchers.

Property's anticipated occupancy: late Summer / Fall of 2027

Bangor Project

In December 2025, Bangor signed their option agreement and began borings to check soils on the site. Bangor anticipates the environmental review can start in early 2026.

The architect for this project is Gawron Turgeon Dillon and they have already established the shape and location for the design of the building. The team noted there are easement issues that they are working through. The Bangor team met with Bangor Housing Authority to ensure that all housing authority administrative plans are aligned and began discussing the coordinated entry process through which tenant selection occurs.

Number of anticipated units: 30 units

Vouchers: Bangor Housing Authority has committed 100% of the project-based vouchers to their Home for Good project.

Property's anticipated occupancy: late 2027/early 2028

4. National Equity Fund (NEF)

One unique feature of the Home for Good projects is the partnership with National Equity Fund (NEF), a national non-profit real estate investment manager and tax credit syndicator. Traditionally, when LIHTC equity is used as a source of capital for the development of housing, the developer must find a syndicator to syndicate the tax credits to provide the project with equity. While MaineHousing did not require developers to use NEF for Home for Good projects, MaineHousing did partner with NEF to offer a number of advantages, which has led all projects to date to use NEF as the LIHTC syndicator.

Beyond confirming that the tax credit pricing and the economics of the partnership will be equal to, or better than any other market syndicator, NEF and MaineHousing offered the developers something completely new: joint underwriting that has been agreed to by NEF and MaineHousing. Typically, the syndicator underwrites projects based on the expectations of the major investors, and the Housing Finance Agency (MaineHousing in Maine) underwrites projects based on the debt it is lending to the project. The risks and goals are not exactly the same and there is always some tension between the two (2) parties. Developers must navigate the differences and ultimately come up with a project that satisfies the investor and the lender. In this case, NEF and MaineHousing negotiated and agreed to how the projects would be underwritten prior to the involvement of any developer, so developers had a clear path from the beginning and could save time and money by not answering to two (2) different underwriting standards. While still in the early stages, this has so far proven to be efficient and welcomed by the developers. MaineHousing is hoping that this is a model that could be expanded to developments that are not part of a very specific program, such as these Home for Good projects.

Home for Good projects will serve an incredibly valuable public purpose but development and operation of these projects also pose unique challenges and risks that pure economic investors may not want to take the time to understand. NEF proved willing to take the time to work with MaineHousing and the various developers and has a great interest in the public purpose of these projects. NEF has visited Maine multiple times and has regular conference calls with the teams to advance the due diligence needed for the equity investment. On a parallel track, NEF is working with investors to invest in the fund, which will ultimately syndicate the LIHTC.

5. Cohort Model

DHHS and MaineHousing, along with MaineHousing's technical assistance provider, The Genesis Fund, identified a unique opportunity to involve the Home for Good teams in program development by introducing a cohort model approach. Through this approach, DHHS, MaineHousing, and The Genesis Fund have been able to facilitate shared learning, input and feedback from the teams, and relationship development across the projects.

Due to the pressing nature of the development activities, construction standards, and financial development of the projects, the first several sessions of the cohort focused primarily on those key topics. For ease of reference, the initial topics and schedule is listed below:

Home For Good Cohort Meetings – 2025 Schedule and Topics

1. Home For Good Cohort Kick-Off Meeting. May 12 at 1pm. in-person at MaineHousing
   This meeting focused on the background of Home for Good and introduced the cohort approach to the Home for Good teams. Teams had the opportunity to engage with DHHS and MaineHousing by asking questions and providing feedback about the process and model.

2. Key Development Activity. Thursday, June 12 at 10:30 a.m. hybrid via Microsoft Teams and MaineHousing – 90 minutes
   This meeting focused on development schedules, development of financial models, and basic construction considerations. Discussion identified important benchmarks and deadlines, financial layers and limits, and general building sizes and layout considerations.

3. Tax Credits and MaineHousing Underwriting Standards. Wednesday, June 25 at 2:00 p.m. remote only via Microsoft Teams – 90 minutes
   This meeting further introduced National Equity Fund (NEF) as the tax credit syndicator and focused on key underwriting considerations and requirements. Discussion identified key items that need consistency among funders, e.g., debt service coverage, reserves, operating expenses etc.

4. Key Development Activity Wednesday, July 9 at 2:00 p.m. hybrid via Microsoft Teams and MaineHousing – two hours
   This meeting was a follow-up to the June 12th meeting with closure on many of the open items identified in June. Progress updates from the five developments occurred. This meeting also included more in-depth discussion of building layouts, with descriptions from Preble Street's and Avesta's experiences.

5. Vouchers. Thursday, August 7 at 2:00 p.m. hybrid via Microsoft Teams and MaineHousing– 90 minutes
   This meeting reviewed the status of each project's needed vouchers. Discussion included Public Housing Authority (PHA) voucher administrative plans, commitments and various requirements that accompany vouchers.

6. Resident selection – Wednesday, September 3 at 2:00 p.m. remote only via Microsoft Teams – 90 minutes
   This meeting included discussion on the anticipated approach to selecting residents. Discussion included how the coordinated entry system works as well as reviewing statutory requirements, responsibilities and consistency. Consistency among funders were also reviewed.

7. Full Cohort Meeting. Tuesday, September 23 at 1:00 p.m. in-person at MaineHousing – 2.5 hours

This meeting reviewed all progress made to date, outstanding issues, clarification of key issues, and included an outline of upcoming meetings.

The second round of cohort meetings began on December 12, 2025, and will continue through the Spring of 2026 with topics specific to property development; coordinated entry system and resident selection; service provider performance metrics and data reporting; and other relevant topics. In this cohort round, each project will be scheduled to provide a short presentation on their current status and share successes and roadblocks. The full schedule and topics are still in development for the next session; however, the initial meeting details are listed below.

Home For Good Cohort Meetings – 2025-2026 Schedule and Topics

1. Furniture, Fixtures & Equipment. Friday December 12, 2025, at 2 p.m. hybrid via Microsoft Teams and MaineHousing– 90 minutes

   This meeting focused on Amanda Bartlett and Brian Sites (Augusta Site) giving an in-depth review of progress, budget development, and questions that have arisen through the budgeting process for the Riverlands project in Augusta. Reviewed budgeting for furniture, fixtures & equipment (FF&E) expenses and what makes FF&E needs different for these projects. Tessa Metcalfe at Avesta and Erin Kelly at Preble shared some thoughts on ongoing replacement and maintenance costs and process related to FF&E for these properties.

2. Service Provider Staffing and Operations Budget Discussion. Thursday, January 15th, 2026, at 10:30 a.m. via Microsoft Teams and MaineHousing

   This meeting focused on the staffing and service delivery expectations of Home for Good Service Providers within the financial structure of the rate model. Service Providers heard a presentation from Preble Street, who provides service delivery at the first three (3) existing site-based properties, regarding their staffing structure and staffing challenges.

3. Service Provider Data and Performance Measure Discussion, Part I. Thursday January 29th, 2026, at 10:30 a.m. remote only via Microsoft Teams – 60 minutes

   This meeting included representatives from the Office of Behavioral Health (OBH) Data Team. The discussion focused on how Home for Good data points can be integrated into the Service Providers' existing client data systems.

4. Topic To Be Determined. Wednesday, February 18th, 2026, at 10:30 a.m. via Microsoft Teams

   This meeting topic will be determined by DHHS, MaineHousing and The Genesis Fund.

5. Service Provider Data and Performance Measure Discussion, Part II. Thursday February 26th, 2026, at 10:30 a.m. remote only via Microsoft Teams – 60 minutes

This meeting will serve as a follow-up to the January 29th meeting and will have representatives from the Office of Behavioral Health (OBH) Data Team. This meeting will involve continued discussion on how Home for Good data points can be integrated into the Service Providers' existing client data systems.

6. Topic To Be Determined. Thursday, March 26th, 2026, at 10:30 a.m. via Microsoft Teams
   This meeting topic will be determined by DHHS, MaineHousing and The Genesis Fund.

7. Topic To Be Determined. Thursday, April 23rd, 2026, at 10:30 a.m. via Microsoft Teams
   This meeting topic will be determined by DHHS, MaineHousing and The Genesis Fund.

Stakeholder Engagement

DHHS and MaineHousing continue to facilitate significant stakeholder engagement efforts to inform program development and provide ongoing education to the community. In June 2025, DHHS and MaineHousing held two (2) in-person (South Portland and Bangor) Service Provider Forums to provide education on the establishment of the program; the status of the first five (5) Home For Good projects; the process to submit proposals to become a Home For Good team; and the availability of technical assistance via The Genesis Fund.

In November 2025, MaineHousing held the Home for Good RFQ Interested Parties Conference for any entity interested in applying to become a Home for Good Team. MaineHousing, DHHS, and The Genesis Fund provided education on their respective roles with Home for Good as well as any established expectations of the Home for Good Teams.

Program Design

1. Scope of Services

DHHS will contract with Service Providers six (6) months prior to a Home for Good property's initial occupancy. DHHS's intent by contracting prior to service delivery is to ensure that there is adequate and trained staff to support the Home for Good properties and for the staff to have meaningful outreach and engagement with program participants prior to move-in. Engagement is a key focus and strategy to support program participants in successfully transitioning from experiencing chronic homelessness to their new housing opportunity.

Home for Good Services will be site-based services tailored to each tenant's individual needs with the goal of eliminating or mitigating previous barriers to successfully maintaining housing. Services will be delivered through the lens of the Basic Principles under 22 M.R.S. §20-A, which are:

- Participants do not have to be in treatment or recovery from mental illness or substance use disorder or possess all of the skills necessary to live independently at the time they move in;
- Services are focused on housing retention;
- Service delivery must be flexible to meet the shifting priorities of the participants;
- Participants are not required to receive services to retain housing;
- Robust services are predicated on assertive engagement, not coercion; and
- Some participants may ultimately need minimal support or brief interventions, but others may need intensive long-term support.

Home For Good Service Providers will focus their service efforts on the following key component areas, at a minimum:

- Relationship Building;
- Harm Reduction;
- Life Skills Development;
- General Housing Support; and
- Care Coordination.

Relationship Building

The relationship established between tenants and Home for Good staff is vital. The goal is to connect and establish a trusting relationship between Home for Good staff and participants by creating conditions in which participants can feel accepted, safe, and able to express their point of view, as well as their needs and goals.

Prevention Strategies

Services are informed by a prevention-based philosophy that recognizes drug and alcohol use may be a part of participants' lives. Abstinence-based recovery may be a goal for some participants, but not for all. Service Providers shall offer a spectrum of secondary and tertiary prevention services either directly through their service delivery or through referrals. Staff engage participants in nonjudgmental communication regarding drug and alcohol use, offer education regarding how to avoid risky behaviors, support engagement in safer practices, and connect to evidence-based treatment if the participant so chooses. Examples include:

- Provision of alternative activities at times and a frequency that meets the needs of the tenants (e.g. community meals, arts/music, community building activities (memorials, cookouts);
- Having Naloxone (Narcan) accessible on site;
- Referral to a syringe service program;
- Providing education to participants on how to properly dispose of syringes;
- A focus on behaviors rather than on substance use;
- Education on safer sex practices; and

- Providing psychoeducation on safer use practices

Secondary and tertiary prevention services will also focus on the intersection of substance use and other movements.

Life Skills Development

These support and stabilization services are targeted towards supporting participant goals related to personal wellness and integration into communities the participant seeks to become part of, including the property, the neighborhood, and personal relationships with family. These services can include but are not limited to the following:

- Communication support with:
  - Landlord/property management;
  - Family and friends; and
  - Conflict resolution and boundary setting

- Community integration through:
  - Volunteer/Peer opportunities within the building;
  - Cultural and educational opportunities within the building (including neighborhood) such as sharing meals and engaging in leisure activities; and
  - Transportation planning

- Personal wellness support through:
  - Encouraging tenant community engagement and creating structure to the day, with a goal of alleviating loneliness and isolation;
  - Education and coaching related to basic money and income management (including entitlement assistance and accessing benefits);
  - Time management;
  - Health and nutrition (including meal cooking/preparation);
  - Personal hygiene and self-care;
  - Housekeeping; and
  - Education, coaching, and support with personal and household safety and relationship management, including assisting with guest management, interpersonal and neighbor relations, building healthy relationships and establishing boundaries

General Housing Support

Services are tailored to each tenant's individual situation, can include elements such as understanding and honoring lease agreement, and are geared towards elimination or mitigation of previous barriers to successfully maintaining housing. Service Providers will assist the participant through the move-in and lease up process, as well as act a mediator when property management concerns arise. Service Providers work collaboratively with the participant to develop an Individual Mitigation Plan as a response to a specific event or combination of circumstances related to a participant's housing and tenancy stability.

Care Coordination

Service Providers implement a team-based approach to stabilization and support service delivery that includes maximizing utilization of MaineCare services and coordinated linkage to other services, whether provided On-Site or within the community.

2. Staffing

The Fund will fully cover staffing costs for up to two (2) FTE staff for 24/7 On-Site housing support and stabilization services in the first one to two (1-2) years of the program and all Home for Good Service Providers will be required to enroll in MaineCare to provide Targeted Case Management (TCM) and/or Housing Outreach and Member Engagement (HOME) services.

During the first two (2) years of service performance, which is anticipated to be 2027-2028, DHHS will evaluate services provided to determine what percentage of On-Site housing support and stabilization services can be reimbursed by MaineCare. DHHS will develop benchmarking in subsequent years to develop a percentage of housing support and stabilization services that the Fund will cover and what will be required of the Service Providers to bill to MaineCare.

3. Revisions to TCM, the HOME Program, and MaineCare Maximization

The enacting legislation mandated that DHHS amend two (2) sections of the MaineCare Benefits Manual to support tenants at Home for Good properties: Section 13 – TCM, and Section 91 – HOME.

Targeted Case Management (TCM)

TCM services are provided by a social services or health professional, or other qualified staff, to identify the medical, social, educational and other needs (including housing and transportation) of the eligible member, identify the services necessary to meet those needs, and facilitate access to those services. Case management consists of intake/assessment, plan of care development, coordination/advocacy, monitoring, and evaluation.

The key policy changes for TCM include removing the 90-day service limitation for TCM after someone is housed and instead expanding eligibility by using a clinical risk assessment to determine eligibility for TCM.

Housing Outreach and Member Engagement (HOME Program)

HOME services are provided by specialized Community Care Teams and services consist of comprehensive care management and medical and behavioral health care coordination with intensive levels of transitional care and individual supports to meet the needs of MaineCare members experiencing long-term homelessness.

DHHS is removing the eligibility gate-keeping function by not requiring people to enter through the intensive tier of experiencing long-term homelessness at service provision. This will allow people to be housed at a Home for Good property and still be eligible to benefit from HOME services. Previously, a member would have to be experiencing current literal homelessness to receive HOME services.
Policy Amendments' Time Frame

Section 13- TCM policy amendments are set to occur in early 2026, whereas Section 91-HOME policy amendments are still in development. It is anticipated that Section 91-HOME changes will be made through the rule making process by 1/1/2027.

Housing Stability Services (HSS)

In addition to the On-Site Home for Good program, the Department is charged with establishing a model known as HSS. The Department intends for HSS to be provided in accordance with 22 M.R.S. §20-A, where supportive services are not necessarily provided on site or twenty-four (24) hours per day, but must be available to participants living in the community for no less than twenty (20) hours per week and must adequately meet the needs of the residents to build independent living skills, to maintain housing, and to access necessary community-based services, as applicable to the participant. The Department expects HSS Service Providers to maximize opportunities to leverage MaineCare while ensuring HSS services do not duplicate services available through any other billing source. The Department welcomed innovative proposals in August 2025 through the Housing Stability Services RFP.

The Department received innovative proposals and will be conditionally awarding in the near future.

Housing Stability Services are anticipated to begin Spring 2026.