



BEGINNING WITH HOME

Housing Action Illinois 2019 Annual Report

Dear Members & Supporters

Where we live affects everything in our lives: our health, our access to education, our job opportunities, our ability to save money, how we raise our children, and what kind of future we build for ourselves and our families. At Housing Action Illinois, we want a future in which every Illinoisan, no matter their income, has a good, stable place to call home.

We are publishing this report in September 2020, amidst the COVID-19 public health crisis, economic downturn, and widespread social unrest in response to systemic racism. We are facing challenges both new and old. However, as we work to meet these challenges and build a better future, we must also reflect on the past and honor the work that has moved us forward. In 2019, we made significant strides toward our vision of an Illinois where everyone has a good place to call home. We are proud of our accomplishments, and we know they would not have been possible without collective action and strong partners from around the state.

Thank you for your support — you are helping us create a tomorrow in which our communities are not just surviving but thriving.

Sharon Legenza, Executive Director

Mary Lu Seidel, Co-Chair

Sheila Dodd, Co-Chair

**Policy Advocacy | Capacity Building | Public Education & Organizing |
Members & Financials**

POLICY ADVOCACY

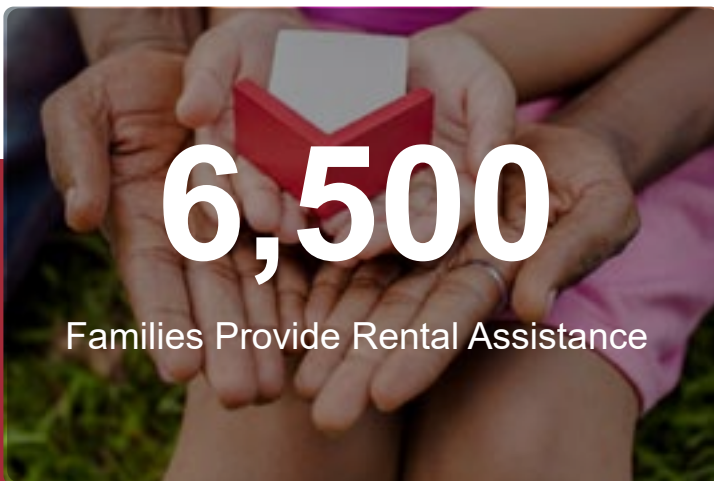
Each year, we mobilize our members and allies to advocate for policies that help end homelessness and housing discrimination, create affordable rental housing, and promote sustainable home ownership. We aim to increase federal, state, and local investments in proven housing programs, as well as to develop new policy solutions.

Working alongside strong allies, we had a number of key wins.

We successfully advocated for \$200 million for affordable housing in the Illinois capital budget. Through direct funding and by leveraging other resources, these dollars will help people rent or buy homes as well as support innovative initiatives such as reentry housing programs and health + housing partnerships.



\$200M
for Affordable Housing



6,500

Families Provide Rental Assistance

The Homeless Prevention Program helps people avoid experiencing homelessness by providing them with rental and utility assistance. We secured a \$4 million—more than 80%—increase for the program, bringing its total funding to \$9 million. We estimate this will support 6,500 households.

In 2018, we advocated for a law requiring Illinois to update its definition of an elevated blood lead level. In 2019, we secured \$6 million in new funding to implement the rules, bringing total funding to approximately \$10 million. As a result, an additional 6,000 children are newly eligible for resources including nurse care management and inspections to identify lead hazards in their



6,000

Children Protected from Lead Posioning



1,000,000+

Families Provide Rental Assistance

As co-chair of the Just Housing Initiative, we successfully advocated for protections from housing discrimination for people with arrest and conviction records in Cook County. The campaign brought together more than 100 organizations and leaders with lived experience, who shared their personal stories and helped plan campaign strategies. The protections went into effect at the end of 2019.

[Click here to learn about other key wins and advocacy work in our 2019 General Assembly Session Wrap-Up](#)

CAPACITY BUILDING

Through our Capacity Building program, we help nonprofit housing organizations build staff expertise and become more effective at their work, ensuring that agencies keep up with changing trends, new technology, and best practices. We offer workshops and one-on-one support to provide housing practitioners with the resources, knowledge, and skills they need to serve more families and help our communities thrive.

TRAINING & CONSULTING

Our team of expert Capacity Building Specialists design trainings that serve the unique needs of housing organizations. In 2019, more than 2,000 participants attended our in-person and virtual workshops.

We launched our Online Study Group in 2018 to help housing counselors prepare to take and pass the HUD Individual Certification Exam. This year, we took it national, drawing more than 420 participants from 39 states. Having certified housing counselors will help ensure more effective and standardized counseling services and more knowledgeable counselors.

Feedback from attendees has been very positive, with counselors reporting that they feel better prepared to take the exam after participating in the Online Study Group.

“Took the test the Tuesday after the study group ended and passed on the first try. The study group was indispensable in so many ways!”

- Karen Crump, Fair Housing Advocates of Northern California

Intermediary



Housing Action Illinois 2019 Intermediary Affiliate Data

As a HUD-Approved Housing Counseling Intermediary, we secure funding from HUD and pass it on to our affiliated housing counseling agencies. We provide assistance with administrative functions and help each agency ensure it meets program standards and client needs. With our support and resources, our affiliates are able to help more families find and keep good homes.

In 2019, we received \$1.2 million from HUD—the 7th largest award in the nation—and distributed it to 33 housing counseling agencies in the

Intermediary Affiliates

Access Living, Chicago | Advantage Housing, Kokomo, IN | Brightpoint, Fort Wayne, IN | CDBG Operations Corporation, East St. Louis | CEFS Economic Opportunity Corporation, Effingham | Center for Changing Lives, Chicago | Central Detroit Christian Community Development, Detroit, MI | Community & Economic Development Association of Cook County, Chicago | Community Investment Corporation of Decatur, Decatur | Community Service Council of Northern Will County, Bolingbrook | Cornerstone Community Development Corporation, Ford Heights



AmeriCorps VISTA

We manage a network of AmeriCorps VISTA Members, who are placed at our member organizations across the state. VISTA Members work on a range of projects to fight poverty and end homelessness while building the capacity of their host organizations. Our 27 full-year VISTA Members and 25 VISTA Summer Associates recruited and managed 964 volunteers and raised more than \$560,000 in cash and in-kind donations for their host sites.

“Now that I am a year out of VISTA, I see a great deal of how this experience catapulted my career. It gave me the experience needed to become a good job candidate, and I am able to utilize skills learned at CCH (Chicago Coalition for the Homeless) in my current role.”

- Veronica Cullinan, AmeriCorps VISTA, 2017-2019

Community Revitalization Challenge

The Community Revitalization Challenge (CRC) is a multi-year initiative to connect community-based organizations to financial institutions to design and launch projects that increase access to affordable housing in Illinois. We launched the first round of the CRC in 2018. During the second year, participants reached the final stages of developing their proposals and began seeking funding for their projects. Seven have received a total of \$200,000 in

Public Education & Organizing

Through our Capacity Building program, we help nonprofit housing organizations build staff expertise and become more effective at their work, ensuring that agencies keep up with changing trends, new technology, and best practices. We offer workshops and one-on-one support to provide housing practitioners with the resources, knowledge, and skills they need to serve more families and help our communities thrive.

Housing Justice + Racial Justice

Racial justice is foundational to our work at Housing Action Illinois. Expanding access to quality, affordable homes for everyone—in any community, regardless of race or ethnicity—is long overdue and an inextricable part of addressing systemic racism. As we explain our core issues, Housing Action Illinois aims to build awareness of the deep connections between racial justice, affordable housing, and ending homelessness. We are committed to advocating for policies and programs that advance equity.

[Click here to explore our issue breakdowns](#)

Storytelling for Change

To help residents of permanent supportive housing explore how they can tell their stories to make a difference, we facilitated a [series of workshops](#) in Mt. Vernon, Peoria, Rockford, Hillside, and Chicago in partnership with the Supportive Housing Providers Association. We also created a guide for supportive housing practitioners who are interested in helping facilitate storytelling workshops with their residents.

The stories of people who live in supportive housing can shed light on important issues, such as what it is like to experience homelessness or live with mental illness or a disability. Stories are an effective tool for change, helping people connect, understand different perspectives—and take action.

The Storytelling for Change workshops culminated in the publication of [A Place to Call Home](#), which shares the experiences of Illinoisans who have been homeless in their own words.

HOLLY

Mt. Vernon workshop



Racial Disparity in Homelessness Policy Brief

Black Illinoisans are eight times more likely to experience homelessness than White Illinoisans. Even among those in poverty, Black Illinoisans are more likely to experience homelessness than White Illinoisans. Our 2019 policy brief examines racial disparities in homelessness throughout Illinois and provides policy recommendations for addressing them.

[Read Homelessness Policy brief](#)

Eviction in Illinois Policy Brief

Eviction is prevalent throughout Illinois. Our 2019 policy brief reviews statewide data from 2016 and finds that more than half (54 percent) of cases did not result in a negative determination, but the tenants still ended up with an eviction filing on the public record. This record is often a serious obstacle to finding a future home. Our brief suggests ways to address and prevent eviction throughout Illinois.

[Read Eviction Policy Brief](#)

Conference



Each year, housing professionals from around Illinois come together for our annual Housing Matters! conference. This year, **246 participants from 145 different organizations** gathered to join us for workshops on policy advocacy, ending homelessness, housing counseling, and housing development, as well as a Community Revitalization Challenge breakfast and office hours. **Governor J.B. Pritzker** welcomed our guests with a personal video message, and we closed out the conference with an inspiring keynote address from **Illinois Deputy Governor Sol Flores**.



MEMBERS

Access Living, Chicago | Affordable Housing Corporation of Lake County, Libertyville
All Chicago Making Homelessness History | Alliance to End Homelessness in Suburban Cook
County, Hillside | Applegate & Thorne-Thomsen, Chicago | Archtreasures, Chicago | Assisted
Housing Risk Management Assessment (AHRMA), Rantoul | Association for Individual
Development, Elgin | BCMW Community Services, Centralia | Bethany Village Family Crisis
Resource Center, Anna | Breakthrough Joliet, Romeoville | Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese
of Chicago | Catholic Charities Diocese of Joliet, Downers Grove | CDBG Operations Corporation,
East St. Louis | C.E.F.S. Economic Opportunity Corporation, Effingham | Center for Changing Lives,
Chicago | Center for Disability and Elder Law, Chicago | Centro Romero, Chicago | Champaign
County Regional Planning Commission | Champaign-Urbana Tenant Union | Chicago Area Fair
Housing Alliance | Chicago Coalition for the Homeless | Chicago Community Loan Fund
Chicago Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, Inc. | Chicago Rehab Network | Chicago
Urban League | Chicagoland Habitat for Humanity | Chinese American Service League, Chicago |
Cinnaire, Madison | City of Evanston | City of Rockford | Claretian Associates, Chicago | Community
& Economic Development Association of Cook County (CEDA), Chicago | Community Contacts,
Inc., Elgin | Community Investment Corporation of Decatur | Community Partners for Affordable
Housing, Highland Park | Community Service Council of Northern Will County, Bolingbrook |
Connections for the Homeless, Evanston | Connections of Illinois, Palatine | Consumer Credit
Counseling Services of Northern Illinois, Woodstock | Cornerstone Associates LLC, Omaha | CSH,
Chicago | Disability Resource Center, Joliet | Dove, Inc., Decatur | DuPage Habitat for Humanity,
Wheaton | DuPage PADS, Wheaton | East Central Illinois Community Action Agency, Danville |
Economic Growth Corporation (GROWTH), Rock Island | Edgewater Village, Chicago | Embarras
River Basin Agency, Greenup | Enabled Path, Inc., Wheeling | Erie Neighborhood House, Chicago
| Everlasting Word Church, Aurora | Facing Forward to End Homelessness, Chicago | Federal
Home Loan Bank of Chicago | Ford Heights Community Service Organization | Fox Valley Habitat
for Humanity, Montgomery | Full Circle Communities, Inc., Chicago | Garfield Park Community
Council, Chicago | Genesis Housing Development Corporation, Chicago | Grass Roots Organizing
Works, Rock Island | Greater Southwest Development Corporation, Chicago | Grundy Area PADS,
Morris | Habitat for Humanity Chicago | Habitat for Humanity Chicago South Suburbs | Habitat
for Humanity of Champaign County & Restore | Habitat for Humanity of Illinois, Oswego | Habitat
for Humanity of Northern Fox | Valley, Elgin | Heartland Housing, Inc., Chicago | Hesed House,
Aurora | HomeStart, Rockford | HOPE of East Central Illinois, Charleston | HOPE Fair Housing
Center, Wheaton | Hope Haven of DeKalb | Hope Network, Grand Rapids | Housing Authority of
Champaign County | Housing Authority of Cook County, Chicago | Housing Choice Partners of
Chicago | Housing Forward, Maywood | Housing Opportunities and Maintenance for the Elderly
(H.O.M.E.), Chicago | Housing Task Force, Arlington Heights | H.O.M.E DuPage, Wheaton | Housing
Opportunities for Women, Chicago | Housing Plus NFP, Chicago | IFF, Chicago |

Illinois Community Action Development Corporation, Springfield | Illinois Housing Council (IHC), Chicago | Illinois Valley Center for Independent Living, LaSalle | IMPACT Center for Independent Living, Alton | Inland Home Mortgage, Villa Park | Interfaith Leadership Project of Cicero, Berwyn & Stickney | John Marshall Law School, Chicago | Joining Forces for Affordable Housing, Evanston | Joseph Corporation, Aurora | Justine Petersen, Granite City | Kankakee County Housing Authority | Lake County Coalition for The Homeless, Gurnee | Lake County Community Development Division, Libertyville | Lake County Housing Authority, Grayslake | Lake County Residential Development Corporation, Gurnee | Latino Policy Forum, Chicago | Latin United Community Housing Association (LUCHA), Chicago | Lawson House Tenants Association, Chicago | Lawyers' Committee for Better Housing, Chicago | LIFE Center for Independent Living, Bloomington | Lifebuilders Ministry, Inc., Glenwood | Madison County Community Development, Edwardsville | Manufactured Home Owners Association of Illinois, Des Plaines | Matthew House, Chicago | METEC Resource Center, Peoria | Mid Central Community Action, Bloomington | Midland States Bank, Chesterfield | Mortgage Education Foundation, Palos Heights | Navicore Solutions, Manalapan | Neighborhood Housing Service (NHS) of Chicago | Neumann Family Services, Chicago | New Community Vision, Chicago | North Side Community Federal Credit Union, Chicago | North West Housing Partnership, Schaumburg | Northside Community Development Corporation, Chicago | Northwest Compass, Inc., Mount Prospect | Northwest Side Housing Center, Chicago | Oak Park Regional Housing Center | Open Communities, Evanston | Over The Rainbow, Evanston | PADS Lake County, North Chicago | PADS of Elgin | Partners In Community Building, Chicago | People's Resource Center, Wheaton | Peoria Housing Authority | Peoria Opportunities Foundation | Plante Moran, Chicago | Prairie State Legal Services, Waukegan | Preservation of Affordable Housing, Chicago | Progress Center for Independent Living, Forest Park | Project IRENE, Wilmette | Promethean Solar, Chicago | Resources for Community Living, Rolling Meadows | Respond Now, Chicago Heights | Restoration America, Inc., Crystal Lake | Rockford Housing Authority | Sarah's Circle, Chicago | Second Federal (A Division of Self-Help FCU), Chicago | Shawnee Development Council, Karnak | South Suburban Housing Center, Homewood | South Suburban PADS, Chicago Heights | Southwestern Illinois | Development Authority, Collinsville | Spanish Coalition for Housing, Chicago | Springfield Housing Authority | Statewide Independent Living Council of Illinois, Springfield | Supportive Housing Providers Association (SHPA), Springfield | Supportive Services for Veteran Families, Springfield | The Harbour, Inc., Park Ridge | The Michaels Development Co., L.P., Chicago | The Resurrection Project, Chicago | Together We Cope, Tinley Park | Tri-County Opportunities Council, Rock Falls | Turnstone Development, Chicago | University of Illinois Department of Family Medicine, Chicago | Urban Action Network/Quality Housing Coalition, Springfield | Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis | Volunteers of America, Chicago | Western Egyptian Economic Opportunity Council, Inc. Steeleville | Will County Center for Community Concerns, Joliet | ZION Development Corporation, Rockford

Housing Action Illinois has more than 160 members, including nonprofit organizations, government agencies, and corporations, all committed to protecting and expanding the availability of quality, affordable housing.

FUNDERS

Thank You to Our 2019 Funders & Conference Sponsors

Alphawood Foundation | Associated Bank | Applegate & Thorne-Thomsen | Bank of America | BlueHub Sun | BMO Harris Bank | Catholic Campaign for Human Dignity | Chicago Community Trust | Cinnaire | Corporation for National & Community Service | Cuore e Mani | Federal Home Loan Bank of Chicago | Field Foundation | Fifth Third Foundation | First Midwest Bank | Freddie Mac | Huntington Bank | Illinois Housing Development Authority | JPMorgan Chase & Co. | Midland States Bank | Pierce Family Foundation | PNC | Polk Bros. Foundation | Second Federal | State Farm Bank® | U.S. Bank Foundation | U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development | Wells Fargo | Woods Fund Chicago

BOARD & STAFF

Staff

Sharon Legenza, Executive Director | David Young, Director of Capacity Building | Wanda Collins, Capacity Building Specialist | Bibian Cristino, Capacity Building Specialist | Jennifer Pallas, Capacity Building Specialist | Bob Palmer, Policy Director | Gianna Baker, Outreach Manager | Willie Heineke, National Service Program Manager | Brandon Grigsby, National Service Program Associate | Steven Johnson, National Service Program Associate | Erana Jackson, AmeriCorps VISTA Leader | Kristin Ginger, Communications Manager | Amina Farha, Membership & Development VISTA

Board of Directors

Bob Campbell, Zion Development Corporation, Rockford | Niccole Clements, PNC, Springfield—Secretary | Sheila Dodd, City of Urbana, Urbana—Co-Chair | Kelli Harsch, Applegate & Thorne-Thomsen, P.C., Chicago | Joyce Hothan, Glen Ellyn | Dottie Johnson, Chicago Commons, Chicago | Kurt Kuyawa, Citizens Bank NA, Chicago—Treasurer | Jackie Newman, Springfield Housing Authority, Springfield | David Noble, Midland States Bank, Effingham | Shelly Richardson, The Statewide Independent Living Council of Illinois, Springfield | Mary Lu Seidel, Preservation Chicago, Chicago—Co-Chair | Darsonya Switzer, Dove Inc., Decatur | Mary Ellen Tamasy, Community Partners for Affordable Housing, Libertyville | Carl Wolf, Respond Now, Chicago | Margaret Wooten, Chicago Urban League, Chicago

FINANCIALS

Revenue: \$2,660,594

Government Grants: \$1,973,296
Foundation Grants: \$200,526
Corporate Contributions: \$156,200
Other: \$289,807
Membership Dues: \$40,765

Expenses: \$2,641,418

Programs: \$2,532,936
 Subgrants/Stipends: \$1,498,271
Fundraising: \$29,926
Management and General: \$78,556

Total Assets: \$1,303,042

Current Liabilities: \$629,086
Total Net Assets: \$673,956

59% of our program funds were given to other organizations as subgrants.



STAY UP TO DATE



DONATE