



ANNUAL REPORT 2024



**Strengthening
Communities**

IN ILLINOIS & BEYOND

Reflecting on 2024

Dear Supporter,

In 2024, Housing Action remained focused on what matters most: making sure every person in every community has a safe, affordable place to call home.

We deepened our roots in Illinois while continuing to collaborate with allies across the country. We **expanded our coalition** to include nearly 200 member organizations, **supported local and statewide policy solutions** to housing instability, and **strengthened the capacity of housing organizations** through training, individual guidance, and national service. We also achieved key policy wins—including securing a historic \$290 million investment in ending homelessness in the state budget.

At the same time, we celebrated milestones, including **10 years of our Housing Action Counseling Network**, which has helped nearly **100,000 households navigate their housing options**. We rebranded and **grew our Housing Action Corps program**, connecting AmeriCorps VISTA members to organizations across Illinois and beyond to help housing counseling organizations do more and do it better.

Even in the face of uncertainty and challenges, our mission has always been clear—and our commitment is unwavering. Together, we will continue to expand housing opportunities and strengthen communities across our state and beyond.

Thank you for being part of this movement.

With gratitude,

Sharon Legenza

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Highlights

ADVOCATE | EDUCATE | STRENGTHEN

Housing Action Illinois focuses our work on:

- **Advocating** for policies and funding that prevent and end homelessness, expand affordable housing opportunities for renters and homeowners, and ensure fair access to housing.
- **Educating** housing nonprofits by providing professional training, resources, and one-on-one guidance.
- **Strengthening** our members and our field by securing resources, fostering collaboration, and creating long-term housing solutions.

IN 2024, HOUSING ACTION ILLINOIS:

SECURED HISTORIC INVESTMENTS TO END HOMELESSNESS

Advocated for robust state funding to prevent and end homelessness. The General Assembly demonstrated a strong commitment to this priority by appropriating \$290.3 million for the HOME Illinois line item. This was a \$90 million increase from last year's budget.

STRENGTHENED HOUSING POLICIES

Shaped implementation of the Illinois Community Reinvestment Act to ensure that financial institutions invest in underserved communities; appointed to a task force focused on reforming Cook County's tax sale process, helping at-risk homeowners keep their properties.

BUILT CAPACITY THROUGH NATIONAL SERVICE

Our AmeriCorps program strengthens communities by placing VISTA members with our coalition's member organizations to expand their impact. In 2024, our VISTA members served 38 organizations in Illinois and beyond, recruited 4,071 volunteers who logged 16,095 hours, and raised \$1M+ in grants and donations.

HELPED HOUSING COUNSELORS SUPPORT COMMUNITIES

Distributed resources and provided guidance for 34 housing agencies across six states, trained hundreds of housing counselors nationwide, and guided 13 agencies through federal monitoring and approval. We celebrated the 10th anniversary of our Housing Action Counseling Network, which has helped nearly 100,000 households navigate their housing options.

ELEVATED LOCAL VOICES

Conducted engagement sessions and published a Cairo Housing Needs Action Plan to guide local solutions in southern Illinois; provided stipends to people with lived experience to inform homeless service coordination through local Continuums of Care.

FOSTERED COLLABORATION & CONNECTION

Brought together nearly 350 housing professionals to spark ideas and drive solutions at our annual Housing Matters Conference.

Board & Staff

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Shalonda Bedenfield-Causey, FHLBank Chicago, Chicago
Paula Bush, North West Housing Partnership, Schaumburg
Bob Campbell, ZION Development Corporation, Rockford
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John S. Herring, Sr., Illinois Network of Centers for Independent Living, Springfield
Kurt Kuyawa, Citizens Bank NA, Chicago—Treasurer
Cornell Lurry, Midland States Bank, Joliet
Horacio Mendez, Woodstock Institute, Chicago
Jackie Newman, Springfield Housing Authority, Springfield
Laura Olvera Yarza, Community Partners for Affordable Housing, Libertyville
Shelly Richardson, Statewide Independent Living Council of Illinois, Springfield
Darsonya Switzer, Dove Inc., Decatur—Co-Chair
Jennifer Taff, DuPage and Chicago South Suburbs Habitat for Humanity, Wheaton
Carl Wolf, Respond Now, Chicago Heights—Co-Chair
Margaret Wooten, Reach CDC, Chicago

STAFF

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Wanda Collins, Capacity Building Specialist
Bibian Cristino, Capacity Building Specialist
Jennifer Pallas, Capacity Building Specialist
James Miller, Capacity Building Associate
Eli Gillespie, Capacity Building AmeriCorps VISTA
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Foluke Akanni, Housing Policy Organizer
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Marissa Diekhoff, National Service Program Associate
Petra D. Rodríguez Everson, National Service Program Associate
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Leah Martin, AmeriCorps VISTA Leader
Patricia McClendon, AmeriCorps VISTA Leader
Jovan Williamson, AmeriCorps VISTA Leader
Kristin Ginger, Manager of Communications & Development
Maria Flores, Development Coordinator
Emma Robinson, Communications & Development VISTA

Members

360 Youth Services, Naperville
Access Living, Chicago
All Chicago Making Homelessness History, Chicago
Alliance to End Homelessness in Suburban Cook County, Hillside
Ameren Illinois, Springfield
Apna Ghar, Chicago
Applegate & Thorne-Thomsen, Chicago
Arab American Family Services, Worth
Association for Individual Development, Elgin
Aurora Area Interfaith Food Pantry, Aurora
BCMW Community Services, Centralia
Bridge Communities, Glen Ellyn
Busey Bank, Champaign
Catholic Charities Diocese of Joliet, Downers Grove
Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Chicago, Chicago
Catholic Urban Programs, East St. Louis
CDBG Operations Corporation, East St. Louis
CEFS Economic Opportunity Corporation, Effingham
Center for Changing Lives, Chicago
Center for Disability and Elder Law, Chicago
Center for Housing & Health (AIDS Foundation Chicago), Chicago
Central Illinois Land Bank Authority, Danville
Centro Romero, Chicago
Champaign County Regional Planning Commission, Urbana
Champaign-Urbana Tenant Union, Champaign
Chicago 400 Alliance, Chicago
Chicago Area Fair Housing Alliance, Chicago
Chicago Coalition for the Homeless, Chicago
Chicago Community Loan Fund, Chicago
Chicago Furniture Bank, Chicago
Chicago Housing Trust, Chicago
Chicago Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights, Chicago
Chicago Rehab Network, Chicago
Chicago Urban League, Chicago
Chinese American Service League, Chicago
Cinnaire, Madison
City of Decatur, Decatur
City of Evanston, Evanston
City of Kankakee Economic & Community Development Agency, Kankakee
City of Rockford, Rockford
City of Urbana, Urbana
CJE SeniorLife, Chicago
Climate Economy Educations, Inc., Makanda
Community & Economic Development Association of Cook County, Chicago
Community Investment Corporation of Decatur, Decatur
Community Partners for Affordable Housing, Highland Park
Community Service Council of Northern Will County, Bolingbrook
Connections for the Homeless, Evanston
Consumer Credit Counseling Services of Northern IL, Woodstock

Cook County Department of Planning and Development, Chicago
Cornerstone Community Development Corp, Ford Heights
CRWorks Inc., Lansing
CSH, Chicago
Cumberland Green Cooperative, St. Charles
Cunningham Township, Urbana
Disability Resource Center, Joliet
Dispute Resolution Institute, Carbondale
Dove, Inc., Decatur
DuPage County ARES, Glendale Heights
DuPage County Continuum of Care, Wheaton
DuPage Habitat for Humanity, Wheaton
DuPagePADS, Wheaton
Economic Growth Corporation, Rock Island
Edwardsville Community Housing Alliance, Edwardsville
Embarras River Basin Agency, Greenup
Erie Neighborhood House, Chicago
Everlasting Word Church, Aurora
Fair Housing Legal Clinic – UIC Law, Chicago
Far South Community Development Corporation, Chicago
Federal Home Loan Bank of Chicago, Chicago
Fortitude Community Outreach, Bourbonnais
Full Circle Communities, Chicago
Garfield Park Community Council, Chicago
Garfield Park Community Development Corporation, Chicago
Genesis Garden, Macomb
Good News in the Neighborhood, Palatine
Good Samaritan Inn, Decatur
Gorman & Company, Oregon
Greater Alton Community Development Corporation, Alton
Grundy County Housing Authority, Morris
H.O.M.E. DuPage, Wheaton
Habitat for Humanity Chicago, Chicago
Habitat for Humanity Lake County, Waukegan
Habitat for Humanity of Champaign County, Champaign
Habitat for Humanity of Northern Fox Valley, Elgin
HANA Center, Chicago
Harris Family Foundation, Chicago
Heart of Illinois United Way, Peoria
Heartland House/Heartland Continuum of Care, Springfield
Helping Elevate You, Sister Inc., Monee
Hesed House, Aurora
HOPE Fair Housing Center, Wheaton
HOPE of East Central Illinois, Charleston
Housing Authority of Champaign County, Champaign
Housing Authority of Cook County, Chicago
Housing Choice Partners of Illinois, Chicago
Housing Forward, Maywood
Housing Opportunities and Maintenance for the Elderly, Chicago

* As of August 2024

Members

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Housing Opportunities for Women, Chicago
Housing Opportunity Development Corporation, Skokie
IFF, Chicago
Illinois Association of Community Action Agencies, Springfield
Illinois Equal Justice Foundation, Chicago
Illinois Housing Council, Chicago
Illinois Network of Centers for Independent Living, Springfield
Illinois Valley Center for Independent Living, Spring Valley
Illinois Valley Economic Development Corporation, Gillespie
IMPACT Center for Independent Living, Alton
Impact for Equity, Chicago
Impact Global Inc., Quincy
Jackson County Housing Authority, Murphysboro
Journeys | The Road Home, Palatine
Justine Petersen, St. Louis
Kankakee County Housing Authority, Kankakee
La Casa Norte, Chicago
Lake County Housing Authority, Grayslake
Latino Policy Forum, Chicago
Law Center for Better Housing, Chicago
Lazarus House, St. Charles
LIFE Center for Independent Living, Bloomington
Little Fannie's Heavenly Housing, Dolton
Mano a Mano Family Resource Center, Round Lake Park
Meraki House of Illinois, Chicago
Mercy Housing Lakefront, Chicago
Metropolitan Family Services | Legal Aid Society, Chicago
Metropolitan Family Services, Chicago
Metropolitan Planning Council, Chicago
Mid Central Community Action, Bloomington
Midland States Bank, Chesterfield
Moline Community Development Corporation, Moline
Moran Center for Youth Advocacy, Evanston
N/NW Suburban Task Force on Supportive Housing, Wheeling
Neighborhood Housing Services of Chicago, Chicago
Neighbors for Affordable Housing, Chicago
Niles Township Government, Niles
North Suburban Legal Aid, Highland Park
North West Housing Partnership, Schaumburg
NI ReACH, Rockford
Northside Community Development Corporation, Chicago
Northwest Center, Chicago
Northwest Christian Community Development Corporation, Rockford
Open Communities, Evanston
PADS Lake County, North Chicago
PADS of Elgin, Elgin
People's Resource Center, Wheaton
Peoria Housing Authority, Peoria
Peoria Opportunities Foundation, Peoria

Phoenix Community Development Services, Peoria
Preservation of Affordable Housing, Chicago
Progress Center for Independent Living, Forest Park
Project NOW, Rock Island
Reach CDC, Chicago
Rebuilding Together Metro Chicago, Chicago
Rebuilding Together Stephenson County, Freeport
Regions Bank, St. Louis
Renaissance Social Services, Inc., Chicago
Respond Now, Chicago Heights
Restoration America, Inc., Crystal Lake
ReVive Center for Housing and Healing, Chicago
Rockford Area Habitat for Humanity, Loves Park
Rockford Housing Authority, Rockford
Sarah's Circle, Chicago
Second Federal / Self-Help Federal Credit Union, Chicago
Share Our Spare, Chicago
South Suburban Housing Center, Homewood
South Suburban PADS, Chicago Heights
Southern Illinois Coalition for the Homeless, Marion
Spanish Coalition for Housing, Chicago
Spanish Community Center, Joliet
Springfield Housing Authority, Springfield
Statewide Independent Living Council of Illinois, Springfield
Supportive Housing Providers Association (SHPA), Springfield
TASC, Inc., Chicago
Territory, Chicago
The Journey Forward, Chicago
The Neighbor Project, Aurora
The Resurrection Project, Chicago
The Salvation Army, Bloomington
Thresholds, Chicago
Thrive Housing NFP, Normal
Together We Cope, Tinley Park
Total Resource Community Development Organization, Chicago
Trinity Services, Chicago Metro
UChicago Harm Reduction Project, Chicago
Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis, Inc., St. Louis
UrbanWorks Architecture, Chicago
Voice of the People in Uptown, Chicago
Western Egyptian Economic Opportunity Council, Inc., Steeleville
Will County Center for Community Concerns, Joliet
Will County Community Development Division, Joliet
Will County Habitat for Humanity, Joliet
WJW Architects, Chicago
Woodstock Institute, Chicago
Xilin Association, Hoffman Estates
YWCA Metropolitan Chicago, Chicago
ZION Development Corporation, Rockford

* As of August 2024

FINANCIALS

Revenue: \$4,360,182

- Government Grants: \$3,071,650
- Foundation Grants: \$568,229
- Corporate Contributions: \$233,670
- Membership Dues: \$45,725
- Other: \$440,908

Expenses: \$4,108,391

- Programs: \$3,881,174
⇒ Subgrants/Stipends: \$2,278,767
Comprised 59% of program expenses
- Fundraising: \$136,926
- Administrative and General: \$90,291

Total Liabilities & Net Assets: \$2,875,686

Total Liabilities: \$1,351,921

Total Net Assets: \$1,523,765

