



**OREGON HOUSING *and*
COMMUNITY SERVICES**

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January 11, 2024

Senator Jama, Chair
Senator Anderson, Vice-Chair
Senate Interim Committee on Housing and Development
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Shelter Operations Funding

Chair Jama, Vice-Chair Anderson, and Members of the Senate Interim Committee on Housing and Development,

We at Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS) are grateful for our continued partnership with the Oregon Legislature in addressing homelessness across our state. Thank you for your time and thoughtful questions during yesterday’s committee meeting. We wanted to provide additional information via written responses:

Senator Sollman: When talking about shelter beds are you also referring to shelter “pods”?

Yes- “bed” first and foremost refers to a place to sleep out of the elements that meets federal habitability standards. This could be in a congregate shelter, non-congregate motel shelter, or a tiny home village that uses “pods”. In this case all “beds” being funded must meet certain contracting requirements, however there are several types of shelter that can— and have— met those requirements including those that do and do not use “pods”.

Senator Sollman: Knowing that the growing population of people experiencing homelessness are aging people and women with children, is there a way to focus on those populations?

Housing stability is a concern for far too many people in our state including Oregon’s rapidly growing aging population and for women and single parents with children. OHCS has worked to use these funds to sustain various emergency shelter models including shelters focused on families, women with children, domestic violence survivors, and individuals with specific medical needs, such as aging people. By supporting these critical shelters across Oregon, we are taking the first necessary step to ensure options and safety for these uniquely vulnerable populations.

Chair Jama: How many of these shelters are in urban and rural communities?

We know that Oregon’s counties are unique and can be simultaneously home to both urban and rural communities. OHCS is working on a more detailed geographic representation of shelters that expressed operations funding needs which we hope to be able to share in the near future. In the meantime, we have included a list of shelters that expressed operations funding needs broken out by Continuum of Care (CoC). This is by no means a comprehensive list of the shelters across Oregon by CoC; this list only



includes shelters that responded to OHCS’ survey or outreach and expressed that they were at imminent risk of closure to due to lack of operations funding:

Continuum of Care (CoC)	Number of Shelters	
	Eligible	Ineligible
Central Oregon CoC (OR-503)	8*	2
Jackson County CoC (OR 502)	6*	2
Lane County CoC (OR-500)	7*	6
Marion/ Polk Counties CoC (OR-504)	11	2
Rural Oregon CoC (OR-505)	25*	6
Portland, Gresham/Multnomah (OR-501)	5*	4
Washington County (OR-506)	1	1
Clackamas County (OR-507)	0	0

*at least one eligible shelter declined operational funding

Vice-Chair Anderson: What is the time period for the fiscal need numbers presented? Is there work on financial sustainability of these shelters long term, will they continue to need state funding?

The financial need data presented today represents the bare minimum to keep emergency shelter doors open through the end of the 2023-25 biennium across the state of Oregon. In order to address the life-threatening experience of unsheltered homelessness for Oregonians the State will need to sustain funding in not only emergency shelter operations, but also in housing-focused services to help Oregonians regain housing and self-sufficiency.

OHCS has heard loud and clear from local communities that despite their best efforts, they simply cannot foot the bill for much-needed shelter beds alone. If Oregon wants to maintain the expanded shelter stock we have invested in, sustained State investments will be required.

Simultaneously, we need to continue to invest in increasing housing supply to create more affordable housing opportunities for Oregonians and decrease the inflow into homelessness. Both strategies are required to ensure that Oregon continues to make progress towards our housing goals.

OHCS looks forward to continuing conversations on our ongoing partnership to build a more sustainable and predictable shelter system across the state. On behalf of OHCS and our local partners, thank you for your leadership.

Sincerely,

Caleb Yant
 Deputy Director
 Oregon Housing and Community Services

