



**For Immediate Release: March 19, 2018
Embargoed Until Noon Eastern Time**

New Grant Helps Advance Oklahoma Initiative to House Youth Facing Homelessness

Tulsa – CSH ([Corporation for Supportive Housing](#)) has selected the [Community Service Council](#) (CSC) to receive a grant of technical assistance to further advance a Pay For Success initiative undertaken by the [Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services \(ODMHSAS\)](#), designed to help youth ages 17-25 transitioning out of foster care or the criminal justice system who lack stable housing, have experienced homelessness or are chronically homeless.

CSH anticipates CSC will receive approximately 12-18 months of technical guidance from its experts as well as the [Nonprofit Finance Fund](#). The goals are for CSC and partners to build capacity and services to actively participate in the ODMHSAS' effort to create supportive housing for transitioning youth through a financing mechanism known as [Pay For Success \(PFS\)](#).

“CSC and other key leaders from across the state have been working on the Oklahoma Opportunity Youth PFS project under the leadership of the ODMHSAS since 2014” said Patrice Pratt, Community Service Council division director for housing and homelessness. “CSC and our partners are honored to be selected for this opportunity. This grant will assist Oklahoma in taking the next step, developing the quality infrastructure and capacity for providers to achieve successful outcomes through the Oklahoma Opportunity Youth PFS project.”

In dozens of studies, supportive housing has repeatedly proven to be an effective intervention that improves housing stability, reduces the use of expensive crisis care (e.g., ERs, detox, hospitalization, nursing homes, child welfare), and improves outcomes even for the most vulnerable individuals, youth and families with complex needs. This makes supportive housing an ideal candidate for achieving the successful results identified within many PFS financing contracts.

“Our aim is to ensure the work underway in Oklahoma has the maximum support network of partners that can deliver much needed services to the youth transitioning from the trauma of out-of-home placement, incarceration and homelessness,” said Deborah De Santis, President and CEO of CSH. “We are seeing such great progress and want to build on the momentum in Oklahoma to ensure these vulnerable youths get off the streets and out of jails and into the safe, stable supportive housing they need.”

The PFS financing approach offers a potential tool to support the creation of supportive housing for transitioning youth, helping them gain housing stability and improving their well-being across a range of outcome areas and measures.

CSH selected CSC due, in part, to the impressive partnerships it has formed to bolster the ongoing development of the supportive housing through ODMHSAS. Local services partners include: The Mental Health Association of Oklahoma, Youth Services of Tulsa, the Homeless Alliance, and Youth Services of Oklahoma County. In addition to ODMHSAS, government agency partners include: Oklahoma Office of Juvenile Affairs, Oklahoma Department of Corrections, Oklahoma Department of Human Services, Oklahoma City Housing Authority, Tulsa Housing Authority, and the Governor's Interagency Council on Homelessness.

"We identified a clear need for capacity and partnership building to complement the work being done by ODMHSAS and CSC has convened a very robust group of providers and agencies," said Stephanie Mercier, CSH Director of Impact Investment. "We believe their emphasis on interagency collaboration and cooperation will capture the services that are needed, and should be tailored, to lift vulnerable, transitioning youth out of insecurity and into stable lives through supportive housing."

The CSH grant to CSC is made possible through an award received from the [Corporation for National and Community Service](#) combined with additional financial support from CSH's philanthropic foundation partners.

###

Media Contacts

CSH: Robert Friant; 212-986-2966, x245; robert.friant@csh.org

CSC: Heather Hope-Hernandez; 918-699-4229; hhope-hernandez@csctulsa.org