



Simpson Housing Services at Riverside Hennepin County, Minnesota *Supportive Housing Integration Model Profiles*



Project Overview: *Scattered-Site Leasing Supportive Housing Model*

Simpson Housing Services provides supportive housing services to 115 families exiting long-term homelessness in Hennepin County, MN. This service provider has established relationships with a number of housing owners to integrate supportive housing into the community. A subset of these SH units are located in various affordable housing developments such as Riverside Plaza, the state's largest housing development, and Elliot Park Apartments, a set of five affordable housing properties in the same neighborhood.

Owner/ Sponsor

Various; Riverside Plaza is owned by Sherman and Associates, Elliot Park Apartments is owned by BDC Management

Property Management

Various

Service Provider

Simpson Housing Services
Department of Mental Health (LACDMH)

Tenant Profile

Simpson Housing Services provides supportive housing to long-term homeless families who are at or below 30% AMI and that are referred by the Hennepin County Shelter Team. In some cases the families move to SH after receiving short-term rental assistance and services from Simpson, but need longer-term assistance to maintain stability. Simpson provides services to assist tenants who have challenges with mental health, substance use, health, and employment, layered onto the challenges of parenting and keeping children engaged in school. Simpson's services to children is unique to many SH programs.

Service Approach

Simpson Housing uses a Harm Reduction and strengths-based approach to its services delivery to target highly vulnerable families experiencing long-term homelessness. Two unique features of their model are the use of family advocates and early childhood specialists. Simpson's philosophy is that serving the whole family improves stabilization. The focus on early childhood intervention helps children at high-risk to receive supports as they ready for Kindergarten. The services for Pre-K through 5th grade focus on connecting parents to schools, literacy supports, and navigating afterschool programs.

Key Features and Innovations:

- Simpson Housing Services has established a scattered site leasing Supportive Housing model through their relationships with a number of property owners in the community.
- Riverside Plaza Apartments is a 1,300-unit affordable housing development near downtown Minneapolis, built in 1971-73. In 2011, the \$132 million property redevelopment of Riverside Plaza incorporated 15 units of supportive housing for long-term homeless families.
- Elliot Park Apartments is a set of five unique buildings on Elliot Avenue in Minneapolis. These low-rise homes and apartments are affordable where all tenants pay no more than 30% of their income toward rent.
- Simpson Housing Services maintains an office on-site at Riverside Plaza, and keeps an off-site office in the neighborhood of Elliot Park Apartments. Both strategies work well to maintain close service provision and coordination with property management.

Integration Strategies

Supportive housing programs work to create a sense of home as quickly as possible with things like furniture and other items to help define it as “home.”

For families exiting homelessness, the best way to achieve integration into the community is to establish and maintain long-term housing tenancy. Families are encouraged and assisted to access services that help them address challenges that impact their housing stability.

Families are also encouraged to grow their networks to connect with schools, community assets and other people who are stably housed.

State agencies in Minnesota are coordinating resources to further the integration of supportive housing units into affordable housing developments.

Financing Information

Capital financing for integrating SH was made available through Minnesota Housing Finance Agency’s (MHFA) affordable housing financing programs including tax exempt bond financing, Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC), and flexible subordinate debt programs. The Qualified Allocation Plan (QAP) which allocates the LIHTC to affordable developments promotes both threshold requirements and scoring priorities to encourage developments to integrate units for extremely low income households and for persons with disabilities. Coordination of MHFA capital funding resources with housing support and service programs provided by the Minnesota Department of Human Services (MDHS) has expanded the number of integrated supportive housing units in the State. Under the Group Residential Homes (GRH) Program, state supplemental funding can be provided for rent and related housing costs for elderly and persons with disabilities living in qualified residences, which may include units set aside in affordable developments. Under the GRH Program the provider, Simpson Services receives funding for housing and services, and forwards the housing rate to the property owner on behalf of the tenant.

About Simpson Housing Services

For over thirty years the Simpson Housing Services programs have housed, supported and advocated for people experiencing homelessness. The programs serving the homeless include advocacy, direct services, shelter housing, permanent supportive housing rent subsidies and education programs for children.

About CSH

The CSH Supportive Housing Integration Model Profiles and Toolkit are designed to help communities understand opportunities for incorporating supportive housing units within the broader housing market and community. CSH transforms how communities use housing solutions to improve the lives of the most vulnerable people. We offer capital, expertise, information and innovation that allow our partners to use supportive housing to achieve stability, strength and success for the people in most need. CSH blends over 20 years of experience and dedication with a practical and entrepreneurial spirit, making us the source for housing solutions. Visit csh.org to learn how CSH has and can make a difference where you live.