

December 1, 2020

## HOPWA In Focus: World AIDS Day 2020

Greetings HOPWA Grantees, Project Sponsors, and Friends,

Amid a global pandemic, the Office of HIV/AIDS Housing (OHH) will pause on December 1, 2020 for World AIDS Day to remember, reflect, and renew. We remember our friends, neighbors, and loved ones that we have lost to the HIV/AIDS epidemic. We reflect on the hard work done this year and years past to support those living with HIV and prevent new HIV infections. Even under the heavy weight of COVID-19, we renew our efforts in the fight to end the HIV/AIDS epidemic.



The 2020 Federal World AIDS Day theme is, “Ending the Epidemic: Resilience and Impact.” The theme reflects the U.S. government’s continued commitment to ending the HIV/AIDS epidemic globally and in the United States. The theme also highlights the dual importance of delivering quality, people-centered HIV prevention and impactful treatment services, along with strengthening the capacity and resilience of communities and health systems to address HIV and other health challenges.

Housing remains a critical component of health, particularly for those living with HIV/AIDS, and we applaud the ongoing work to provide supportive housing opportunities to our nation’s most vulnerable families. We have seen the resiliency and impact HOPWA grantees and project sponsors have had in communities across the nation. HOPWA housing and service providers have shifted program operations from in-person to virtual settings and continue to ensure community members living with HIV have access to safe and stable housing to weather the COVID-19 pandemic. HOPWA providers have connected and assisted new families impacted by the pandemic and continue to bring critical housing and services to their community while personally encountering hardships associated with the pandemic.

Through the COVID-19 pandemic, OHH has worked to provide extra flexibilities for HOPWA grantees and project sponsors to quickly and effectively address the needs of persons living with HIV and their families. Resources and guidance associated with COVID-19 for HOPWA grantees are continually being updated. To access these resources and guidance, please visit the [HOPWA COVID-19 Grantee Guidance page](#).

OHH also continues to work on ending the HIV/AIDS epidemic by elevating housing as a structural intervention. In coordination with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), OHH has continued to collaborate with federal partners on the [Ending the HIV Epidemic: A Plan for America initiative \(EHE\)](#). This year, OHH has created and developed the EHE-HOPWA Resource Tool for EHE Phase 1 Jurisdictions and their HOPWA grantee counterparts. OHH has presented on numerous webinars with HHS’s Office of Infectious Disease and HIV/AIDS Policy (OIDP) involving the EHE-HOPWA Resource Tool and Quarterly Stakeholder sessions. Moving into next year, OHH and OIDP will release a public version of the EHE-HOPWA Resource Tool that will be available on the [AHEAD Dashboard](#) along with the first round of data updates for the tool. OHH looks forward to further collaboration in the EHE Initiative as we progress towards the goal of reducing new HIV infections by 90% in 2030.

OHH will continue to elevate housing as a structural intervention in ending the HIV/AIDS epidemic in the United States. We are renewing our efforts in the fight to end the HIV/AIDS epidemic this World AIDS Day. I hope you will join us and renew your effort to end the HIV/AIDS epidemic in your community.

Sincerely,

*Rita*

Rita Harcrow  
Director, Office of HIV/AIDS Housing