

2010

Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program: Year 1 Summary



Office of Special Needs Assistance Programs
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Introduction

On February 17, 2009, President Barack Obama signed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, which included \$1.5 billion to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for a Homelessness Prevention Fund.

Funding for this three-year program, called the **Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP)**, was dispersed to state and local governments to keep individuals and families in their homes or to help individuals and families who are already homeless find affordable housing. Nationwide, 535 grantees received these funds, which were allocated according to the formula used by HUD's Emergency Shelter Grant. The program requirements are laid out in the [*Notice of Allocations, Application Procedures, and Requirements for Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program Grantees*](#)¹, published on March 19, 2009.

Purpose of HPRP

HPRP has two components: homelessness prevention and rapid re-housing. Homelessness prevention can assist households who would become homeless *but for* this assistance. To qualify for rapid re-housing, a person must be literally homeless according to [*HUD's definition*](#)² and need HPRP to obtain housing. HUD gave a great deal of flexibility to grantees to decide how best to use HPRP to address homelessness in their communities, including choosing how the funds are divided between these activities, targeting specific populations, and deciding how much assistance to provide each household.

Assistance under HPRP is not intended to provide long-term support for individuals and families, nor does it provide mortgage assistance to homeowners facing foreclosure. Rather, HPRP offers short- and medium-term financial assistance and services to those who would otherwise become homeless and those who are already in homeless shelters or living on the street, many due to the nation's economic crisis. Financial assistance can include short- and medium-term rental assistance, security deposits, utility deposits and/or payments, moving cost assistance, and hotel vouchers. Housing relocation and stabilization services can also be provided in the form of case management, housing location services, legal services, and credit repair to help people stay in homes, as well as outreach and engagement.

"Often times, a little bit of financial assistance can make all the difference between finding or keeping a stable home and being forced to live in a shelter or on the streets."

HUD Secretary Shaun Donovan

HPRP marks the first time that such a large amount of federal funds have been available for homelessness prevention at the national level. Homelessness prevention and rapid re-housing are key strategies of [*Opening Doors: the Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness*](#)³, published by the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness on June 22, 2010 under the leadership of HUD Secretary Shaun Donovan. These ideas are also included in the [*Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid*](#)

¹ http://www.hudhre.info/documents/HPRP_NoticeRedline_6_08_09.pdf

² <http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/topics/homelessness/definition>

³ http://www.usich.gov/PDF/OpeningDoors_2010_FSPPreventEndHomeless.pdf

[Transition to Housing Act](#)⁴ (HEARTH Act), signed into law by President Barack Obama on May 20, 2009. Through this legislation, homelessness prevention and rapid re-housing will be eligible activities in the new Emergency Solutions Grant. Lessons from HPRP will advise the development of this and other future programs.

Purpose of This Summary

This report is intended to provide a national summary of the first year of HPRP – from the initial implementation in summer/fall 2009 through September 2010. The data comes from two sources:

1. **Quarterly Performance Reports (QPRs)** provide data on program performance and progress during three-month intervals – October to December 2009, January to March 2010, April to June 2010, and July to September 2010.
2. The first **Annual Performance Report (APR)** also tracks the accomplishment of HPRP grants and evaluates the effectiveness of the program, but includes detailed information on persons and households served. Each grantee was required to submit an APR covering the date HUD signed the grant agreement through September 2010, and will be required to submit one annually for the next two years until the program is completed.

Both of these reports were submitted using HUD's grants management system called *e-snaps*. To view the questions in each report, see the [training guides](#)⁵ available on HUD's Homelessness Resource Exchange. The data used in this summary is self-reported by grantees, as generated by their Homeless Management Information System and reported to HUD in *e-snaps*.

This summary includes the preliminary findings from this data. The information is examined further in the 2010 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress (AHAR).

HUD's Evaluation of HPRP

In addition to the data that grantees report through the QPRs and APRs, HUD's Office of Policy Research and Development (PD&R) has contracted for a formal evaluation of grantees' processes within the program. These lessons will inform the development of the new Emergency Solutions Grant prevention and re-housing services and have implications for the Continuum of Care programs. Anne Fletcher, PD&R Social Science Analyst, said this about the project:

This massive infusion of funding into prevention services comes at a time when the desire and intuitive appeal of implementing prevention programs is great, but the evidence base for such programs is scant. This prevention study will have three primary components: first, a nationally representative survey of all communities implementing a prevention program using HPRP funding; second, 1 to 18 site visits to communities who are implementing innovative prevention programs and intend to continue supporting prevention programs after HPRP funding is exhausted; and third, a set of activities to set the stage for a future empirical study of homelessness prevention. A contract was awarded to The Urban Institute in September 2010 for \$1.2 million to conduct this study.

⁴ <http://www.hudhre.info/hearth>

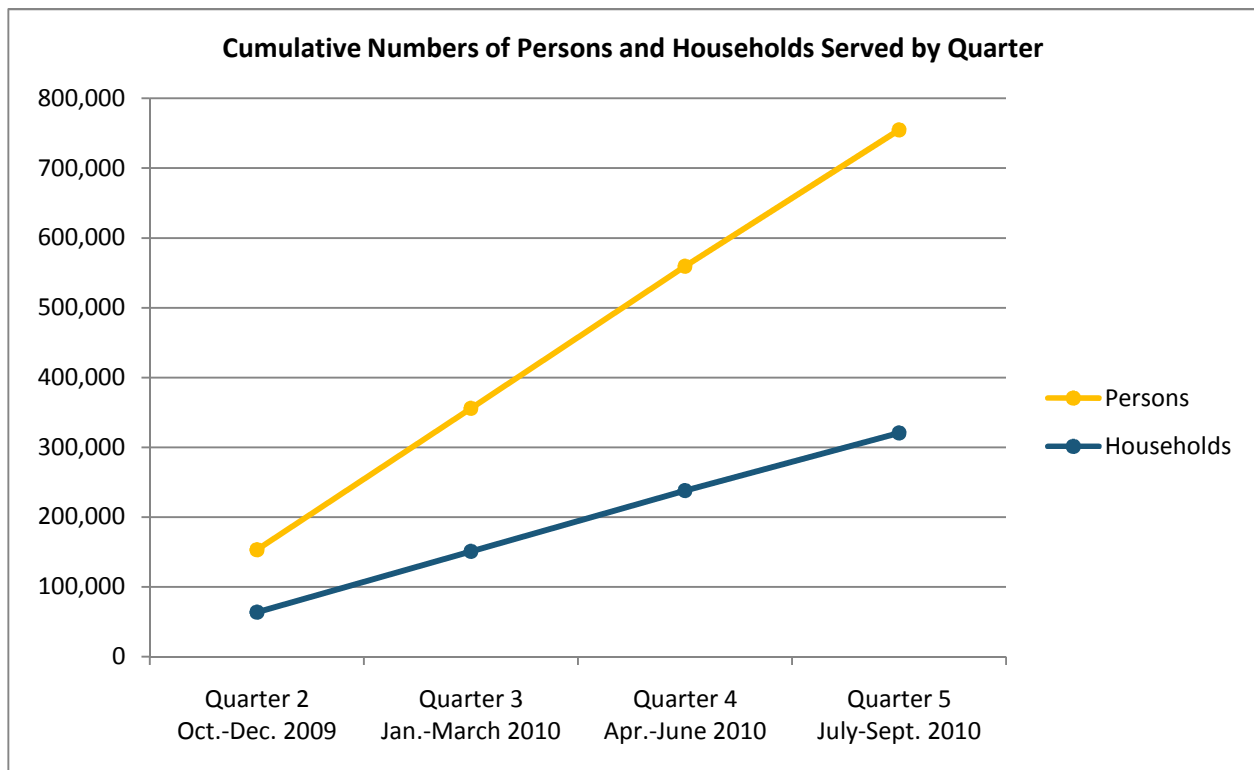
⁵ <http://www.hudhre.info/HPRP/index.cfm?do=viewHPRPData>

Total Assistance

In its first year, HPRP prevented and ended homelessness for approximately 690,000 people, including families and individuals. This section shows the increases in persons served and money spent by quarter.

Number of Persons and Households Served

Because HPRP was a new program, it required planning and start-up time; therefore, many grantees began serving households in January 2010. The graph below demonstrates the increasing number of persons and households served in the program to date. Both began accelerating in July 2010 and continued at a steady, consistent increase. In the first year, approximately 381,000 (55% of people receiving assistance) were adults and 301,000 (44%) were children.



Source: Quarter 2 through 5 QPRs; Quarter 1 is not included due to incomplete data

Total Funds Spent

Of the \$1.5 billion allocated for HPRP, **grantees drew a total of \$482,975,619 (32%) as of October 4, 2010** through the Integrated Disbursement and Information System (IDIS). As of June 13, 2011, grantees have drawn \$985,764,397, or 66% of funds.

Types of Assistance Provided

This section discusses eligible activities and compares homelessness prevention assistance to rapid re-housing services. Local communities may choose how the funds are divided between these two components. Overall, 34 grantees chose to assist persons only through homelessness prevention and 3 only through rapid re-housing. The majority of grantees offered both types of assistance.

Definitions of Services

HPRP has four categories of eligible activities: financial assistance, housing relocation and stabilization services, data collection and evaluation, and administrative costs. The vast majority of funds have been spent on financial assistance and housing relocation and stabilization services. These activities are briefly defined below; all terms are defined in the [Notice of Funding Availability](#)⁶ (pp.13-20).

- *Financial assistance* – Includes short-term (up to 3 months) and medium-term (up to 18 months) rental assistance, security deposits, utility deposits, utility payments, moving cost assistance, and hotel and motel vouchers.
- *Housing relocation and stabilization services* – Includes case management, outreach and engagement, housing search and placement, legal services, and credit repair. Each program participant may receive these services for up to 18 months.

Connecting HUD-VASH to HPRP

The HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) program combines HUD's Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers with Department of Veterans Affairs' case management services. Through this program, more than 22,000 homeless veterans have been permanently housed as of January 2011. HPRP creates an opportunity for complementary assistance not provided by HUD-VASH that is needed for a veteran to obtain housing, such as security deposits and housing relocation services. Using these services in collaboration has helped 3,895 veterans, like this one in Oakland, CA:

A 27-year-old male Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom veteran became homeless following a break-up with his girlfriend. He had limited resources and support in the area. The veteran survived by living in his car. In spite of his homelessness, he managed to continue to attend college. He parked his car in a residential neighborhood during the night, used a local gym to take showers, attended classes in the morning, and completed his schoolwork at the library or in his car. This continued for two years.

Once he was admitted to HUD-VASH program and was approved to receive a voucher, the veteran became concerned about the security deposit required to secure an apartment unit. His case manager informed him about HPRP and he applied for the funds with the help of Catholic Charities. His request was approved and he was able to rent a unit in one of the most desirable locations in Oakland. The veteran has been living at his apartment for six months and now has a place to call his home. He continued to attend college and received his Bachelor's Degree in May 2011.

⁶ http://www.hudhre.info/documents/HPRP_NoticeRedline_6_08_09.pdf

Homelessness Prevention vs. Rapid Re-Housing

Persons served by HPRP received homelessness prevention assistance and/or rapid re-housing assistance. In developing the program, HUD anticipated that the persons receiving each type of assistance would be split evenly. Data in the APRs, however, indicated that of the persons served in the first year, **approximately 78.2% received homelessness prevention assistance and 24.2% received rapid re-housing assistance.** (An estimated 2.4% of persons received both types of assistance.)

Grantees reported the following information in the APR for each type of assistance:

- Of the persons who received *homelessness prevention assistance*, approximately 75.1% received financial assistance and 89.1% received housing relocation and stabilization services.
- Of those who received *rapid re-housing assistance*, 61.1% received financial assistance and 89.1% received housing relocation and stabilization services.

It appears that about the same percentage of those in need of rapid re-housing assistance received housing relocation and stabilization services as those who needed assistance to remain housed (homelessness prevention). However, fewer persons who received rapid re-housing assistance received financial assistance than expected. It may be that for rapid re-housing, grantees were able to pair HPRP services with other housing options, such as the HUD-VASH program, and that a large portion of homelessness prevention assistance went to pay rental and/or utility arrears.

The most common types of assistance provided with HPRP funds were rental assistance and case management. As a whole, approximately 58.4% of persons served received rental assistance. Approximately 77.3% received case management. This overall percentage demonstrates the level of importance programs place on assessing their clients, connecting them to resources, and ensuring continual housing stability.

Unaccompanied Youth

Approximately 0.6% of persons served by HPRP were identified as unaccompanied youth. According to the 2009 AHAR, 1.4% of all people experiencing homelessness are unaccompanied youth. Projects across the country have used HPRP funds to target this population, like this one in Pennsylvania, featured on the National Alliance to End Homelessness' online [HPRP Youth Program Profiles](#)⁷:

Valley Youth House provides prevention and intervention services to abused, neglected, and homeless youth in southeast Pennsylvania. The agency modeled their HPRP grant after HUD's Supportive Housing Program to supply additional beds to homeless and near homeless youth, including those exiting the foster care system. These youth, ranging from 18 to 21 years old, sign a lease to a scattered-site apartment in their own name.

In addition to this financial and housing relocation assistance, each youth receives case management and life skills counseling. Case managers have a caseload limited to 10 youth, who receive regular home visits. Other local agencies and foundation grants fund the case management, bus/train passes, basic furniture, and emergency food.

⁷ http://www.endhomelessness.org/section/solutions/solutions_focus_areas/youth/hprpprofiles

Impact of HPRP

After receiving homeless prevention and rapid re-housing assistance, program participants were most likely to live in permanent housing. This data shows that HPRP has surpassed its initial goal of 70% of all persons served nationally being permanently housed upon exiting the program.

Special Populations

Of the adults served during the first year of HPRP, **roughly 2.2% were veterans**. According to the 2009 AHAR, 13.1% of all people experiencing homelessness are veterans.

Over 23,000 persons were served by victim services providers, mainly domestic violence shelters assisting people to move to permanent housing. Of these persons, 76.5% were families with children.

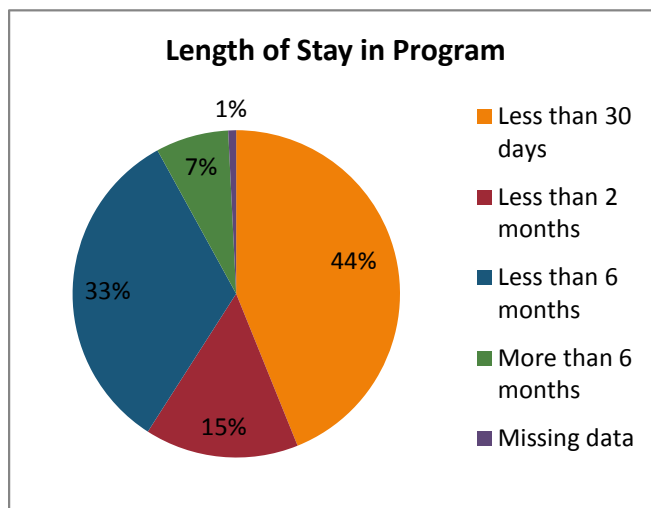
Length of Assistance

While HPRP assistance can be provided for up to 18 months, it is up to grantees to provide the assistance based on each household's needs. All households must be reassessed for eligibility every 3 months in the program.

Overall, grantees report that 43.9% of program participants received services for less than 30 days. 59% exited the program within 2 months. Approximately 92% exited within 6 months. HUD had anticipated that clients would be enrolled in the program for longer periods. This may indicate that a large percentage may have only needed assistance with rental arrears, security deposits, or one month's rent.

Grantees reported the following information in the APR for each type of assistance:

- Of the persons who received *homelessness prevention assistance*, approximately 40.3% of households stayed in the program for less than 30 days. 56.6% exited the program within 2 months. Approximately 91.6% exited within 6 months.
- Of those who received *rapid re-housing assistance*, 55.1% of households stayed in the program for less than 30 days. 67.4% exited the program within 2 months, and 93% within 6 months.



It seems contrary to expectations to see shorter duration of assistance for rapid re-housing than for prevention assistance. This could be due to many programs requiring income or employment before assisting households with HPRP, which could mean that the households assisted are newly homeless and only need a short period of assistance to get re-established because they have some income. Or, if grantees are pairing rapid re-housing assistance with other subsidies—which the financial data supports—then it could be that many are using HPRP as a bridge until that subsidy becomes available and shorter lengths of stay would be expected.

Housing Status at Entry and Exit

For all persons leaving the program, grantees report that 22% of households were homeless upon entry into HPRP. An additional 50.6% were imminently losing their housing and 23.9% were unstably housed. 3.4% were classified as stably housed, which may signify a reporting error or a need for more training on the program. This is generally consistent with the percentages of persons served by rapid re-housing and homelessness prevention activities, though some homeless persons seem to have been reported as receiving homelessness prevention assistance.

Of those who were literally homeless at entry, 64.2% were stably housed at exit. 6% had missing data, indicating a need for more attention to entering this data element in HMIS. The rest (approximately 30%) exited to an unstable housing situation or literal homelessness. For those who were either imminently losing their housing or unstably housed, about 52.2% exited to stable housing.

Destinations

Overall, approximately 87.9% of program participants exited to permanent housing. (For those whose destination is known, it is estimated 94% exited to permanent housing.) Of those who received homelessness prevention assistance, 88.8% of households lived in permanent housing when exiting the program. Of those who received rapid re-housing assistance, 84.1% of households lived in permanent housing when exiting the program. The data does not differ largely between those who stayed in the program for less than or more than 90 days.

The table below shows the approximate percentage of households who exited the program to each destination by the type of assistance they received and how long they stayed in the program.

Destination of Households who Exited the Program by Type and Length of Assistance				
	Homelessness Prevention Assistance		Rapid Re-Housing Assistance	
	Before or at 90 Days	After 90 Days	Before or at 90 Days	After 90 Days
Permanent Destinations				
Owned by client	3.2%	2.1%	0.4%	0.7%
Rented by client	83.3%	84.7%	81.6%	73.8%
HUD-VASH recipient	1.2%	0.7%	1.6%	1.4%
Permanent Supportive Housing	0.3%	0.2%	0.7%	1.8%
Living with family or friends permanently	1.0%	1.2%	1.1%	2.2%
Subtotal	90.0%	88.9%	85.5%	79.8%
Temporary Destinations				
	3.1%	2.3%	6.9%	6.4%
Institutional Settings				
	0.7%	0.3%	0.6%	1.2%
Other/Unknown				
	7.4%	8.6%	7.1%	12.6%

Source: 2010 APRs. Note: *Permanent Supportive Housing* refers to HUD's Continuum of Care programs.

At this time, it is not clear why there is little difference in outcomes between those who stayed in the program for less than 90 days and those that stayed longer. There is also no current explanation for the decreases in percentage of permanent destinations for those who received rapid re-housing assistance for more than 90 days. HUD is hopeful that the results of the HPRP evaluation (p. 4) will provide some insight to these questions.

Moving Forward

The successes included in this summary are the work of HUD’s grantees and subgrantees, which have used this program to prevent and end homelessness in communities across the country. This summary also presents some areas of improvement for the remainder of the program—areas that we are looking to for valuable lessons.

Some of these preliminary findings are surprising. The 2010 AHAR explores the data in detail and provides further insight as to how the program has been used to make an impact on homelessness. HUD’s evaluation of HPRP (p. 4) will also add a different perspective to the story to inform HUD’s policies and future empirical study on homelessness prevention.

“HPRP funding provided the County of Orange with a unique opportunity to launch an innovative program designed to connect homeless individuals with permanent housing. This new program has proven to be a practical and cost saving measure that is ending homelessness for many hard to serve individuals in our community.”

*Kelly Lupro, HPRP Grantee,
Orange County, CA*

At this time, one-third of the allocated funds have not yet been drawn down. It is not too late to adjust local programs to better target the populations HPRP can serve. **HUD strongly encourages grantees to be strategic with the remaining HPRP funds.** This summary enables grantees to compare local performance outcomes to those of the nation to advise local decisions.

As HUD learns from this data to inform the implementation of the HEARTH Act, the hope is that grantees will learn from their own data to improve their programs and better serve their clients.

Visit Us Online

- <http://www.hudhre.info/hprp>
- <http://www.hud.gov/homeless>
- <http://www.recovery.gov>
- <http://www.hud.gov/recovery>

Client Success Story

A service provider in Broward County, Florida received this letter from a former client:

I am writing to express my deepest gratitude for the financial support that I received from HPRP. I am also grateful to my case manager for her professional assistance with the program.

Last year was quite a challenging year for me. In the spring, I lost my job of almost 7 years. My unemployment led to me losing my apartment. In the midst of that very difficult time my car ended up needing a \$1,700 repair. I felt like my world was crashing in!

Because of the economy, many hard-working Americans have fallen on extremely hard times. The HPRP program is a wonderful program for people that need a bit of assistance to get back on track. Again, I want to express my sincere gratitude and wish you all much success as you continue to assist citizens in need!