



SUPPORTIVE HOUSING PROVIDERS ASSOCIATION

Working Together, We Can Accomplish Anything

CALL TO

ACTION



SUPPORTIVE HOUSING PROVIDERS ASSOCIATION

Working Together, We Can Accomplish Anything

SHPA requests its members and supporters join us in advocacy to increase Supportive Housing line items in the state budget.

From Cairo to Chicago, and in communities throughout the state, Illinois Supportive Housing Providers are responding to increased demand for supportive services. Illinois Supportive Housing Providers respectfully request funding increase for program expansion in FY2022.

As we continue to respond to the social and economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic, Supportive Housing Providers are working to meet increased demand for services from Illinoisans who, but for our support, would be homeless and taxing the resources of first responders and local government agencies. We respectfully urge lawmakers to appropriate an additional \$3.054 million for a total appropriation of \$45 million to continue existing supportive housing services while also providing services to residents at 436 new units coming on line in the fiscal year.

Illinois Lawmakers and their staff are trying to balance their ongoing official obligations with the considerable community needs associated with the COVID-19 crisis, while simultaneously attempting to keep themselves and their families healthy and safe. During this pandemic, many lawmakers and their staff have been conducting their work remotely. The act of connecting with a lawmaker or his/her staff has necessarily become far more challenging, but lawmakers and their staff are, in our experience, doing their best under the circumstances to continue to be responsive to constituent outreach.

Please join us in advocating by outreaching to the state lawmakers and raising awareness!

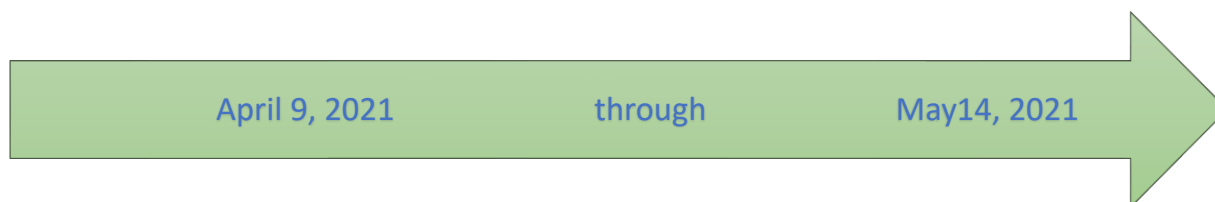
Working together, we can accomplish anything!



SHPA’s Action Toolkit

This toolkit provides SHPA’s members and supporters information on joining SHPA’s work to increase, preserve, and protect Supportive Housing line items in the state budget. Our goal is to successfully advocate for an increase in state appropriations so that Supportive Housing line items are appropriated \$45 million in FY2022. This toolkit provides information on these action opportunities: SHPA’s Call In Days, Setting Up a Virtual Meeting with Lawmakers, Lawmaker Awareness and Advocacy Letter Campaign, and Social Media Awareness using #ILSupportiveHousing.

SHPA has prepared messaging materials available at SHPA-IL.org. These resources are great to share with Lawmakers.



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Our Budget Ask

We are respectfully asking the lawmakers to appropriate \$45 million for supportive housing services as part of the FY 2022 budget.

- This funding, which represents an increase relative to the FY 2021 appropriation of \$3.054 million, is necessary to sustain current services, address cost increases associated with the pandemic, and provide supportive services for individuals residing in 436 new units of supportive housing that will come online in the next fiscal year – new units that will help us ensure health and safety for more Illinoisans.

Our Message

New data demonstrates the increased need for Supportive Housing- even before the pandemic. Here is why Illinois needs to increase its investment in Supportive Housing:

- 10,431 Illinoisans are Homeless Tonight- 20% are experiencing chronic homelessness.
- Illinois had the 5th highest increase in the rate chronic homelessness in the nation.
- 17,684 Supportive Housing beds are currently dedicated to Illinoisans who have experienced homelessness.
- 40,749 Additional Illinoisans are in need of Supportive Housing now- 47.5% have a disabling condition.
- 15% Increase in demand for Supportive Housing Services reported to Illinois Department of Human Services in 2020
- 8X more likely that Black/African Americans will experience homelessness in Illinois.

Supportive housing can end homelessness, stop unnecessary institutionalization, build communities, and strengthen Illinois.

Supportive Housing is innovative, evidence-based, person-centered, and cost-effective. It connects affordable housing and supportive services to Illinoisans who need them.

Supportive housing improves lives of Illinoisans and reduces demands on local 1st responders, saving taxpayer's dollars, wrapping person-led supportive services around affordable housing.

Supportive housing is an equitable response to systemic racism.

Housing is health care. Supportive housing provides the platform for the delivery of services that lead to improved health and stability.

Illinoisans not able to access supportive housing services are more likely to reside in nursing homes or state institutions, alternatives that are far more expensive for Illinois taxpayers, or they are experiencing homelessness. Homelessness is expensive and stresses the resources of local emergency rooms, police, and other first responders and jails, increasing costs for local taxpayers.



Telling Your Local Story

It is very important to lift up the amazing work SHPA's members have been doing in their communities, the impact of COVID-19 in their work and on those they serve, and the need for increased state funding. SHPA's members serve Illinoisans who are very vulnerable to COVID-19. SHPA's members work has literally saved lives and lessened the spread of COVID-19. This is on top of your daily work that helps end homelessness and stop unnecessary institutionalization in Illinois.

There is no story more local than that of a person whose life experiences and conditions have led them to need supportive housing. Encourage residents to share their stories too. Include resident advocates in meetings and help empower them to raise their voice through sharing their stories too.

Helping lawmakers understand that supportive housing is a need in every community in Illinois is critical, but helping lawmakers understand supportive housing is a need of their constituents in the communities they serve will be the most impactful.

For more information about local supportive housing resources, please visit our supportive housing map at : [Supportive Housing Map](#) on www.shpa-il.org .

Identifying My Lawmakers

Direction:

- Identify the state representative and senator who represent the location of your supportive housing agency. If you're not sure who they are, contact SHPA's Merridith Montgomery at (217) 321-2476 ext. 4 or m.montgomery@shpa-il.org.

Find your legislators' contact information by looking up your agency's address or your address at:

<https://www.elections.il.gov/ElectionOperations/DistrictLocator/AddressFinder.aspx>

- Please, note the contact information for BOTH your senator and representative's **district** and **Springfield** offices.
- Please check to see if your state Representative is a member of the House Appropriations-Human Services Committee, or if your state Senator is a member of the Senate Appropriations-Human Services Subcommittee. If one or both of your local lawmakers belong to the committee/s, then please make a note of this when you are engaging with the lawmaker or his/her assistant.
 - ***These committee members are primarily responsible for crafting the state budget for supportive housing services. We want to let them know that we appreciate their hard work and consideration of the state's human services community – particularly in this extraordinarily difficult time.***



Your lawmakers:

Representative Name:	
District Office Address:	
District Office Phone Number:	
Springfield Office Address:	
Springfield Office Phone Number:	
Committee(s):	

Notes:

Senator Name:	
District Office Address:	
District Office Phone Number:	
Springfield Office Address:	
Springfield Office Phone Number:	
Committee(s):	

Notes:



Call In Days

A Call In Day is a day of action. SHPA is asking its members and supporters to call Illinois Lawmakers and share the need to preserve and protect Supportive Housing during the state's financial uncertainty.

Please, call your Lawmakers on Fridays- starting April 9, 2021!

Direction:

Call both your senator and representative's **district** office 1st and then, the Springfield office.

It is likely you will speak to a legislative assistant or need to leave a recorded message:

- Tell them your name and that you are a constituent.
- Say you're requesting a call with the senator or representative to discuss the importance of funding for supportive housing.
- If you leave a message, be sure to include your phone number and respectfully request a return call.

Navigating a Conversation with a Lawmaker

- Lawmakers deal with dozens of major policy issues and hundreds of competing interests. Any lawmaker you speak with could be short on time and simultaneously focused on many different matters.
- A lawmaker may also direct his or her staff to return your call and collect your points on the lawmaker's behalf.
- Note the big picture: we're people working together, across the state, to preserve, protect and expand supportive housing.
- But remember: "All politics are local." Lawmakers are chiefly concerned with how state policy affects the people who live in their own districts. To the degree possible, emphasize the local implications of any reduction in state funding for supportive housing services.
- If the lawmaker or staff member wishes to direct the conversation, follow his/her lead. Legislators and staff have different styles; some might prefer to do the talking and ask questions, while others may prefer that you do most of the speaking while they listen.

At the Close of the Conversation, Thank the Lawmaker

- Respectfully encourage the lawmaker to work with supportive housing providers to protect continued, necessary funding for supportive housing (and make note of his/her response).
- Thank the lawmaker for his/her time and tell him/her that you look forward to following up over the course of the fiscal year.



Call In Day Script

Once on the phone with a lawmaker or the lawmaker's staff, introduce yourself, share the name of your agency and where it is located.

- Hello! My name is (Frist Name, Last Name) and I am a constituent/work in the district of (Legislator's Name).
 - Supportive Housing Provider: Provide a brief about your agency and its supportive housing programs: State the number of staff at your agency and the number of individuals served
 - Supportive Housing Resident: Share a few sentences about your experience, the services, and the impacts of supportive housing on your life.
- I am calling you because it is important that our state preserves, protects and expands supportive housing.
- Illinois supportive housing providers are on the front line of fighting the spread of COVID-19 among this state's most vulnerable citizens. We serve men, women and children who, but for our services, could be homeless and at much higher risk of contracting and spreading the virus.
- **I respectfully ask the lawmaker to appropriate \$45 million for supportive housing services as part of the FY 2022 budget.**
- This funding, which represents an increase relative to the FY 2021 appropriation of \$3.054 million, is necessary to sustain current services, address cost increases associated with the pandemic, and provide supportive services for individuals residing in 436 new units of supportive housing that will come online in the next fiscal year – new units that will help us ensure health and safety for more Illinoisans.
- Any reduction in appropriated funding would lead to increased homelessness and a greater burden for local government. Community service agencies would be forced to part with staff, and could in some cases shut down entirely, and it would take years to rebuild this service infrastructure. Most importantly, it will put the lives of vulnerable Illinoisans at risk – severely undermining the state's effort to protect the health and safety of residents.
- Especially during this critical time, supportive housing – and residents it serves – depend on continued and stable funding from the state.



Setting Up a Meeting: Lawmaker Engagement

Many lawmakers have been willing to meet virtually this session. These meetings are both efficient and impactful. Please, outreach to lawmaker starting April 9, 2021 to request a virtual meeting to take place no later than May 5, 2021. You may need to call the office several times and will likely speak to the lawmaker's team to set up the meeting. Do not get discouraged. The latter part of the legislative session is extremely busy.

Direction:

- Call the district office first.
- If you speak to someone, simply say:

My name is (First Name, Last Name), I am from (your agency) and we are the lawmaker's constituents. I would like to schedule a 30-minute virtual meeting with the lawmaker to discuss Supportive Housing needs in their district and throughout Illinois. I also would like to discuss the FY22 State Budget. Can we please schedule a meeting in April?

- If no one answers, leave this message, and include your contact information.
- Sometimes, you will be directed to email the lawmaker.

Below is a sample email:

Subject Line: Requesting a constituent meeting on supportive housing.

Hello!

Thank you for helping us connect with (Title) (Lawmaker's Last Name)!

We are requesting a 30-minute virtual meeting. Hopefully, we can meet soon. Our team is available to meet between (date) and (date).

(name of agency) provides supportive housing and homeless services to the constituents of (Title) (Lawmaker's Last Name)'s district. We would like to talk about supportive housing, the work happening in the (Lawmaker's district number) district and discuss the needs of providers and those they serve- especially during this critical time.

Please, allow me to be the primary contact to schedule this meeting. I can be reached at (your email) or by phone (your direct number).

Thank you so much!

Sincerely,
Name

The SHPA team would love to be apart of these meeting.

We can also help with the video conference platform.

Please, reach out to Merridith Montgomery at m.montgomery@shpa-il.org to set this up.



Sample Meeting Agenda

Agenda:

1. Introductions

Everyone should briefly share their name, agency, and 1 or 2 sentences about their involvement on the issues of homelessness and supportive housing. Mention any relationships you already have directly with the legislator of any of their acquaintances.

2. Purpose of Meeting

To educate the legislator on the local and state impact of our policy priorities and to build relationships that improve access to and increase resources for Supportive Housing and Homeless Services. We are specifically asking the legislator to support these issues and become a champion of our issues.

a. Policy Priorities

Progress being made on issues of homelessness, the importance of supportive housing, and how we can work together to advance our progress.

b. Local Impact

The impact of homelessness and supportive housing in your community: community wide successes, and local data.

c. Constituent's Lived Experience

The impact of homelessness and supportive housing in your community: personal stories

3. Thank the Legislator

a specific thank you relating to them

4. The Ask

a specific request about the policy priorities

5. Closing

Summarize anything that either you or the legislator's team committed to. Express next steps. Identify who you should follow up with. Invite them to visit a local program the next time they are home.

Remember, meetings with legislators and/or their teams can be intimidating. Advocacy is the active support of an idea or cause. You are an expert. You are champion of ending homelessness and the importance of supportive housing. You believe in helping our neighbors obtain and maintain housing stability so they can pursue their goals.



Letters to Legislators: Lawmaker Awareness and Advocacy Letter Campaign

Please, continue these conversations by sending letters to your legislators from April 9, 2021 through April 23, 2021.

Direction:

- These tools can be used as a template for drafting your message to lawmakers.
- Please personalize all sections in yellow.
- Please send your communications to both your state representative and state senator.
- Use their District Office Address for this correspondence.



Supportive Housing Provider Template

[Please use your agency's letterhead/logo]

[Date]

Honorable [First] [Initial] [Last]

Address 1

Address 2

City, IL Zip

Dear [Choose one title as appropriate: Representative or Senator or Leader or Speaker or President] [Last Name]:

Illinois supportive housing providers are on the front line of fighting the spread of COVID-19 among this state's most vulnerable citizens. We serve men, women, and children who, but for our services, could be homeless and at much higher risk of contracting and spreading the virus.

(PERSONALIZE YOUR INTRODUCTION: COMMUNITIES AND NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS SERVED)

Illinois supportive housing providers are grateful for Gov. J.B. Pritzker's proposed budget of \$41.956 million for supportive housing services in FY 2022. But as we continue to respond to the social and economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic, supportive housing providers are working to meet increased demand for services from individuals who, but for our support, would be homeless and taxing the resources of first responders and local government agencies.

Unmet need for our services is constant; we operate at or near capacity. In the coming fiscal year, providers across Illinois are preparing to offer services to the residents of 436 new units coming on line.

Supportive housing is affordable housing paired with wrap-around, person-centered supportive services. We serve 17,684 adults and youth statewide. To maintain existing services without interruption, while expanding to address this portion of the state's unmet need, Illinois supportive housing providers are seeking an appropriation of \$45 million (the homeless services and mental health services lines combined). This would represent an increase, relative to the FY 2021 appropriation, of \$3.054.

Over the last year, our programs adapted to the unprecedented challenge posed by the pandemic, quickly shifting our service models and meeting increased needs while losing resources, to ensure services reach vulnerable populations throughout the crisis. The vast majority of supportive housing residents are Black/African American, a population significantly and disproportionately impacted by COVID-19.

(BRIEFLY RECITE YOUR AGENCY AND COMMUNITY EXPERIENCE)

We appreciate the state's ongoing budgetary challenges. But any reduction in state funding for supportive housing services will result in reduced services and, as a consequence, an increased risk that



these individuals return to homelessness, require emergency services and/or hospitalization, spread COVID-19 to others, suffer serious illness and possibly also death. This will severely undermine the state's effort to protect the health and safety of vulnerable Illinoisans.

We respectfully urge your support for the funds necessary for supportive housing providers to stay the course and, in the coming fiscal year, reach even more men, women and children who require supportive housing services. Additional state funds for services will help us protect more people at risk of homelessness and/or with a physical or intellectual disability, bolster the state's effort to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, and save lives.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. We would be glad to answer any questions you or your staff may have.

Sincerely,

Please Include Your Signature

Name

Organization

Address

Contact



Supportive Housing Resident Template

[Date]

Honorable [First] [Initial] [Last]

Address 1

Address 2

City, IL Zip

Dear [Choose one title as appropriate: Representative or Senator or Leader or Speaker or President] [Last Name]:

Illinois supportive housing providers are working to end homelessness, promote public health and safety, and improve quality of life for men, women and children across Illinois. Supportive housing services also save taxpayer money by preventing unnecessary institutionalization and reducing the burden on local first responders.

Very briefly describe your own experience with supportive housing:

- What was your life like before supportive housing?
- What is life like now that you have the benefit of supportive housing?
 - Where do you live?
 - Are you more productive?
 - Are you relatively safe and healthy?
- What would become of your life if Illinois lawmakers reduced funding for supportive housing services?

Unmet need for supportive housing services is constant. In the next fiscal year, Illinois supportive housing providers are preparing to offer services to the residents of 436 new units coming on line. **Please join Illinois supportive housing providers and residents in advocating for an appropriation of \$45 million (the homeless services and mental health services lines combined) in FY 2022.** This would represent an increase, relative to the FY 2021 appropriation, of \$3.054 – a sum that is necessary to continue the existing services while reaching even more people in need.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please feel free to contact the Supportive Housing Providers Association of Illinois (SHPA) at (217) 321-2476 for more information.

Sincerely,

[Please Include Your Signature]



Phone number
Email address]



Social Media

Help SHPA bring awareness to all the amazing work being done in our field- especially during these unprecedented times. We are asking that you share your stories on social media, using the hashtag #ILSupportiveHousing.

#ilsupportivehousing

People are posting about this

Don't forget to like SHPA on Facebook and tag us too!



<http://www.facebook.com/shpail>

Examples of Posts include:

Support Supportive Housing! Over 26,000 Illinoisians rely on Supportive Housing.
#ILSupportiveHousing

Supportive housing connects affordable housing and supportive services to Illinoisans who need them. #ILSupportiveHousing

We helped 150 households stay safely housed during the pandemic and helped them received services they need! #ILSupportiveHousing

Our staff have been working hard- making sure our 150 supportive housing residents are safe this year! #ILSupportiveHousing

Supportive Housing changed my life! #ILSupportiveHousing

Social Media Images are available on page 17 of this toolkit.



Advocacy Feedback

SHPA tracks outreach to lawmakers on an ongoing basis. We are constantly evaluating and adjusting our approach based on reports from residents and staff, so your comments are very important and help us to do a better job.

Please, let us know how you participated in our Call to Action:

Survey Link
https://us18.list-manage.com/survey?u=9d985a7e25453fbb60cd5f50b&id=c1a47672b0

Please report, by email or phone, the highlights of your outreach to Merridith Montgomery at 217-321-2476 ext. 4 or m.montgomery@shpa-il.org.

Advocacy Debrief Call

Join your fellow advocates on SHPA's weekly Advocacy Debrief Call. This call will take place on the following Fridays at 9:00am:

April 16, 2021

April 23, 2021

April 30, 2021

May 7, 2021

May 14, 2021

Spring Into Action: Advocacy Debrief Call In Information

Please join my meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone.

<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/614261085>

You can also dial in using your phone.

United States: [+1 \(872\) 240-3212](tel:+18722403212)

Access Code: 614-261-085

New to GoToMeeting? Get the app now and be ready when your first meeting starts:

<https://global.gotomeeting.com/install/614261085>



Social Media Images

10,431 Illinoisians are Homeless Tonight - 20% are experiencing chronic homelessness	17,684 Supportive Housing beds are currently dedicated to Illinoisians who have experienced homelessness
40,749 Additional Illinoisians are in need of Supportive Housing now - 47.5% have a disabling condition	15% Increase in demand for Supportive Housing Services reported to Illinois Department of Human Services in 2020

Spring Into Action

Support Supportive Housing
#ILSupportiveHousing

Housing *Services*
Funding *People* *Advocacy*
Policy

Working together, we can accomplish anything

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#ILSupportiveHousing




10,431 Illinoisians are Homeless Tonight- 20% are experiencing chronic homelessness

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Illinois had 5th highest increase of the rate chronic homelessness in the nation

Support Supportive Housing #ILSupportiveHousing



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17,684 Supportive Housing beds are currently dedicated to Illinoisians who have experienced homelessness

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40,749 Additional Illinoisians are in need of Supportive Housing now - 47.5% have a disabling condition

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15% Increase in demand for Supportive Housing Services reported to Illinois Department of Human Services in 2020

Support Supportive Housing #ILSupportiveHousing



SUPPORTIVE HOUSING PROVIDERS ASSOCIATION
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8X more likely that Black/African Americans will experience homelessness in Illinois

Support Supportive Housing #ILSupportiveHousing



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