



SUPPORTIVE HOUSING PROVIDERS ASSOCIATION

Working Together, We Can Accomplish Anything



Supportive Housing is powerful- it can stop unnecessary institutionalization, end homelessness, build communities, and strengthen Illinois! Support supportive housing by connecting with Illinois Law Makers in February- so our collective story can find its champions and together, we can expand supportive housing in Illinois!

Illinois Supportive Housing Providers respectfully request funding increase for program expansion in FY2023. ***Please join us in advocating by outreaching to the state lawmakers and raising awareness!***

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 for individuals who, but for our support, would be homeless or institutionalized, and facing steep barriers to housing, health and behavioral healthcare, and human services. Instead, they'd rely on hospital emergency rooms, jails, and prisons to meet their immediate needs. We respectfully urge lawmakers to appropriate an additional \$5.1 million — for a total appropriation of \$46.9 million. The request includes an allocation of \$3.0 million to provide services to the residents of 875 new units coming online in the next fiscal year- which doubles the units added in FY22. Also, we request \$2.1 million, (5% cost-of-living) increase to support existing grants as providers combat the employment crisis. Providers have not received a cost-of-living increase in 4 years and providers face serious staffing challenges.

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!

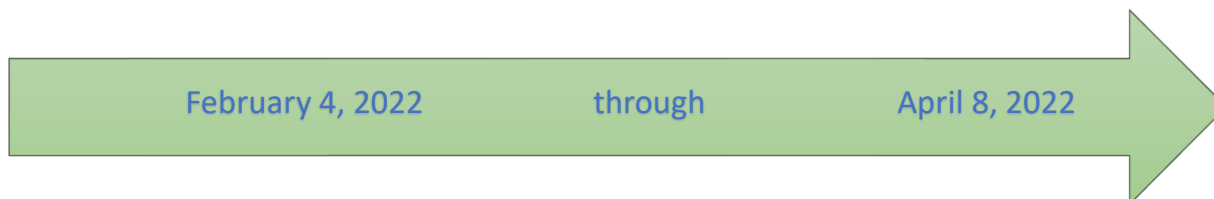
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SHPA’s Action Toolkit

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 \$46.9 million in FY2023. 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.



SHPA’s Action Tools

Overview	3
Our Asks	3
Our Message	4
Telling your Local Story	5
Identifying My Lawmakers	5
Calling Your Lawmakers	7
Call In Day Script	8
Setting Up a Meeting: Lawmaker Engagement	9
Sample Meeting Agenda	10
Letters to Legislators: Lawmaker Awareness and Advocacy Letter Campaign	11
Supportive Housing Provider Template	12
Supportive Housing Resident Template	14
Social Media	15
Advocacy Feedback	16
Advocacy Support Calls	16
Supportive Housing Forum	17



Overview

This legislative session, the Supportive Housing Providers Association will engage the Illinois General Assembly (ILGA) Members about two specific issues.

Our primary ask is that ILGA support supportive housing through the FY23 Illinois General Revenue Budget. This supports the annual work of supportive housing providers. Also, DHS was appropriated supportive housing funding from the American Rescue Plan in FY22. This funding is expected to be spent during three-year period and therefore will need to be reappropriated annually until spent.

Our secondary ask is that ILGA supports Improving Homeless Response and Expanding Supportive Housing in Illinois through emergency relief funding. Our recommendation includes a holistic scope of need and four strategies that will help end homelessness in Illinois. These strategies can be scaled back based on funding availability.

Our Primary Ask- Our Budget Ask

We are respectfully asking the lawmakers to appropriate \$46.9 million for supportive housing services as part of the FY 2023 budget.

- This funding, which represents an increase relative to the FY 2022 appropriation of \$5.1 million, the request includes an allocation of \$3.0 million to provide services to the residents of 875 new units coming online in the next fiscal year- which doubles the units added in FY22. Also, we request \$2.1 million, (5% cost-of-living) increase to support existing grants as providers combat the employment crisis. Providers have not received a cost-of-living increase in 4 years and providers face serious staffing challenges.

Please, ensure the commitments made to supportive housing during the FY22 allocation of ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act).

Our Secondary Ask- Our ARPA (American Rescue Plan) Ask

The Supportive Housing Provider Association is sharing a recommendation that aims to improve Illinois' response to homelessness and create housing stability. Funding now available in Illinois from emergency relief resources, such as the American Rescue Plan Act, creates a once in a lifetime chance to improve the components of the Homeless Response Systems and expand Supportive Housing in Illinois. Please, consider supporting the following critical initiatives.

- Implement the Housing Assistance Program
- Commit To Expanding Permanent Supportive Housing
- Develop Emergency Supportive Housing
- Improve Infrastructure of/for the Homelessness Response System



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 Illinoisians 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 Illinoisians who have experienced homelessness or unnecessary institutionalization
- 40,749 Additional Illinoisians need Supportive Housing now- 47.5% have a disabling condition.
- 8 times higher for Black/African Americans households to experience homelessness in Illinois.

Supportive Housing is as diverse as the people and communities it serves. It is a powerful change factor- helping individuals and families throughout Illinois by providing affordable housing and supportive services.

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

Supportive Housing is a solution that combines housing and services. Housing is the platform where Illinoisians can achieve wellness, reach economic stability, and be a part of their communities. The supportive services are critical to a person's stability once they enter housing.

Supportive housing providers are working to meet increased demand for services from individuals who, but for our support, would be homeless or institutionalized, and facing steep barriers to housing, health and behavioral healthcare, and human services. Instead, they'd rely on hospital emergency rooms, jails, and prisons to meet their immediate needs.

Housing is Health Care- decades of research and experience with supportive housing have taught us that a holistic view of health necessarily accounts for housing and other social factors. Illinois supportive housing providers are committed to reducing homelessness throughout the state and, in doing so, promoting health, safety and quality of life for our most vulnerable residents.

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

Supportive housing is an equitable response to systemic racism.

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



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:



Calling Your Lawmakers

Supportive Housing is an evidence-based solution that will help Illinoisians facing homelessness or housing vulnerability. Please, start conversations with lawmakers beginning February 7, 2022, by calling their offices as raising awareness- asking them to support supportive housing.

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

*A Call-In Day is a day of action. SHPA will send Calls to Action asking its members and supporters to call Illinois Lawmakers and ask them to support supportive housing. Call-In Days help show our ask's support because lawmakers will have many calls focused on our asks in one day. **You can call your lawmakers with the tool below at ANY TIME during the spring session.***

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 (Rep/Sen 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.

 - Supportive Housing is a solution that Can Ensure All Illinoisans Facing Homelessness and Housing Vulnerability Have a Home That Meets Their Needs. It combines housing and services. Housing is the platform where Illinoisans can achieve wellness, reach economic stability, and be a part of their communities. The supportive services are critical to a person's stability once they enter housing.

 - **I respectfully ask the lawmaker to appropriate \$46.9 million for supportive housing services as part of the FY 2023 budget.**

 - This funding, which represents an increase relative to the FY 2022 appropriation of \$5.1 million.

 - The request includes an allocation of \$3.0 million to provide services to the residents of 875 new units coming online in the next fiscal year- which doubles the units added in FY22. Also, we request \$2.1 million, (5% cost-of-living) increase to support existing grants as providers combat the employment crisis. Providers have not received a cost-of-living increase in 4 years and providers face serious staffing challenges

 - 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 February 7, 2022, to request a virtual meeting to take place no later than February 28, 2022. 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 FY23 State Budget. Can we please schedule a meeting in February?

- 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) (rep/Sen 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 a part 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 February 7, 2022, through March 18, 2022.

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]:

Supportive Housing is as diverse as the people and communities it serves. It is a powerful change factor—helping individuals and families throughout Illinois by providing affordable housing and supportive services. Simply put, supportive housing is affordable housing with person-led, person-centered supportive services. We serve 17,684 adults and youth statewide.

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

Illinois supportive housing providers are grateful for Gov. J.B. Pritzker's proposed budget of \$42.586 million for supportive housing services in FY23. 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 or institutionalized, and facing steep barriers to housing, health and behavioral healthcare, and human services. Instead, they'd rely on hospital emergency rooms, jails, and prisons to meet their immediate needs.

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 875 new units coming online—which doubles the units added in FY22. ***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 \$46.9 million*** (the homeless services and mental health services lines combined). This would represent an increase, relative to the FY 2022 appropriation, of \$5.1 million.

The request includes an allocation of \$3.0 million to provide services to the residents of 875 new units coming online in the next fiscal year— which doubles the units added in FY22. Also, we request \$2.1 million, (5% cost-of-living) increase to support existing grants as providers combat the employment crisis. Providers have not received a cost-of-living increase in 4 years and providers face serious staffing challenges.

(BRIEFLY RECITE YOUR AGENCY AND COMMUNITY EXPERIENCE)



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 Illinoisians who face homelessness and housing vulnerability, 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 is as diverse as the people and communities it serves. It is a powerful change factor- helping individuals and families throughout Illinois by providing affordable housing and supportive services. It can end homelessness, stop unnecessary institutionalization, build communities, and strengthen Illinois.

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 875 new units coming online- which double the units added in FY2022. **Please join Illinois supportive housing providers and residents in advocating for an appropriation of \$46.9 million (the homeless services and mental health services lines combined) in FY 2023.** This would represent an increase, relative to the FY 2022 appropriation, of \$5.1 million – 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



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=7155f300cc&attribution=false

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 Support Calls

Join your fellow advocates on SHPA's weekly Advocacy Support Call. During this call, SHPA's team will help our advocates with the why and how of law maker outreach. We also hope to work as peers for brainstorming and debriefing our collective advocacy efforts. We hope you'll join, even if it's only for a few minutes!

Start your week with us, at 9:00am, on the following days:

- Monday February 7, 2022; 9:00-10:00
- Monday February 14, 2022; 9:00-10:00
- Tuesday February 22, 2022; 9:00-10:00
- Monday February 28, 2022; 9:00-10:00

Call 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: [+1 \(872\) 240-3212](tel:+18722403212) ; Access Code: 614-261-085



Supportive Housing Forum

February 28, 2022, at 1:00pm- 2:30pm

Supportive Housing is as diverse as the people and communities it serves. It is a powerful change factor- helping individuals and families throughout Illinois by providing affordable housing and supportive services. It can stop unnecessary institutionalization, end homelessness, build communities, and strengthen Illinois!

Supportive Housing is a solution that combines housing and services. Housing is the platform where Illinoisans can achieve wellness, reach economic stability, and be a part of their communities. The supportive services are critical to a person's stability once they enter housing. It appropriately serves households experiencing literal homelessness and other housing vulnerable population. *Simply Put- Supportive Housing is affordable housing with person-led supportive services.*

This Forum will provide a comprehensive understanding of supportive housing, the work happening across the state, and discuss strategies to help Illinois Lawmakers support supportive housing.

Please, invite your lawmakers to join us!

Register at: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/1565236586774310667>
