

2023 ANNUAL REPORT



OUR MISSION

Council for the Homeless is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to provide community leadership, compelling advocacy, and practical solutions to **prevent and end homelessness** in Clark County, Washington.

From the Executive Director



In 2023, I completed my first year leading an amazing organization known as Council for the Homeless (Council). I continue to make considerable effort to understand Clark County's response to homelessness, the unique role that Council for the Homeless fills, and the efforts and collaboration of a multitude of partner organizations and stakeholders. I speak with people including elected officials, social service providers, faith community members, people receiving our services, educators, healthcare providers, businesses, private foundations, residents in the community, our donors, and so many more. Everyone truly cares about people experiencing homelessness and have a desire to help. I am fortunate to be a part of such a caring community.

The complexity of homelessness is dense with barriers and myths that could easily lead to a lackluster attempt to meet an increasing need. Yet, Council for the Homeless, alongside partner agencies, continues to do transformative work.

The response to homelessness is driven by the resources available. Council faces a significant reduction in COVID-era public funding even while the need for housing and homelessness services continues to grow due to a lack of affordable housing and the increasing cost of rents. Council works diligently to meet the need of this crisis by increasing our donor base, foundation support, and restructuring funding strategies.

We remain convinced that preventing and ending homelessness in Clark County is possible. Council is committed to advancing best practices and learning from the strategies of communities across the nation. Our staff and board of directors surpass my expectations each day.

I am excited for 2024. Here are three highlights to watch for.

A home for Council for the Homeless

We have been working on the acquisition of our first dedicated home. This new centralized facility, in the Fourth Plain corridor, represents the gathering of our staff, which has historically been dispersed across two offices and home locations.

For the people we serve, having our staff available in one building will reduce the confusion of where to go when faced with homelessness and housing instability.

Advancing solutions to family homelessness

With support from the Bezos Day 1 Families Fund, our team is bringing partners together to improve the availability of emergency shelter and permanent housing for families in Clark County.

Addressing livable wage and pay equity

It is true that people often work at nonprofit organizations because they are passionate about the mission. It is also true that nonprofit employees must have stable housing, be able to pay rent or mortgage, and meet the expenses of daily living. Our agency is improving staff wages in accordance with a wage market study, while continuing as responsible stewards of our funding. Bottom line: No Council staff should also need our services.

I am proud of the work we do at Council for the Homeless. Housing is not an option, it is a right. As a community, we should never accept that people and families are sleeping outside. Housing creates a strong foundation that allows people the ability to prosper and heal from the trauma of homelessness. Council for the Homeless will not accept the excuses that tell us homelessness cannot be solved. Our community can build truly affordable housing, people battling behavioral health issues can be housed, supportive services can rise to the level of need, and the Homeless Response System can function seamlessly and equitably. It takes resources from every sector to make this possible. This includes collaboration, resources, and political will. No one deserves to or chooses to live outside. Walk with Council for the Homeless as we work toward a Clark County that has solved homelessness.

 Sesany Fennie-Jones

Leadership



The Council **coordinated** efforts of Outreach teams across **six agencies**, increasing collaboration and improving response effectiveness.

101 people who were living in tents, encampments, cars, and trailers without running water **found new homes** and the support they need to thrive by CFTH's team. Another **202 people** were assisted by partner teams.

Served as subject matter expert **providing accurate, timely information** during **51** interviews by print, digital, and TV media.

Eight additional agencies began entering their homeless services data into the Homeless Management Information System, bringing the total to **46** agencies. Data informs program evaluation, demographic trends, and contributes to a more coordinated approach to ending homelessness.

Advocacy



Over **130 people advocated** in multiple calls, letters, emails, and meetings with elected officials to support policies that **increase affordable housing and end homelessness**.

Significant **investments** to address our state's affordable housing and homelessness crisis. The state allocated over **\$400 million new dollars** from the Capital Budget for **housing justice priorities** including:

- **\$60 million** for **infrastructure** to build **new affordable housing**.
- **\$14.5 million** for **shelter and housing** for homeless **youth and young adults**.
- **\$6 million** for preservation and investments in **manufactured housing communities**.

The Operating Budget included:

- **\$150 million** for House Bill 1474 to create the Covenant Investment Act to provide **homeownership opportunities** for people harmed by racist real estate practices.
- Over **\$50 million** for **House Bill 1260** eliminating the requirement that aged, blind, and disabled recipients repay state support when they become eligible for federal assistance.
- A permanent ongoing increase of **\$26.5 million** for the **Housing and Essential Needs (HEN) rental assistance program**.
- **\$45 million** for **frontline workforce stabilization**.

Solutions



The **Housing Hotline** received **21,035 calls for housing assistance**. Thousands of additional calls for other resources were directed to local partners.

73 households were placed into **Permanent Supportive Housing**, which means stabilizing in a home with supportive services.

Of the people entering Permanent Supportive Housing in 2022, **88% have remained successfully housed for one year**. Of those entering PSH in 2021, **85% have remained successfully housed for two years**.

219 households ended their homelessness and secured a new home through CFTH coaching and one-time financial assistance known as Diversion.

Provided 1,334 motel vouchers to households for urgent protection from severe weather, a bridge to permanent housing, and resource connections.

The Romero Family's Journey Home

Meet the Romero family – Roberta, a devoted mother, and her sons Isaiah, Jayden, and Donovan. Roberta and her sons resided in New Mexico but found themselves in unsafe living conditions and facing eviction. Forced to leave behind their familiar surroundings due to escalating violence in their neighborhood, they made the move to Vancouver in 2023 to live closer to family and pursue work and school.

Once in Vancouver, their expected living situation fell through. They found themselves in a new city without a place to call home. The Romeros secured temporary shelter in modest motel rooms while they navigated the complexities of job hunting. Roberta shares, “We were so nervous about not knowing where we were going to end up sleeping. I didn’t want to have my kids in the street.”

Refusing to let her family endure even more hardship, Roberta reached out for help by contacting Council for the Homeless (CFTH). Through collaborative efforts with CFTH, Isaiah and Roberta were able to find jobs. To escape the cold winter weather, they temporarily rented a garage while looking for a permanent place to move.

After a few months, the Romero family found not just a place to live, but a home they could truly call their own. With CFTH assistance covering move-in costs and the first month’s rent, they finally settled into an apartment building, where safety and security became their reality.

This stability brought Roberta and her sons a wave of gratitude and joy. From cooking together in their own kitchen to watching their cat run around the house, every moment served as a reminder of their resilient journey to find housing. As Isaiah puts it, “We started from zero, but now we have everything.”

Through the support of CFTH, they have not only found a home but also a community where they can thrive and pursue their goals.

Roberta shares, “I’m very happy, and I’m grateful to see my kids so happy and safe, too. I wanted them to have better opportunities, and now we all do. It’s really positive here, and I see my sons doing big things in the future.”

Their story is a testament to the transformative impact of safe, stable housing and resources. Together, the Romero family stands as living proof that with hope, perseverance, and the support of a caring community, anything is possible.

“We started from zero, but now we have everything.”

— Isaiah



Pictured in photo from left to right: Isaiah, Roberta, Donovan, and Jayden

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2023 EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP

Sesany Fennie-Jones
 Executive Director

Sunny Wonder
 Deputy Director

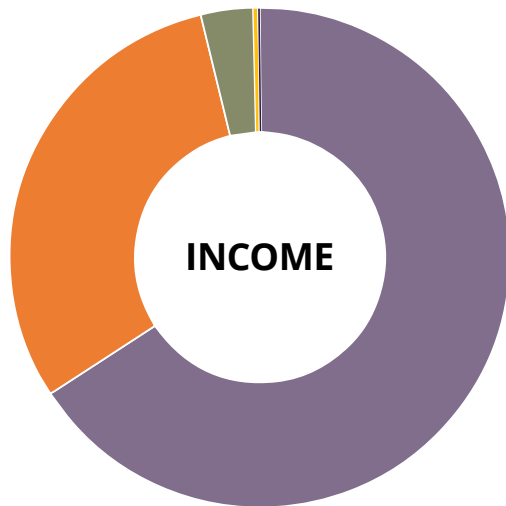
Beth Oliver
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Charlene Welch
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Dale Whitley
 Homeless Management Information
 System Administrator

Morgan Valentine
 Coordinated Entry Systems Manager

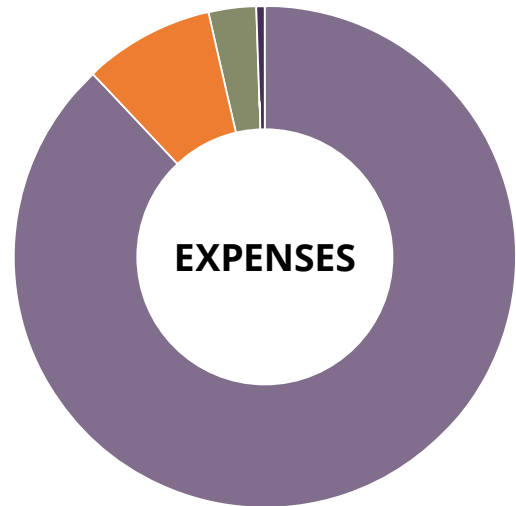
2023 FINANCIALS



INCOME

INCOME BASED ON ACTUALS

65.9%	Public Grants	\$12,125,056
30.4%	Foundations	\$5,582,569*
3.4%	Individuals	\$622,770
0.3%	Other Income	\$46,167
0.1%	In kind	\$14,782
	Total income	\$18,391,467



EXPENSES

EXPENSES BASED ON ACTUALS

88.1%	Client Assistance	\$11,387,629
8.4%	Administration	\$1,079,971
3.1%	Leadership, Equity, Advocacy	\$395,041
0.5%	Other Expenses	\$59,604
	Total expenses	\$12,922,245

*Reflects Bezos Day 1 Family Foundation grant of \$5,000,000

These 2023 finance details are unaudited.