

# REGAINING BALANCE

SAFE & STABLE HOUSING FOR  
SURVIVORS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



**Author: Jen Margulies**  
**Report Contributors:**  
**Molly Woodard Thibodeaux & Molly Voyles**

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## INTRODUCTION: SAFE PLACES, SAFE FUTURES

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“They helped me regain my balance.”

– TEXAS SURVIVOR [28]

Every day across Texas, in communities large and small, survivors of domestic violence (DV) are trying to build lives that will keep them safe, well, and free. More than 1,700 people a day call DV hotlines in Texas for help; in a single day, Texas DV organizations provide residential and non-residential services to 6,437 survivors. For survivors of DV, a safe home is not just a home without abuse. A safe home is a place where survivors can live without fear of violence, harm, unsafe conditions, or losing the roof over their heads. Poverty can trap survivors in abuse or make them vulnerable to more abuse. True freedom from DV requires freedom from poverty. We know that emergency DV shelter saves lives. Supportive non-emergency housing for survivors is an equally essential life-giving resource. We thank the survivors and advocates across the state who lent their insight and expertise to this report. We also recognize and appreciate the housing innovation and expertise occurring nationally that support this report and are referenced throughout. We strongly encourage a review of the reference section at the end of this document to learn more about these efforts.

### Need for Supportive Non-emergency Housing for Domestic Violence Survivors

Year after year, DV program staff and survivors report that housing is the biggest unmet need that survivors face. Nationally and statewide, housing assistance is the service that DV survivors most frequently request, and the request that most frequently goes unresolved.<sup>[30]</sup>

“I need housing. That’s what my needs are. I need to get a safe place I can call a safe haven that I can get—where I can go in and basically be myself, be safe.” [28]

– TEXAS SURVIVOR

**71.4%**

OF SURVIVORS INTERVIEWED FOR THE TEXAS STATE PLAN ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE NEEDED HELP FINDING HOUSING. [4]

**69%**

OF TEXAS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AGENCIES SAID GETTING INTO PERMANENT HOUSING IS A BIG PROBLEM FOR SURVIVORS. [4]

**32.7%**

OF SURVIVORS INTERVIEWED FOR THE STATE PLAN NEEDED HELP KEEPING THEIR CURRENT HOUSING. [4]

Domestic violence survivors are far more likely than other people to experience housing instability—defined as “having trouble paying rent, doubling or tripling up households in overcrowded living situations, moving frequently, staying with relatives, or spending the bulk of household income on housing.”

[18] [27]

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Quotes without citations to published materials are drawn from program staff interviews conducted for TCFV.

**1 in every 3-4**

HOMELESS WOMEN REPORT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AS A MAJOR CONTRIBUTOR TO HOUSING PROBLEMS.<sup>[10][29]</sup>

**80%**

OF U.S. MOTHERS WITH CHILDREN EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS HAVE PREVIOUSLY EXPERIENCED DOMESTIC VIOLENCE.<sup>[8]</sup>

**90.1%** OF SURVIVORS INTERVIEWED FOR THE TEXAS STATE PLAN EXPERIENCED HOMELESSNESS AT LEAST ONCE AFTER ESCAPING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE.<sup>[30]</sup>

**Over 45%** HAD BEEN HOMELESS TWICE OR MORE DUE TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE.<sup>[30]</sup>

Financial abuse also takes a toll on survivors' ability to secure housing. Abusive partners will often directly target their partner's finances to maintain control over their partner, including ruining rental and credit history, causing eviction, preventing a survivor from working, harassment at work leading to job loss, taking their income, stealing their money, making it impossible to save, damaging property, and coercing their partners into criminal activity and making it even harder to get a job or find housing with a record.

All of these factors combine to create multiple challenges for survivors seeking safe housing. Staff who participated in interviews for the Texas State Plan from across the state described survivors living in cars, tents, hotels, or RVs to escape violence.

“We offer them everything we have to offer—shelter, counseling, help with resources, anything—but then when they're really needing a home to stay in with their kids or... they're about to be evicted because a bunch of medical bills came up and they can't pay and we can't help them and they end up losing their home, then they're back at square one.”

[28]

– DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ADVOCATE

### ***Beyond Shelter: Domestic Violence Housing Service Options***

Emergency housing (shelter) is essential but *clearly not enough* to help survivors overcome these obstacles. Without longer-term housing assistance, it typically takes years for DV survivors to find stable permanent housing, if they can find it at all.

Domestic violence survivors have unique safety concerns and complex needs arising from risks posed by abusers and the effects of DV, and survivors benefit from services that are not provided by general transitional or rapid rehousing programs for unhoused people. Longer-term (non-shelter) housing programming specifically for DV survivors can help people find safety, healing, and financial stability.

#### **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOUSING SERVICE OPTIONS**



## DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOUSING SERVICE OPTIONS

**Transitional Housing (TH)** provides a free or reduced-rent apartment or rental unit for 12-24 months, along with supportive services, allowing survivors time to work on any barriers they face to securing permanent housing and to heal from the trauma they have experienced. Can be on-site (clustered in independent apartments in a single complex or in one or more communal living facilities) or scattered site throughout the community.

**Rapid Rehousing (RRH)** focuses on getting people into permanent housing of their choice in the community as fast as possible and addressing any issues after they are stably housed, with rental assistance from 1 month to 2 years. May or may not include supportive services.

**Domestic Violence Housing First (DVHF)** provides flexible services and financial assistance to help survivors rapidly find and stay in permanent affordable housing. Three pillars of DVHF are survivor-driven trauma-informed mobile advocacy, flexible funding assistance, and community engagement.

**Permanent Housing** examples include housing vouchers, public housing, other federally subsidized housing (such as tax credit properties), mortgage assistance, and permanent supportive housing.

**Homelessness Prevention** examples include emergency funding, housing advocacy, and support.

### ***Benefits of Transitional Housing and Other Longer-Term Supportive Housing for Domestic Violence Survivors***

National studies show that transitional housing (TH) programs, DVHF, and certain kinds of RRH have positive long-term outcomes for survivors' safety, healing, housing stability, and general financial well-being, with survivors who participated in these programs reporting less DV and improved economic stability.

SURVIVORS INTERVIEWED THREE YEARS AFTER COMPLETING A YEAR OF TRANSITIONAL HOUSING REPORTED **stable employment** AND THE ABILITY TO MAINTAIN HOUSING AND CHILDCARE.  
[9][12]

SURVIVORS EXITING A TH PROGRAM REPORTED **increased emotional well-being**, INCLUDING SIGNIFICANTLY FEWER DEPRESSIVE SYMPTOMS, HIGHER SELF-ESTEEM, AND DECREASED ANXIETY.<sup>[14]</sup>

**88%** OF A TOTAL OF 400 SURVIVORS FROM A STUDY OF NINE DVHF PROGRAMS WERE IN PERMANENT HOUSING BY THE END OF THE EVALUATION PERIOD.  
[13]

# COMPREHENSIVE HOUSING OPTIONS FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SURVIVORS IN TEXAS

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## *The Landscape of Transitional Housing in Texas for Domestic Violence Survivors*

Longer-term supportive housing options for DV survivors are present in 52 of the 254 counties in Texas, including most (but not all) of the largest cities in the state, many smaller cities, and a smaller number of rural areas. Local DV agencies run the majority of the programs; some are operated by religious charity organizations or other organizations focused on human trafficking and homeless assistance. There are 27 agencies (just over 10% of DV agencies in Texas) offering TH programs for DV survivors. Rapid re-housing is offered by 25.8% of agencies, some of which also offer TH, with RRH support ranging from 1 month to 12 months.<sup>[30]</sup>

## *Benefits and Effectiveness of Texas Domestic Violence Transitional Housing Programs*

A concentrated research study on comprehensive housing options for Texas survivors suggests that different modes of housing support benefit survivors in different circumstances. <sup>[28]</sup>

Transitional housing (TH) is an excellent fit for survivors who have ongoing safety concerns caused by an abuser, face barriers to accessing housing (e.g. housing discrimination, criminal records, lack of documentation, evictions), lack other social supports such as a network of family or friends with resources, are low-income, unemployed, or otherwise experiencing financial instability.

Transitional housing in Texas provides a much-needed bridge to safety for survivors who may be unable to access safe housing in any other way. Providing financial assistance for rent has a positive domino effect, freeing survivors’ money and energy for navigating the rest of their life challenges and opportunities. What’s more, the many services available through TH help survivors build up savings for permanent housing, establish or repair credit/rental history, seek employment or improve job skills for better-paying work, work on healing from trauma, get counseling and medical attention for themselves and their children, and make long-term plans for safety and navigating ongoing risks the abuser may pose in their lives.

On the whole, TH helps survivors prepare for a safer, more stable future. Research shows that **domestic violence-specific transitional housing (DVTH) programs in Texas are helping increase survivors’ physical safety, emotional well-being, and housing stability.**<sup>[28]</sup>

### PHYSICAL SAFETY AND EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING:

**75%** OF SURVIVORS WHO HAD PARTICIPATED IN DVTH PROGRAMS IN TEXAS REPORTED THAT THE PHYSICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL VIOLENCE AGAINST THEM HAD DECREASED.<sup>[28]</sup>

**100%**—EVERY PARTICIPATING SURVIVOR—SAID THAT THE PHYSICAL VIOLENCE AGAINST THEM HAD LESSEned SINCE THEIR INVOLVEMENT WITH THE TH PROGRAM.<sup>[28]</sup>

## HOUSING STABILITY:

OF SURVIVORS WHO RESPONDED TO A TEXAS TH FOLLOW-UP STUDY 1-24 MONTHS AFTER COMPLETING PROGRAM RESIDENCY...  
[28]



“Right now, I’m independent, I pay my own bills, and it’s because of them. Because, they took me to the banking program... I’ve lived in this apartment right now by myself, I pay my bills and everything, I go to school, and it’s because of them that I own this moment.” [28]

- SURVIVOR WHO COMPLETED TEXAS TH PROGRAM

## Trends and Needs in Texas

### SCARCE AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Affordable housing is difficult for anyone to find in Texas. A tight rental or housing market is particularly hard for survivors whose abusers may have destroyed their credit or rental histories, since landlords or lenders have no economic reason to accept their applications when other renters seem more of a sure bet. For extremely low income survivors with incomes at or below the poverty line or 30% of area median income, the picture is even worse.

STATEWIDE, THERE ARE ONLY **29 housing units available** FOR EVERY 100 EXTREMELY LOW INCOME RENTERS. IN SOME TEXAS CITIES, THE NUMBER IS AS LOW AS **14 for every 100**, THE WORST RATE IN THE NATION [3]

**Gentrification and displacement** of low-income renters, a problem in urban, rural, and suburban areas of Texas, causes specific trouble for TH programs. One large DVTH program in a major Texas city lost the use of two apartment complexes in their community-based scattered-site program when the complexes changed ownership and new owners raised the rent to “keep up” with rising market rates. Rising markets also impact the availability of tax credit apartments, as fewer property owners are choosing the tax advantage of providing affordable housing in gentrifying rental markets with higher profit margins.

“There’s price-gouging horrifically. There’s no price caps on anything. Nothing is rent controlled at all. So, the second the influx of people come in, the prices go up. They were already high to begin with.” [30]

- ADVOCATE IN OIL-BOOM REGION OF WEST TEXAS

**Environmental disasters** cascade into housing shortages as well, with costly damage to housing and large-scale displacement of residents, along with the expense of surviving the disaster and its aftermath, forcing many people over the edge to eviction, housing instability, or homelessness.

## ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF COVID-19

Texas has been hit hard by the pandemic surge in evictions, unemployment, economic insecurity, and housing instability, creating an even more challenging financial landscape for survivors.

**42% of adults** IN TEXAS REPORTED IN A LARGE NATIONAL STUDY OF COVID-19 FINANCIAL EFFECTS THAT IT WAS **SOMEWHAT OR VERY DIFFICULT** FOR THEIR HOUSEHOLD TO COVER USUAL EXPENSES, INCLUDING FOOD.<sup>[5]</sup>

TEXAS HAS SEEN A **20% increase** IN SNAP RECIPIENTS SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE PANDEMIC.<sup>[5]</sup>

## NEED FOR MORE TRANSITIONAL HOUSING & LONG-TERM SUPPORTIVE HOUSING FOR SURVIVORS

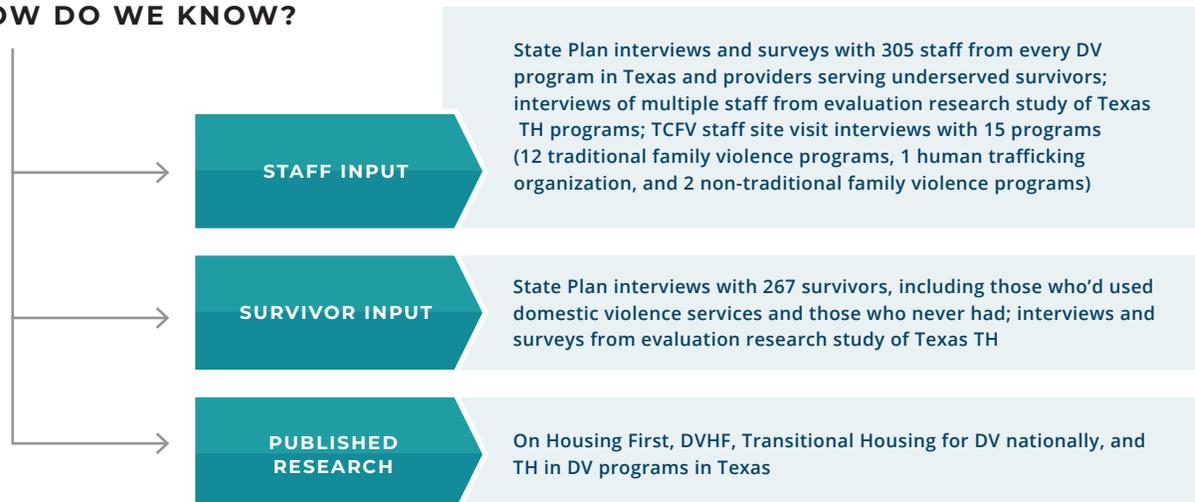
The need for long-term supportive housing for survivors in Texas greatly outstrips the supply.

55% OF AGENCIES WITH RAPID RE-HOUSING PROGRAMS WAIT-LIST OR TURN DOWN **6 or more** SURVIVORS EVERY MONTH DUE TO CAPACITY.<sup>[30]</sup>

IN 47% OF TEXAS TRANSITIONAL HOUSING PROGRAMS, **6 or more** SURVIVORS EVERY MONTH ARE WAIT-LISTED OR TURNED DOWN FOR HOUSING DUE TO LACK OF AVAILABLE UNITS.<sup>[30]</sup>

## WHAT WORKS

### HOW DO WE KNOW?



## Essential Elements

Successful TH programs share a set of principles and practices that center survivors and mobilize creative, flexible support to help as many survivors as possible find safe, stable housing.

### WHAT WORKS: ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

- 1 Survivor-Driven and Survivor-Centered:** Empowerment-based, voluntary services model with trauma-informed approach to helping survivors heal and build stability in ways they define as important.
- 2 Low-Barrier, Equitable Admissions:** As few barriers as possible for survivors to access housing services, with policies that implement equity in access and consider the unique needs of marginalized survivors.
- 3 Blend of Independence and Support:** Program policies that offer minimal restriction and maximum flexibility for survivors to build their futures and staff to assist them; survivor-defined safety assessments and procedures; duration of services long enough for survivors to establish themselves on their next path.
- 4 Access to Staff Support:** When survivors experience staff as available to them and having time to help, and when staff and survivors build connected relationships, the service environment improves and the program is more effective.
- 5 Survivor Peer Support:** Creating positive opportunities for survivors to connect with one another and the support networks in their lives.
- 6 Flexible Funding:** Financial assistance to help survivors cover costs that are getting in the way of securing or keeping safe, stable housing. Quick access to funds with limited red tape.
- 7 Mobile Advocacy:** Meets survivors where they are, literally—rather than requiring survivors to come to the program for services, advocates make home visits, use mobile or online advocacy, or arrange to meet survivors at locations survivors choose as the safest and best way for them to connect.
- 8 Housing Advocacy:** Designated housing advocates help survivors explore their housing options and find the type of housing that best fits survivors' wants and needs; includes accompanying survivors to housing appointments, acting as liaisons with landlords, and marshalling relationships with community partners to increase survivors' access to and retention of safe housing.

## 1 SURVIVOR-DRIVEN AND SURVIVOR-CENTERED

An empowerment philosophy, a voluntary services model, and a trauma-informed approach are the three interlocking building blocks of successful supportive long-term housing services for survivors.

**Empowerment Philosophy.** The DV movement has long based its work in the philosophy that survivors are the experts in their own lives, and DV advocacy should support survivors as they make decisions about how to shape lives of freedom, safety, healing, and stability. In practice in housing services, this looks like connecting people to community resources, helping survivors stay connected with natural support networks, providing clear communication and straightforward access to information that can help people, presenting and respecting choices, and respecting survivors' dignity at all times, including creating and maintaining service environments that preserve dignity.

**Voluntary Services Model.** Built on a foundation of empowerment, in a voluntary services model, survivors determine their own goals in the program. No particular set of services is required, coerced, or pressured. In practice in housing programs, this means offering survivors a range of services to choose from—from advocacy, case management, and counseling to assistance with basic needs, mental and physical health, legal issues, employment, public benefits, financial literacy, credit repair, immigration, childcare, and building support systems.

**Trauma-informed Approach.** A trauma-informed approach to services takes into account that survivors are experiencing the effects of trauma, from recent abuse and often from lifetime trauma events. Coping with and healing from trauma can look many different ways for different people and can look different over time. Trauma affects the mind, body, and the spirit: physical health, energy levels, the way people process information, coping mechanisms, and more. Research on trauma-informed DV advocacy has found six principles that inform the most effective trauma-informed approaches.

“I feel trusted.”  
[15]

– SURVIVOR IN  
TH PROGRAM

“I don't have to have any service mandated. You don't have to meet with me. You don't have to come to any group, you don't have to come to anything. I'm willing to take that on and say, you know what, I'm going to earn your trust, and I'm going to prove that the case manager that I can give you is so important you're going to want to be engaged.” [28]

– TX DVTH PROGRAM MANAGER

“I decide what I want. They just put me all of the options and I decide what I want at the end.” [30]

– TEXAS SURVIVOR

### SIX PRINCIPLES OF TRAUMA-INFORMED APPROACH

1. SAFETY
2. TRUSTWORTHINESS & TRANSPARENCY
3. PEER SUPPORT
4. COLLABORATION & MUTUALITY
5. EMPOWERMENT & CHOICE
6. ATTENTION TO CULTURAL, HISTORICAL & GENDER ISSUES

In practice in housing services, this might look like:

- » Being straightforward, empathetic, consistent, authentic, honest, and transparent in all communications.
- » Offering education on trauma and support for trauma in formats, settings, and opportunities that people can absorb.
- » Moving at the speed of each survivor, understanding that trauma response is not linear. Someone may be numb and then flooded, feeling capable in one moment and foggy, exhausted, scattered, or angry the next.
- » Understanding that providers can re-trigger trauma and avoiding doing so (through interpersonal interactions like tone of voice, or programmatic factors like unnecessary restrictions).
- » Never assuming a default experience and instead acknowledging survivors' expertise in their own experiences of their race and gender and identity in the world.
- » Trauma informed property management, taking into account the inherent power the program holds as a landlord with the power to make someone homeless and refraining as much as possible from actions that echo an abuser's control, such as monitoring survivors in their homes, controlling survivors' social contacts or comings and goings, or threats of exit from their home.

“Our work is: build trust but never expect survivors to trust us.”<sup>[31]</sup>

– DV ADVOCATE

## 2 LOW-BARRIER, EQUITABLE ADMISSIONS

**Low-Barrier.** Every survivor deserves to be safe and free. And since safe and stable housing is necessary for survivors to get and stay safe and free, that means every survivor deserves safe and stable housing. Every survivor—survivors with serious mental illness, survivors living with addiction, survivors without jobs, survivors with disabilities, survivors who are undocumented, survivors who have never been in emergency DV shelter, survivors with criminal records, survivors who are unemployed, survivors who do sex work, survivors who are in contact with their abuser—they all need and deserve safe and stable housing. With low-barrier admissions, programs try to help every survivor who needs it.

“We’ve evolved. We used to have a lot of conditions, but not anymore. Anything and everything is considered.”

– TEXAS TH ADVOCATE

“At first, it was a little bit rocky because I was just, I wasn’t ready to open up. I was pretty fearful. After a while, after I seen that she just wasn’t about just making rules and she was genuinely there to help, it became a little bit easier. So, the more I met with her, the more I got comfortable.”

[28]

– SURVIVOR IN TEXAS TH PROGRAM

## Low-Barrier Checklist

- Does the program screen out or exit survivors with unresolved issues with addiction or mental health?
- Does the program limit survivors' opportunities to connect with their friends, family, and social support network?
- Does the program require that survivors have no contact with their abusers?
- Could survivors who do not meet income requirements benefit from existing program services?
- Could the factors making a survivor ineligible be addressed by direct cash assistance?
- Does the program screen out survivors based on criminal or rental history?
- Does the agency make information about the housing program widely accessible?
- Does the program have access to mental health and chemical dependency resources in the community or staff trained to address mental health and chemical dependency?

**Equity-conscious Admissions.** Survivors who are targeted by systems of oppression face an additional set of barriers to accessing housing. The historical reality of racist housing policy in the United States persists to this day, with studies showing that housing discrimination continues to limit the options of Black, Latino, and Asian American renters and hinder the ability of qualified Black and Latino homebuyers to secure mortgages. Black people, other people of color, Indigenous people, undocumented immigrants, and people with disabilities are all overrepresented among those who are unhoused or facing housing instability. Housing discrimination also limits options for LGBTQ+ individuals, and, ironically, people who hold housing vouchers.<sup>[25]</sup>

Equity-conscious admission policies seek to address the unique challenges that confront survivors who are subjected to housing discrimination and are careful not to replicate those barriers in their own procedures.

- » **Make pathways to the housing program widely accessible so that survivors can find services, rather than be selected for them.** When pathways to housing services are narrow, informal judgments can create subtle bias: for example, shelter staff referrals of survivors who have been “*good residents*,” or invitations to the program being shared only with survivors who are perceived by staff as likely to “*work the program*” or “*capable of being self-sufficient*.”

- » **Use priority admissions** to prioritize survivors facing the most severe barriers in accessing housing, along with prioritizing people who are at highest risk of immediate homelessness or at highest risk from an abuser.

### 3 BLEND OF INDEPENDENCE AND SUPPORT

**Freedom.** Internal program policies governing staff and survivors are as **minimally restrictive** and **maximally flexible** as possible. Survivors need the freedom to build the future they want, and staff need to be free to offer creative assistance.

**Duration of Services.** The longer survivors can access support, the better chance they have of developing economic stability. The pathway to safe and stable housing is not a straight line and can include setbacks like delayed court dates, debt collection, car breakdown, job loss, illness, and other family crises, with the possibility of an abuser’s ongoing attempts to harm and manipulate. Even if everything in a survivor’s life were going smoothly, the scarcity of affordable housing and the length of waitlists for Section 8 housing vouchers and other federal housing assistance makes it likely that even once a survivor has left TH, aftercare services and financial assistance will play an important role in helping maintain safety and stability through life’s ongoing challenges.

**Safety.** Survivors’ independence in these programs is supported by survivor-defined safety assessments and dynamic safety planning. One Texas TH program checks in with participants monthly to assess safety issues and make safety plans. In programs that operate on an off-site model, survivors assess the safety of off-site apartments, identify individually what would make them deem an apartment safe, and okay the neighborhood (not near abuser or abuser’s contacts, generally safe environment, safe routes to school and work, etc.). Programs use on-premise safety features such as parking lot lighting, peepholes, doorbell cameras, extra locks, curtains, security systems, and gates. In some programs with scattered site apartments in the community, the housing specialist works with landlords to get units that are front facing, near lights, with parking close by, and so on. Survivor safety extends to building safety as survivors define it within the service relationship as well, by committing to non-coercion and open communication.

“It was very safe for me. The neighborhood was quiet like on my tiptoes... I don’t know how to explain it. It was the perfect place and outside, you could take a walk and you could not hear nothing within a minute.”<sup>[28]</sup>

– TH PARTICIPANT IN TEXAS

“Being given a chance to get on my feet, to achieve things on my own, but still get support while I do it.”

[30]

– TEXAS SURVIVOR

### 4 ACCESS TO STAFF SUPPORT

Across different types of DV services in Texas, survivors express the value of good connections with program staff. The Texas State Plan found that increased staff time, access, and connection with survivors improved the service environment. Given the more independent nature of TH and other supportive housing services, access to staff support looks different than in shelter, even in TH programs in congregate settings. When there are not staff on site, supportive housing programs ensure staff availability by providing staff with Google voice numbers where survivors can call or reach them,

“She was very encouraging, and I didn’t really have to see her all the time, but the time she was available to speak, I always felt welcome to talk to her.” [28]

– SURVIVOR, TEXAS TH PROGRAM

intervals over time. Other programs take a more **flexible engagement** approach, recognizing that survivors who have been needing less staff contact for months may have a crisis or challenge arise that leads advocates to check in more frequently, even though those survivors are already established in the program.

Staff availability, advocates’ willingness to find the right resources, and friendly, non-coercive interest in survivors’ well-being all lead survivors to trust advocates and turn to them as resources.

Access to staff support can begin even before survivors are living in their housing unit. Once survivors are in TH, it’s important to make sure that people know early on that the door to the program will always be open to them, and that support can continue even after survivors leave TH.

## 5 SURVIVOR PEER SUPPORT

Whether through independent peer-run programs, mutual support groups, formal peer mentoring, or simply neighborhood-style informal networks, peer support is an important aspect of a trauma-informed approach and just as important to create space for in longer-term housing services as it is in emergency shelter or nonresidential DV services.

It’s important to note some survivors may prefer NOT to live among other survivors and be surrounded by other people working through trauma in unpredictable ways. Or their own trauma may lead them to draw inwards for a while as they heal. Service models shouldn’t assume that survivors will want to build community, only offer multiple avenues for creating it.

or giving survivors advocates’ personal or work cell phone numbers, often with the shelter or the hotline as an after-hours point of contact.

**Proactive Check-ins.** Many supportive housing programs take an approach of **progressive engagement**, contacting survivors frequently when they’re new to services to check in and see how they’re doing, and then reaching out regularly at less frequent

“Survivors help each other out watching each other’s kiddos.”

– TEXAS TH PROGRAM STAFF

“[The] community they have created for themselves is beautiful.”

– TEXAS TH PROGRAM STAFF

### Survivor Peer Support Checklist



Organization holds (voluntary) support groups and seeks to foster other opportunities for survivors to build community.



Program policies don’t disallow survivors from helping each other out through favors like trading childcare.

## Survivor Peer Support Checklist



Survivors living in scattered-site housing also have the chance to be in community with friends and family in the neighborhood. Rather than regarding these outside contacts as potential threats, programs incorporate survivors' social networks as resources.



Organization has an established Survivor Peer Support program in which paid or volunteer Survivor Peers provide services and support to other residents through one-on-one connections, leading groups, workshops, and/or social activities, and more. *(See the Toolkit & Resources section at the end of this report for more ideas on Survivor Peer Support programs.)*

## 6 FLEXIBLE FUNDING AND DIRECT CLIENT ASSISTANCE

Flexible funding and direct client assistance are forms of financial assistance that programs can use to help survivors cover costs that impact housing stability.

**Government-Funded Direct Client Assistance.** Through direct client assistance, programs use government grant or contract funds to pay for certain goods and services for survivors in TH. In Texas, TH programs funded by the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) can use those monies to assist survivors with the costs of TH, relocation, supportive services, and some other immediate needs, according to funder guidelines.

**Privately Funded Flexible Funding.** Other flexible funding drawn from non-governmental sources allow programs to help survivors in ways that VOCA funds currently do not: rent debt, utility debt, and vehicle purchases, for example, and, most importantly, direct cash assistance to survivors. Because funds are completely unrestricted, programs can use the money however they see fit to support survivors with very little bureaucratic processing and very quick response time.

*“To be most responsive to survivors’ needs, flexible funding programs should be low-barrier, quickly accessed by survivors, and non-judgmental and trauma-informed.” [6]*

– DOMESTIC VIOLENCE &  
AND HOUSING TECHNICAL  
ASSISTANCE CONSORTIUM

**Tip:** Programs that offer flexible funding often cover their staff time with governmental sources, but make their survivor cash grants entirely out of private foundation gifts or other non-governmental dollars, freeing organizations to respond to the financial priorities they identify with individual survivors.

**Flexible funding promotes housing stability.** Studies of flexible funding in DVHF programs in Washington, D.C., California, and Washington state found that over 90% of survivors receiving funds achieved long-term housing stability.<sup>[6][13][23]</sup> In one representative study, 91% experienced no further DV, and 100% felt their lives were better off.<sup>[21]</sup>

## 7 MOBILE ADVOCACY

Meeting survivors in the places and ways that are most convenient and supportive to them, rather than requiring survivors to always come to the program office for services, is a key component in successfully supporting survivors as they work towards safe and stable housing. Mobile advocacy can include connecting through technology (texting, online, or app-based) or through in-person meetings at places like a survivor's home or a playground, for example. Program staff engage in dynamic safety assessments as part of mobile advocacy, talking together with survivors about the safest place to meet up. Mobile advocacy can be time-consuming, since it is arranged around the convenience of survivors rather than the convenience of program staff. In existing studies of DVHF and TH programs that use mobile advocacy, survivors, advocates, and program directors alike agree that mobile advocacy is worth the investment of time and logistical coordination.

## 8 HOUSING ADVOCACY

**Housing advocacy means being knowledgeable about housing laws and policies, knowing landlords and housing authorities, and having negotiation skills to convince or incentivize landlords to rent to clients who might otherwise be denied housing.**<sup>[22]</sup>

Housing advocacy can be integrated into all program contacts with survivors, and it's recommended that programs ask about housing and offer housing-related resources with all survivors upfront at intake. When it comes to comprehensive housing advocacy, programs can accomplish much more with a staff person in the designated role of housing advocate or housing navigator. Housing specialists work directly with survivors to help them get and keep housing, including accompanying survivors to housing appointments, acting as liaisons with landlords, and negotiating leases. Programs describe housing advocacy as taking a lot of time: housing specialists dedicate time and funds to landlord outreach and education, constantly recruiting new landlords, hosting landlord appreciation luncheons, and making themselves personally available to landlords who do participate in the program, all to ensure availability of housing.



## Research Spotlight: Transitional Housing for Texas Domestic Violence Survivors

A recent evaluation study of Texas TH programs for domestic violence survivors collected data from staff and survivors to shed light on what they find most effective in successful programs.

*“We have a list of community resources that we go through to be able to help them with either electricity bill or food or donations also. Because we run into the problem where they’re going from the shelter to transition, or transition to housing and they don’t have anything at all. Then we run into the problem of I’m moving into an apartment that has literally nothing.” [28]*

– TEXAS TH  
STAFF MEMBER

STAFF SAY

### Key aspects of success in transitional housing, according to Texas TH program staff:

- » **Survivor-defined practice.** Set things up so survivors identify what they need, and the program is flexible enough to provide it, even when it means getting very creative.
- » **Regular attention.** Meet with clients face to face on a regular basis. Check in regularly to see how they’re doing and if any needs have come up, especially frequently early on and even once in a while after they leave. Offer regular safety planning and budgeting help.
- » **Linkage to services.** Stay connected to community partners for resources and engage in ongoing advocacy and planning with survivors. Stay up to date on public housing wait list and Section 8 wait lists and help people apply.

### Key aspects of success in transitional housing, according to former participants in Texas TH programs:

- » **Working together.** Survivors who participated in the follow-up study shared multiple examples of being treated as respected partners by program staff, supported in establishing and achieving their own goals.
- » **Material resources.** Survivors in the Texas TH evaluation expressed the value of the many supportive services provided in transitional housing, but they also emphasized that an important part of what makes transitional housing programming effective is help with material resources, such as on-site food pantries, direct client assistance, transportation vouchers, and childcare assistance.
- » **Ongoing support.** Survivors also pointed out that abuse, especially psychological and financial abuse, can continue as abusive former partners continue to try to control or interfere with their finances, or control or harm them through continuing contact related to their shared children. Half of participants were still receiving some services from the agency that runs their TH program.

SURVIVORS SAY

*“They always give me a chance to tell me, they always tell me, what you want to do? And then, they’re going to help me through that. Whatever I want to do. They never say, “Oh no, no. You have to do this, no.” They are always like, “What do you want to do? Do you want to do something that we can assist you?” And, they will help me through it.” [28]*

– SURVIVOR,  
TEXAS TH PROGRAM



## **Practice Spotlight: “House Policies”**

Emerging best practices in longer-term supportive housing for survivors suggest adopting the **least restrictive** policies possible in the setting. Fewer restrictions keep survivors housed, which keeps survivors safer.

### **RULES THAT AREN'T RULES ARE STILL RULES**

Survivors interviewed about their experiences in TH described many program rules that TH staff explicitly stated were *not* rules or requirements in that TH program. Survivors who have experience with shelter or other social service environments that are more rule-bound may assume the same rules apply as previous shelter experience. Because of the power differential between staff and survivors, survivors might understand staff encouragement towards certain goals or behaviors to be a mandate. In this way, **survivors experience rules even when the program hasn't intended to establish them.** This can be addressed by communicating clearly early on about what is and isn't expected in TH, explaining how it's different from shelter, and making clear statements about the program's philosophy and approach to client sovereignty.

*“Participants hold the lease and therefore [the agency] does not monitor what happens in their home; the lease is between them and their landlord. We only ask a household to exit the program if there is a safety concern that requires such action (i.e. addiction treatment needed that requires long-term inpatient treatment).”*

**- STAFF AT A SCATTERED-SITE VOLUNTARY TH PROGRAM**

*“They are welcome to use alcohol. We have no restrictions about that; they can come home drunk everyday—as long as they do not create a nuisance.”*

**- TEXAS TH PROGRAM STAFF**

*“Make sure to understand this is not the shelter—you are in your own place.”*

**-TEXAS TH PROGRAM STAFF**

*“If terminated from program, never terminated permanently from program. Can always be re-evaluated. If we ever have to ask them to leave, we ask them to reapply.”*

**- TEXAS TH PROGRAM STAFF**

## ***Program Policies Checklist***



Are restrictions limited to things that make it truly impossible to serve a survivor at that time, regardless of the creativity, external resources, or flexible advocacy strategies that could be applied?



Do policies support the continued building of community via holistic visitor policies that make it possible for adults and children in the household to build and strengthen relationships with, and get natural support from, friends, family members, and new partners?



Do policies take a housing first approach to serving survivors with chemical dependency?



Do policies support survivors around finding resources to address potentially evictable behavior, rather than immediately evicting survivors or exiting them from the program on eviction by external landlord?



Do policies address drug use as an issue to be discussed one-on-one with survivors?



Do policies support the use of service animals? Will the program find housing for survivors with service animals and pay deposits necessary to external landlords?



Do policies support survivors in living with their pets? Will the program find housing for survivors that allows pets and pay deposits (double deposits if necessary) to external landlords?



Do policies address providing support and services to survivors who reunite with abusers or support survivors who are in contact with their current/former abusive partners?



Do policies allow for survivors to return for help in the future, regardless of how they left the program?

## WHAT'S AFTER TRANSITIONAL HOUSING?

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### PERMANENT HOUSING

TH programs that track where survivors go after exiting their programs report that some survivors take over the lease in their scattered-site apartment, or move to another apartment in that complex. Some apply through the housing authority and seek out low income housing. Some survivors move in with supportive family. **Vouchers toward permanent housing** are frequently sought-after elements of post-TH exit planning. They are typically extremely scarce, often with multi-year wait lists.

Achieving permanent housing requires longer-term follow-up support. In a recent study of Texas DVTH programs, only 28% of survivors living in their own apartments after TH believed they were likely to remain in the current home for the next 24 months. <sup>[28]</sup>

### ONGOING SUPPORTIVE SERVICES POST-RESIDENCY

Texas DVTH programs aim for autonomy, not abandonment; when survivors “graduate” from TH, they leave with the message that *on your own is not alone*, and outreach services are always available. Abuse doesn’t end just because a survivor is no longer living with the abuser.

“If someone gets a Section 8 voucher, especially with our housing program, they’re going to come off of ours, we will find a way to make sure they have that deposit. One way or another, we’re going to find that money. Because that’s a fix for them. And it frees up more money for us to help another survivor.” <sup>[28]</sup>

- TEXAS DVTH PROGRAM STAFF

“We encourage them to do outreach services even after they’re finished with the housing program. Because that keeps us in contact with them. If they’re running into issues, maybe we can help. Because it could be a small issue but if you let it go, it turns into a compound issue, like a good example paying an electric bill. All of a sudden now your electric and water is two months behind, then it becomes a bigger issue that can’t be handled or may not be able to be handled.” <sup>[28]</sup>

- TEXAS DVTH PROGRAM STAFF

**43% of survivors** INTERVIEWED AFTER COMPLETING DVTH PROGRAMS NOTED THAT THEIR **ABUSIVE FORMER PARTNERS CONTINUE TO TAKE ACTIONS TO PREVENT THEM FROM GOING TO WORK OR SCHOOL, AND TO PREVENT THEM FROM HAVING THEIR OWN MONEY TO USE, DESPITE NO LONGER LIVING WITH THEM.** <sup>[28]</sup>

**28% of participants** REPORTED THAT DUE TO COMMITMENTS RELATED TO SHARED CHILDREN, THEY HAD TO NAVIGATE **ONGOING CONTACT WITH THE PARTNER WHO CAUSED THEM TO ACCESS TRANSITIONAL HOUSING.** <sup>[28]</sup>

Ongoing contact with the DV program where they got transitional services supports survivors through these challenges. Understanding that trauma recovery is not linear or time-limited, and that financial crises can still arise in survivors' lives that may threaten their housing stability, programs encourage former TH participants to stay connected.

“ In our agency we have ESL classes, and craft class and now we have yoga class. We also have counseling in the outreach office. So then the clients that are... I guess the clients that we see that are more successful after the transition are always going to keep on coming to at least one of our classes. ”<sup>[28]</sup>

- TEXAS DVTH PROGRAM STAFF

“ I'm very confident, because I love to save. I want to save. I've learned the money that I make with my work, I've learned to use it wisely. I don't misuse my money, I save it. I pay my bills correctly and right on time, and I think I'm comfortable. I've not had any problems for a year now, and I'm still moving on with my normal... ”<sup>[28]</sup>

- TEXAS SURVIVOR WHO COMPLETED TH

## WHAT'S NEXT FOR TEXAS

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### ***Policy Spotlight: More Access To Transitional Housing for Domestic Violence Survivors***

Texas is still a long way from offering supportive housing services to everyone who needs them. A recent study of ten DV transitional housing programs in Texas found that half of the programs responding could accept only 50% or fewer of those seeking housing. One third of responding programs could accept 33% or fewer of those in need.<sup>[28]</sup>

Researchers concluded that **expanding the number and geographic diversity of TH units available statewide** could both reduce shelter and violence recidivism for individual survivors and families, enhance program outcomes, and make the [DV] service sector more robust against future shocks such as natural, public health, or human-created disasters.<sup>[28]</sup>

Another way to increase access for survivors is to **reduce barriers to entry for existing programs** so that more high-needs survivors can participate, in turn contributing to the need to increase capacity further.



## Policy Pathways

In addition to funding to expand access to supportive housing solutions for DV survivors, Texas survivors seeking safe and stable housing would significantly benefit from general investments at the state level in affordable housing, mental health services (according to the State Plan, more than 30% of Texas counties lack mental health services, making it hard for survivors with severe mental illness to be successful in housing services when advocates face a dearth of community resources for them), public transportation, childcare, and disaster preparedness.<sup>[30]</sup>

### **Affordable housing in particular is a critical need.**

Section 8 is virtually inaccessible in many communities, and low-income federally subsidized tax credit properties increasingly rare. Across all regions of the state, family violence staff described long wait lists for housing programs, housing shortages, and a lack of available Section 8 and other government housing.

Survivors themselves assess housing program services highly, but the recent study of TH in Texas found that *“survivor satisfaction was highest overall for help with safety and safety planning and lower for housing and financial help,”* despite the fact that survivors couldn’t name any changes they would suggest making to program services.<sup>[28]</sup> No matter how excellent services are, the significant challenges to achieving financial and housing stability in many Texas communities means that without expanding available options at the community level, it will continue to be hard to help survivors fully regain stability and balance in their lives.

## Factors for Funders

Funders of longer-term supportive housing for DV survivors have a unique role to play in making sure that such programs are accessible, successful, and stable. By expanding the types of funding available and ensuring consistent funding streams, while being flexible in administering programs, funders can support local organizations in developing and delivering dynamic, responsive advocacy strategies to assist survivors in securing safe, stable housing.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUNDERS

**Increase funding for longer-term supportive DV housing options in Texas.** Only 35% of Texas counties have non-shelter housing for DV survivors and the majority of those TH and RRH programs have to turn qualified survivors away in large numbers due to lack of capacity.<sup>[30]</sup>

“In the last five years, our Section 8 has been opened up for two days. Last time was two years ago—one day, online only.”

[28]

– TEXAS TH PROGRAM STAFF

87%

OF TEXAS FAMILY VIOLENCE AGENCIES SAY THAT OBTAINING AFFORDABLE HOUSING IS A MAJOR NEED FOR SURVIVORS.<sup>[30]</sup>

“Waitlists are so long for tax credits!”

– TEXAS TH PROGRAM STAFF

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUNDERS

**Adjust expected outcomes to take voluntary services into account.** Best practice in housing services is not to require survivors to use particular services. Instead of holding programs to metrics based on number of meetings attended or number of participants using certain services, it would be better to track outcomes such as where survivors go on program exit and whether they are able to remain in their homes or secure safe housing. Survivor-defined outcomes such as the FVPSA outcomes (*"I have a better idea of community resources/I know ways to plan for my safety"*) may also be helpful.

**Recognize that the best supportive housing service modalities for DV survivors are staff-intensive and increase funding accordingly.** Expect increased staff time costs and new positions, and allow budget line items for staff self-care and for administrative positions to help with increased logistical demands of administering flexible funding and mobile advocacy. Research has shown that the best practices in survivor-driven supportive housing services—mobile advocacy, navigating housing barriers, community engagement, and administration of flexible funds—are time consuming and require more staffing.

**Make funding for housing services permanent.** Program stability relies on a baseline of reliable funding.

**Decrease match requirements and adjust match to include more allowable activities and services,** for example administrative activities and ESL classes. Program staff from across Texas repeatedly mentioned having to cut programming because they could not find enough match.

**Make flexible funding as unrestricted as possible** so that providers can be survivor-directed in their services and fully respond to the needs that survivors encounter. Providers deeply appreciate the ability to materially help survivors with flexible VOCA funds, and nearly unanimously ask for even more flexible funding with even fewer restrictions.

**Allow time for start-up and programmatic changes.** DVTH, DVHF, and flexible funding are newer modalities and setting up new systems may take time, with the need for different processes and procedures and staffing patterns and training. Emerging area of practice requires flexibility & dynamic learning in partnership with programs to incorporate extensive substantive survivor feedback.

**Fund a diversity of housing options.** Emerging consensus in research and practice is that best practice is to determine the most appropriate housing assistance based on each survivor's unique needs. Funding is needed for a range of dynamic options that can include TH, RRH, and DVHF, and other forms of housing advocacy and homelessness prevention.

**Fund additional resources and strategies** to meet the scope of the affordable housing crisis in Texas that survivors must navigate: (1) homelessness prevention, including flex funds (2) extending length of stay at emergency shelter and within other housing programs (3) housing navigators.

## WHAT'S WORKING

*“We’ve grown quite a bit when VOCA came in. Our first housing was donated. Funding allowed us to have more and pay staff better... enabled us to help staff not burn out, give benefits and look out for them. They are an awesome team who give a lot of time and effort.”*

– TEXAS TH PROGRAM STAFF

*“Before we had VOCA TH, in the past most survivors transitioned to Housing Choice Section 8 vouchers. Now, they would be transitioning into their own unit or a tax credit unit. We can help them find places and save up for moving expenses while they are with us.”*

– TEXAS TH PROGRAM STAFF

## PROGRAM CONCERNS

*“At this time, we’re unsure whether our Transitional Housing grant is being renewed. We’ve been unable to accept new survivors into that program due to potentially losing it at the end of the month. Both staff from the program left to pursue other employment because they were not sure if their jobs would exist at the end of the month.”*

– TEXAS TH PROGRAM STAFF

*“Match is the biggest thing for us—very hard. The reason we cut the program is directly because of the match. We were providing rent, utility, childcare, etc. We didn’t [cut] it because we don’t think people deserve it, but we just can’t do it... If we were able to take on other expenses, that would really help.”*

– TEXAS TH PROGRAM STAFF

*“Sometimes the furniture and beds and getting checks in a timely manner is the biggest struggle. Need a better process about getting checks in time.”*

– TEXAS TH PROGRAM STAFF

## SURVIVOR CONCERNS

**More than one quarter (26%)** of survivors said they needed more help looking for housing than they were getting, and **nearly one quarter (23.3%)** of survivors said they needed more help with financial barriers.<sup>[30]</sup>

## Community Engagement and Systems Change

Community engagement has been a foundational strategy in successful housing services for survivors, as programs seek to build a web of support around survivors and connect them to community resources. Community engagement can also include joining community efforts to advocate for systems change at the local, state, and federal levels on issues that would change the larger landscape for survivors seeking safety and stability.

“Affordable housing is a major problem in our areas, or survivors need higher paying jobs.”<sup>[8]</sup>

– TEXAS TH STAFF

**Affordable Housing.** Local campaigns for affordable housing can increase the amount of affordable housing units available in the city as a whole.

**Minimum Wage.** Municipalities can also vote to raise the minimum wage above the state minimum, making it easier for people to make a livable wage.

**Ban the Box.** These measures increase access to consideration for employment for people who have criminal records, an important economic stability factor for survivors with criminal histories.

**Transportation.** Ballot measures for transportation bonds are an opportunity to reduce what the Texas State Plan reports as a frequently reported barrier to renting an apartment in the community.

“I’m standing with five of my coworkers on the steps of City Hall at a... rally in support of affordable housing bonds... And I think about Bonnie... After a lifetime of trauma, a lot of doors opened for Bonnie during her time at [our agency], but the most important was the door to her own safe, affordable and permanent apartment. Bonnie found permanent housing at a unit funded by a previous Affordable Housing bond. To Bonnie, a permanent home was a miracle. But a safe place to call home shouldn’t be a miracle. Safe and affordable housing isn’t only a path to escape abuse, it helps to reduce the risk of future victimization.”

<sup>[8]</sup>

– TEXAS TH ADVOCATE

## The Future of Supportive Housing for Domestic Violence Survivors

### MORE TIME FOR SURVIVORS

The time that supportive housing services can provide survivors—to heal from trauma, improve their education, save for future expenses, and more—was noted by many staff and survivors as one of the most important elements of programming. They were also concerned that the time was not long enough.

The vast majority of residential participants needed support with housing and voiced concern about short lengths of service in shelter and TH. Staff from Texas TH programs also said that one of the top things they would change was being able to give survivors more time, up to 30 months.

According to a recent evaluation study of ten TH programs, regardless of the maximum length of stay set by the program, 12 months is currently the average length of stay. Many Texas TH program staff would like to increase the months of stay up to 24 months but are unable to do so. [28]

### MORE FOLLOW-UP SERVICES POST-RESIDENCY

**Funds are needed to bolster post-residency services such as housing stability support, housing navigators, and direct client assistance for housing and related costs.**

Program staff also identify the need for **more outreach to TH graduates** after they have left the intensive support of the program. One Texas TH program director suggested that “there needs to be a follow up advocate” whose role centers on supporting people who have left supportive housing.

Resources needed for follow-up support include:

- » **Financial assistance for survivors.** Only 30% of Texas TH programs in the recent evaluation had follow-up funds available to help previous TH residents bridge short-term income losses or crisis situations that threaten financial and housing security. Financial assistance was the biggest need identified by research and by staff who were asked what would help preserve housing stability for survivors once they left supportive housing. [28]
- » **Help with transportation.** In both rural and urban programs, staff and survivors identify bus passes, ride vouchers, and other forms of transportation assistance as essential support. However, this support is typically available only during a survivor’s residency in the program.
- » **Homelessness prevention.** 57% of survivors who had completed DV TH programs in Texas said they needed help keeping their new housing. [28]

“Clients often stay in crisis during the one-year program, so one year is not long enough.”

– TEXAS TH PROGRAM STAFF

“More clients vs. longer time—we have to choose between the two, due to limited funding.”

– TEXAS TH PROGRAM STAFF

“The what I would call “post-separation battering” from her husband is starting to ramp up again as he’s questioning her parenting style... So that’s bringing back up all of the trauma. Those abusive kinds of challenges will continue to come up in a survivor’s life even after they’ve found stable housing.”

[22]

– TH STAFF MEMBER

## MORE FLEXIBLE FUNDING AND DIRECT CASH ASSISTANCE BEFORE, DURING, AND AFTER PROGRAM RESIDENCY

- » More direct cash assistance for survivors via **financial emergency funds** with public and private sources.
- » Programs wish they could provide more *“tangible resources that support stability, like transportation assistance (bus passes, gas cards, etc.); connection and deposit assistance, medical costs, and accessible, quality childcare.”* [28]

## MORE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOUSING FIRST APPROACHES

- » Shift to survivors being immediately housed in TH or another housing option, if emergency shelter is not needed, wanted, or available.
- » Implement more distinct separation of emergency shelter services from TH, specifically in how they operate regarding program policies.
- » Shift RRH (rental assistance) to a minimum of 12-24 months and incorporate more DVHF into existing RRH in Texas to include ongoing support of survivors and use of community engagement advocacy model.

“And what I have seen on rapid, again, I don’t work direct with those programs but what I have seen is that it depends on funding. So, sometimes it’ll be three months only or four months only or six months, it depends on how much funding there is.”

– TCFV TH STAFF

## MORE SURVIVOR-DESIGNED FUTURES

Program staff imagine a future in which they can offer a trauma-informed continuum of housing that is more responsive to the particular needs of survivors.

“More options! Instead of putting people in what [housing systems] have, put them in what they need.”

– TEXAS TH ADVOCATE

Survivors need more options: More mobile advocacy, more help to stay in their own homes, more Domestic Violence Housing First, more financial emergency funds, more flexible support. Transitional housing programs, rapid rehousing, Domestic Violence Housing First, and flexible funding are all strategies that work. The next step now is to expand access to these transformative options so that all survivors in Texas can always have their own place to go.

“There’s not been a day that I don’t care for being with them, because they were there always for me. Even right now, I just still care and I just call them, and I say that they were always there for me.” [28]

– TEXAS TRANSITIONAL HOUSING PARTICIPANT

## TOOLKITS & RESOURCES

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### Domestic Violence Housing First

- » [Domestic Violence Housing First Toolkit](#)
- » [Expanding Services and Cultivating Relationships: Family Resource Center video](#)  
10-minute video from rural Washington state program using Domestic Violence Housing First model

### Mobile Advocacy

- » [Survivor-driven, Trauma-informed Mobile Advocacy Toolkit](#)

### Flexible Funding/Direct Cash Assistance Funds

- » [DASH Flexible Funding Presentation](#)
- » [WSCADV Flexible Funding Technical Assistance](#)  
Includes samples of flexible funding requests forms and processes, webinars and video trainings, and a tip sheet on how to handle the impact of cash assistance to survivors on public benefits they may receive.

### Transitional Housing

- » [NNEDV Transitional Housing Toolkit](#)  
Frequently asked questions, common challenges, best practices, templates to adapt, and resources for additional information and assistance.
- » [Peer Support in Transitional Housing](#)
- » [Tips for Advocates: Implementing Survivor Peer Support](#)

### Equitable Admissions

- » [Intake Screening Form](#)  
Tool from a Washington state bridge housing program is a good example of how to give an upfront overview of what the housing program does (and does not do) to help survivors decide if the program a good fit for them.

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TEXAS COUNCIL ON FAMILY VIOLENCE PROMOTES SAFE AND  
HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS BY SUPPORTING SERVICE PROVIDERS,  
FACILITATING STRATEGIC PREVENTION EFFORTS, AND CREATING  
OPPORTUNITIES FOR FREEDOM FROM DOMESTIC VIOLENCE.

