A Transitional Housing Plan for Safe Harbor

“Guiding Families to Self-Sufficiency”

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Safe Harbor

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Executive Summary

Safe Harbor has a mission to empower survivors of sexual and domestic violence to transform their lives, and promote healthy relationships, and it is the driving factor behind their desire to venture into the field of transitional housing. Taking this step into housing is a gigantic move forward in the progression of the domestic violence movement, since the only present option for housing survivors is emergency shelter, offered only for roughly 30 days. Being able to provide long-term, safe, and affordable housing options for recovery. Many sexual and domestic violence agencies across the country are interested in transitional housing. Safe Harbor intends to be out front in this movement, creating a model plan for others throughout the state and region.

Primary research based on the demand Safe Harbor has seen in 2011 and 2012 revealed the need for transitional housing in the Richmond metropolitan area. A literature search to identify best practices, supplemented by discussion with emergency shelter residents and an interview with the first resident in transitional housing, provided the information that helped to assess Safe Harbor’s goals and progress.

This plan intends to make the following recommendations:

1. Enhance the program services offered to residents

2. Define and develop indicators of success and program outcomes

3. Develop and implement follow-up services and tracking methods
Purpose and Scope

Safe Harbor wants a transitional housing plan because in the past year, it acquired two houses through donation to create transitional housing for survivors of sexual and domestic violence. One of those houses, Harbor House, currently has residents already in the program, and the other, Hope House, has not yet begun housing residents, but will very shortly. Safe Harbor needs a plan, because, transitional housing is new to them. Safe Harbor has a strong interest in pursuing and growing their transitional housing program; a plan will help them to continue on that path. Having transitional housing as part of sexual and domestic violence programs is extremely important. Often, even when survivors are ready and prepared to leave, services are so limited that survivors are not given a real opportunity to create a different life and therefore go back to their unhealthy situation. Emergency shelter, which many domestic violence programs currently provide, lasts only 30-45 days. A month is not enough time to leave a crisis situation, deal with trauma, and put affairs in order to enable survivors to transition into a safe and healthy life. Transitional housing would help bridge a serious gap. Housing is a fundamental and primary human need, and with that, if people are to live healthy and successful lives as Safe Harbor promotes, then having a more extensive housing program for qualifying residents is vital to program success.

Safe Harbor wants to ensure that this program is done right. They want to see how other functioning programs are operating and then make changes to their existing program. Even though the residents that will be participants in the transitional housing
program will have gone through the emergency shelter, the two are very different. Building a bridge between emergency and transitional housing, and managing both sides of the program is the goal of this plan. Emergency shelter is a group living situation; everything is shared, even sometimes rooms depending on the family size and space availability at the shelter. The transitional houses will also be group living, but intends to prepare residents to return to independent living, and be self-sufficient, without the support of the program or other residents.

Setting up space efficiently and in a way that can serve a variety of different people or families at the same time and place can be complex, especially since people will be transitioning in and out at various times. Part of the plan that needs to be implemented is how to manage that process in a way that will be conducive to the mission of the program and to the residents needs. The other part of the plan will be creating ways to keep the residents engaged and participating in the other supportive services available, counseling, groups, house meetings, etc., to set them up for success while teaching them skills to be independent.
About Safe Harbor’s Transitional Housing Program

Safe Harbor was founded in April of 2000. A Registered Nurse at St. Mary’s Hospital advocated within the Bon Secours system to create a domestic violence program in response to the severe lack of safe housing options and services for survivors in the area. As a result, Safe Harbor evolved into a sexual and domestic violence program which provides emergency shelter, counseling services, court advocacy, a 24 hour hotline, hospital accompaniment, child and youth services, community education and outreach. It recently added transitional housing to their list of community supportive services in Henrico County. Services are provided to any person experiencing sexual or domestic violence, all of which are free of charge except for transitional housing.

Safe Harbor currently has two transitional houses, Harbor House and Hope House. Both of the houses have four bedrooms and two bathrooms with a full kitchen, laundry, dining and living area equipped with cable. There is also an office space which has a computer and internet access. Harbor House is located on a bus line and is in a much more convenient location than Hope House. Residents in Hope House need transportation because it is not located on a bus line or in walking distance to very many things. In order to participate in the transitional housing program, a resident would first
have to successfully experience the emergency shelter program and be able to obtain employment. While they are in the emergency shelter program, if they live well with others, keep their spaces clean, find employment or have benefits that count as income, and want to be considered for the transitional housing program they are invited to speak with the house case manager about entering the program.

If the house case manager decides that this person would make a good fit and assuming space is available, the applicant signs a program agreement similar to a lease that lays out obligations and expectations, signed by the tenant and the case manager. The resident and case manager jointly develops and approves a program action plan that identifies goals and objectives, with a timeline. Each resident receives a key to the house they are assigned, and they are free to come and go as needed. Residents must pay their monthly program fee, maintain a safe and clean living environment, have no over-night guests, obtain prior approval for visitors, commit no crimes, use no drugs or alcohol, engage in house meeting, and meet with their counselor and case manager. Meetings with the counselor and case manager are determined on a one-on-one basis as determined by the counselor and case manager.
Need for Transitional Housing in Henrico County

Safe Harbor is the only sexual and domestic violence program which services Henrico County. It is only one of three domestic violence programs in the Richmond-Petersburg metropolitan area that provides emergency shelter or housing for victims of abuse. The Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance, which is the statewide agency on sexual and domestic violence, collects data about the services provided by local sexual and domestic violence programs throughout the state. Data is put into a system called VAdata to measure and track the rates in which services are being provided.

Below, is information from the VAdata report on emergency shelter rates for Safe Harbor for 2011 and 2012. In 2011, Safe Harbor provided over 3,000 nights of shelter, and had to turn away 62 people because their shelter was full. In 2012, Safe Harbor provided nearly 3,000 nights of shelter, and had to turn away about 50 people because their shelter was already full. People that received shelter from Safe Harbor came from all over, with a majority being from Henrico County, but also out of state, location unknown, Chesterfield, Goochland, Hanover, Richmond, and other counties throughout the state.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Nights of Emergency Shelter Provided</td>
<td>3,125</td>
<td>2,934</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Requests for Shelter When Shelter Was Full</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance VAdata Report
Approach & Methodology

This plan addresses the following tasks:

1. Identify a best practices model for Safe Harbor’s transitional housing program. Within that, the key component will be identifying the needs of the residents and the capability of Safe Harbor to provide those needs in the most productive manner.

2. Determine how residents perceive, experience and feel about the program and its quality.

3. Recommend to Safe Harbor changes needed to achieve best practices in transitional housing and respond to feedback from current clientele on service to survivors of sexual and domestic violence.
Identifying a Model

Two documents are referred as models for this plan, Characteristics of Transitional Housing for Homeless Families, by Martha Burt on behalf of the Urban Institute in 2006, and Transitional Housing Services for Victims of Domestic Violence, a report from the Housing Committee of the National Task Force to End Sexual and Domestic Violence by Amy Correia and Anna Melbin in 2005. Both analyze current transitional housing programs of varying size. These studies were used to compare Safe Harbor to other programs and recommend improvements either by adapting existing programs or creating new ones.

Transitional housing has a long history in mental health settings dating back to the 1970s and 1980s, well before it emerged in the area of homelessness, and even domestic violence. The goal was to effectively help transition people back into traditional housing settings once they left mental health facilities or prisons. The concept of community based transitional housing programs also avoided the high cost of keeping people institutionalized, while maintaining a level of supervision for these individuals, since evidence showed high levels of recidivism and return to the institutions. This effort hoped to give individuals the skills and support they needed in order to function independently in their community (Burt 2006).

In the 1980s, homelessness providers and agencies saw similar types of problems as those facing mental health providers, and as a result ventured into transitional housing to provide long term, stable housing to individuals unable to sustain such efforts through the limited services available, typically emergency shelters. The first piece of federal
legislation which supported this effort took place in 1986. The Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act incorporated the Supportive Housing Program (SHP) through the division of Community Planning and Development. However, there were shortfalls with SHP being able to distribute balanced funds to communities across the nation. Therefore, in 1994, “HUD developed the concept of a Continuum of Care (CoC), through which SHP applications would be prioritized through community-wide assessments and planning processes which considered overall community need” (Burt 3). This shift in function dictated that smaller cities, suburbs, and rural counties would be as likely as larger cities to receive SHP funds.

As a result of CoCs, domestic violence programs began to enter into the field of transitional housing, applying for applications for SHP funds, since those programs saw much higher rates of family homelessness in suburbs and rural counties. Burt states, “As of 2005, about half of all transitional housing beds are designated to serve single adults and half are designated to serve families, including families fleeing domestic violence” (3). Research showed, “families who completed their program were twice as likely to move to stable housing as families who left early, and the proportion employed had doubled by the time of program exit, and receipt of most types of public assistance had declined somewhat” (Burt 4). Transitional housing continued to grow exponentially throughout the 1990s which created the need for research to describe and understand the work of the programs.
Best Practices

Characteristics of Transitional Housing for Homeless Families, by Martha Burt, developed from the need to examine the effects of transitional housing programs on its participants. This report was broken down into five main sections: program characteristics, characteristics of tenant families, program services and policies, program outcomes and indicators of success, and next steps. These components will be used to assess Safe Harbor. This study selected five to seven family transitional housing programs from five different CoCs to participate in the group based on the criteria for geographic, racial/ethnic, and economic diversity. The programs selected were: Cleveland and Cuyahoga County, Ohio, Detroit and Wayne County, Michigan, Houston and Harris County, Texas, San Diego City and County, California, and Seattle and King County, Washington.

Program Characteristics

The report begins with very basic information from the programs, such as year the program opened and program size. Most of the programs in the sample are experienced programs with five or more years serving families, and one in five programs opened in 2000 or later. Program size is determined on the number of families a program can serve at one time. The information used in this report for program size was compared to national data and therefore could determine how representative this sample is of all family transitional housing programs in the country. Nationally, more than half of family transitional housing programs are very small, containing three to nine units, serving between 9 and 27 people at a time. However, in
this study only 17 percent of the programs screened are very small. Table 2.1 below exemplifies the comparison between national data and the research sample used here (Burt 12).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program size, in number of family units</th>
<th>National distribution of TH programs reported to HUD in 2004 (n ~ 7,000)</th>
<th>Programs with screening interviews for this research (n = 53)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3–9 units</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10–19 units</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20–29 units</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30–39 units</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40+ units</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/411369_transitional_housing.pdf

Staffing levels were an important component of the program characteristics. It is stated that, “in transitional housing, staff are often what makes “the difference” for a family in sustaining a commitment to do what it takes to leave homelessness” (Burt 13). Focus groups with residents reported having staff to talk to and having someone they can trust as factors in successful programs. This survey looked at staffing in two ways, the overall number of staff and the number of staff available at different times of the day or week. On average, the programs surveyed have 6.9 full-time staff, 2.4 part-time staff, and 7.6 full-time equivalents, with 5.2 staff during regular weekday hours, 1.8 staff on weekday evenings, and 1.4 staff on weekends. Table 2.2 below shows the proportion of family transitional housing programs staffing levels and times staff are available (Burt 13). Of course, staffing levels are directly related to program size; therefore, larger programs have many more staff.
Length of stay is one of the key components that characterize transitional housing programs, and therefore this study surveyed programs to see how long they allowed clients to stay and how long residents actually stay. The results of the survey found that the average maximum length of stay is 21 months, with 68 percent of programs allowing 24 months, which is also HUDs maximum length of stay. However, 21 percent of programs only allow residents to stay 12 months or fewer. Relatively few families take advantage of the full potential of transitional housing programs, as shown below in table 2.4. The mean length of stay is 12 months, with an average of 68 percent of families leaving the program within one year; 23 percent between 13 and 18 months, 14 percent between 19 and 23 months. Only two percent of families in the programs studied stayed the full 24 months.
Some families are unable to settle into transitional housing and leave the program quickly. Out of 1 in 6 programs, more than 25 percent of families leave within one to three months. It is unclear in this study whether those families successfully exited the program and needed a shorter amount of time to gain stability, or if the program was not designed in a way that supported their needs at the time. It is important to be able to gain access to this information to see where potential gaps could be and how the program could be improved if clients are exiting unsuccessfully. Program size, however, is directly related to length of stay. Smaller programs are shown to have more than half of the families leave in less than 12 months, whereas the stay for larger programs is between 13 and 18 months (Burt 15).

**Characteristics of Tenant Families**

This section in the, *Characteristics of Transitional Housing for Homeless Families*, looks at the characteristics of homeless families that lead them to transitional housing programs. However, this plan looks at the characteristics of people experiencing domestic violence that lead them to transitional housing programs, and therefore will use other secondary data to examine this section. In, *Transitional Housing Services for*
Victims of Domestic Violence, Amy Correia and Anna Melbin state that “without access to housing options, women fleeing from abusive relationships are often forced to live in substandard conditions or return to their batterers. While many battered women need only short-term, emergency shelter, others face numerous barriers to achieving independence free from the abuse and require long-term housing assistance and a variety of support services” (2). The level of crisis and trauma people are experiencing as they immediately become homeless when fleeing a situation must be recognized in the planning process. The level of safety and stability a program provides determines the likelihood that a victim will remain in the program and remain away from their abuser. With that said it is important to keep the needs and best interest of the survivors at the forefront of this plan.

Program Services and Policies

Correia and Melbin also developed a study which surveyed transitional housing programs specifically serving survivors of domestic violence. Their results showed that program staff made an effort to incorporate the following into program policies and services: Survivors experiences should inform and shape the services provided with participants involved at all levels of program planning, development, and implementation, long-term support being critical to maintaining a safer life, economic independence being essential to long-term stability, and housing is crucial, for without safe and secure housing as a base, families cannot achieve stability. Therefore programs should assist with helping to build a positive credit history and teach skills to maintain permanent housing (5).
Programs offer a range of supportive services; some are mandatory and some voluntary, depending on the program. However, from their research, Correia and Melbin were able to compile a list of services offered by the programs. The list includes counseling, which can be individual, peer, domestic or sexual assault support groups, mental health therapy, parenting groups, or substance abuse support groups. Case management and advocacy sets individualized goals and a means to achieve the plan. A number of referrals can also be made to other community resources for food, clothing, furniture, childcare, mental health services, legal assistance, etc. This also includes follow-up services varying between six months to two years after exiting the program. Financial assistance is provided, often based on the percentage of monthly income the resident earns, but sometimes also in the form of a program fee. Other skill-building and education services are often provided, and those can include: conflict resolution or communication skills, health literacy services, homeownership skills, life-skills classes, budgeting and credit repair, computer literacy, and vocational or job-skills training. Child and youth services programs provide counseling, education, and child care or recreation.

Supportive services distinguish transitional housing from affordable housing. Burt also looked at services offered by family transitional housing programs, and created a list of supportive services that a program may offer. Table 4.1, then looks at the proportion of transitional housing programs that offer the services on the list and how those services are organized. The services highlighted in gray offer at least 75 percent of programs, typically known as core services, on site. The most common services provided are case management and budgeting or money management, but other very common services
they found were conflict resolution skills, daily living skills, building support systems, and help to access to housing. Services highlighted in dark gray or left white are considered to be peripheral (Burt 29).

Table 4: Services Available At or Through Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Type</th>
<th>At program site</th>
<th>Off site, but clear commitment</th>
<th>By referral ONLY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Case management--including referrals, assistance obtaining benefits, &quot;whatever it takes&quot;</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenant Stabilization- helps tenants learn to live in housing, do ADLs, get along with fellow tenants and the landlord, etc.</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Build Support Systems- help tenants create and participate in community within project, find supports externally</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Needs- food, clothing</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental Health, outpatient counseling, therapy, medications and medis management</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medications- monitoring and dispensing</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Health Care- for acute &amp; chronic physical health conditions</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIV/AIDS- specialized health care</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substance Abuse- self-help options, harm reduction services</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substance Abuse- 12-step oriented treatment services</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relapse prevention and crisis intervention—substance abuse</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relapse prevention and crisis intervention—mental illness and emotional problems</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment related- assistance in job placement</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment related- vocational training</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal Services- related to civil (rent arrears, family law, uncollected benefits) or criminal (warrants, minor infractions, etc.) matters</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistance in accessing housing (the actual housing unit)</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistance in accessing entitlements (including housing subsidies)</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veterans Services</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistance in reunifying with family</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily living skills training</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict resolution training</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budgeting and money management training</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representative- petty services</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children related- Tutoring after-school, school-support</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children related- Child care</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family related- DV, PTSD, Trauma-related</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/411369_transitional_housing.pdf

Case management was by far the leading service used, followed by counseling. Case management can mean different things at different times and places, but typically it involves a case manager working with the resident to create a program plan and then follow up on implementing and carrying out the goals of that plan. Meeting frequency tends to be higher during the beginning months of the program, but the most successful
programs create individual plans and recommendations based on the needs of each family, as opposed to having a set rule for how often one needs to meet with their case manager or counselor (Burt 32).

Finally, program rules and policies are the last indicator the study looked at for this section. They wanted to determine the nature of life inside a transitional housing program. They found that 68 percent of programs have common space, such as a living room, where families can socialize or have meetings. Some 47 percent of families have a key to their room, and 94 percent of programs have a written agreement with resident on the terms of their stay for a specified amount of time. Almost all transitional housing programs charge for participation and stay. About 47 percent of programs charge residents 30 percent of their income as rent. This is typically seen in smaller programs. An additional 13 percent charge the same 30 percent of income as a service fee, and 67 percent will dismiss a family for persistent nonpayment. Lastly, almost 100 percent of programs have rules against the use of alcohol, illegal substances, or illegal or criminal activity. All have different rules determining when a person or family will be dismissed from the program as the result of breaking rules.

**Program Outcomes and Indicators of Success**

This section analyzes a successful exit from a transitional housing program. According to this survey, and for most programs, a successful exit is defined by the standards of HUDs Supportive Housing Program. It states, “Obtaining and retaining permanent housing, acquiring adequate income through employment, benefits, or both, increased self-determination, and achieving the maximum self-sufficiency possible” (Burt 35). Most programs expect that the entire service plan be completed for it to be a
successful exit. Several of the programs needed at least 80 percent of the plan to be completed and only one program wanted 50 percent completion of the plan in order to be considered a successful exit. Few (10 percent) define success only after knowing what happens once the family has left the program and has been stable for 6 months to a year. Table 5.1 shows the average time for families to have a successful exit from the program. About half the programs stated that families left the program successfully in less than six months, but this was not typical for all programs. The other programs all said the shortest time to have a successful exit was between 7 and 12 months, with most stating around 12 months as the shortest amount of time to leave successfully (Burt 36).

![Table 5: Average Time to Successful Exit](source: http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/411369_transitional_housing.pdf)

Measuring program effectiveness is done through the follow-up of services provided to families after they have exited the program. Some 43 percent of programs follow families after they exit for 6 to 12 months, to offer both supportive services and to track outcomes. Programs typically track about 10 main outcomes. The four most common indicators of program effectiveness were: where families go after they leave the program, whether families obtained a stable income source, whether families are still
stable in housing after a significant amount of time, and resources used by families to access permanent housing. Programs use a variety of different tracking methods to acquire this information. The two most common methods are phone or personal contact at regular intervals, and maintaining contact through a case manager (Burt 38).

The programs make this effort to see if transitional housing helps to end domestic violence. The first step is to help the family achieve safe, permanent housing, but the overall goal is to help the family attain self-sufficiency and remain safe, independent, and free from violence. Table 5.2 shows the destinations of families once they exit the program. An average of 70 percent of families went to permanent housing, with or without subsidies and supports. The largest proportion, 36 percent, went to conventional housing for which they did not have a rent subsidy. However, 22 percent, received a rent subsidy for regular housing in the community. 13 percent went back to living with one’s family, but only four percent went back to being homeless. For about 10 percent of families, the destination after they exit transitional housing is unknown. Housing affordability and availability of affordable housing play large roles in this factor as well (Burt 39).
Table 6: Destinations of Families at Program Exit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proportion of program families exiting to:</th>
<th>Affordable permanent housing:</th>
<th></th>
<th>Reunite with family</th>
<th>Health institution (hospital, MH facility)</th>
<th>Criminal justice institution</th>
<th>Back to homelessness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Without subsidy or supports</td>
<td>With subsidy, without supports</td>
<td>With subsidy and supports*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1–10%</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11–25%</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26–50%</td>
<td>31</td>
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* This category may include permanent supportive housing in the HUD sense, but it mostly refers to people who leave TH programs with a rent subsidy and continue to receive support from the program.

Source: http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/411369_transitional_housing.pdf
Summary of Findings

Figure 1: Side View of Hope House

Program Characteristics

This section includes very introductory and basic program information. Safe Harbor is generally in line with the programs in the study. One in five programs opened in 2000 or later, and while in the last year Safe Harbor has entered the transitional housing field, they have been operating a domestic violence program since 2000. Nationally, more than half of family transitional housing programs are very small, containing three to nine units, serving between 9 and 27 people at a time (Burt 12). Between Safe Harbor’s two houses, there are between six and eight units or rooms,
depending on how space is divided and based on the number of families presently in the program.

Program configuration for transitional housing programs can take on a number of different styles, including single-site, scattered-site, clustered-scattered, and mixed use. Safe Harbor operates as a clustered-scattered model which means that the program controls more than one multi-unit building in different places where it houses families. In this study, slightly over half of the programs are single site, but 15 percent operate as clustered-scattered models. Scattered site programs are even further differentiated by programs that allow families to remain in the housing after successful completion of the program as a way of avoiding making yet another move and transition into permanent housing. From this sample, 23 percent of programs have this option (Burt 12). This is not a realistic option for Safe Harbor to consider at this point. However, it could be an option to pursue as the program continues to grow. If Safe Harbor is able to acquire additional houses, the program could turn one of the houses into a form of permanent supportive housing for people who are unable to acquire permanent housing otherwise. This method looks similar to transitional housing in the sense that multiple families still live in the same house, but there is no time frame for when they have to exit.

Staffing was seen as a critical component of successful transitional housing programs. Residents surveyed in the study portrayed the importance of having staff they could talk to and who understood and supported them through the process. This resonates very clearly with the feedback received from residents both in emergency shelter and transitional housing with Safe Harbor. It was noted in the interview with a resident, that the Housing Case Manager really made the difference for this individual.
Obviously, they were in a new place and very tense because of recent trauma they had experienced, and this person reiterated how the Housing Case Manager time and time again reassured her and helped her every time she reached out. This feeling was also present during the time spent in the emergency shelter learning about Safe Harbor and its processes.

Safe Harbor differs here on the amount of staff it has dedicated to transitional housing in comparison to other programs. In the study, the average number of staff is nearly seven and many of the programs have staff working evenings and weekends. This is not the case with Safe Harbor. One housing case manager manages both the emergency shelter and transitional housing program. This staff position does not work nights or weekends. However, on-call staff can be reached 24 hours a day through a 24 hour hotline service if there are emergencies. Having staff available has proved to be decisive in people having success in the programs. Therefore, finding funding to add additional staff, not only to help support the Housing Case Manager, but to assist residents would be beneficial. Some of the programs studied provided daycare within the program, which could be an option for Safe Harbor if additional staffing is added. These staff people could also spend time looking for other opportunities to help grow the program and expand beyond the current two transitional houses.

Length of stay differentiates transitional housing from other types of housing programs. The results of the survey found that the average maximum length of stay is 21 months, with 68 percent of programs allowing 24 months, which is also HUDs maximum length of stay (Burt 15). While this option is offered, typically participants do not utilize the full potential of the program, for various reasons. Results show that the
mean length of stay is 12 months, with an average of 68 percent of families leaving the program within one year. 23 percent leave between 13 and 18 months, 14 percent leave between 19 and 23 months, and only 2 percent of families in the programs studied stayed the full 24 months (Burt 15).

Since Safe Harbor has only recently begun its transitional housing program, the scope for this particular criterion is very limited. However, three people enrolled in and began the program but left within days or weeks, with one person returning fairly quickly back into the program; nine people have enrolled and are still currently in the program. No one has completed the program, but one resident and her daughter will be successfully exiting in the coming months. As Safe Harbor’s transitional housing program continues to operate and grow, it will be important for them to learn and track why people exit the program quickly or unsuccessfully.

Typically, an exit interview is done along with a room/house inspection prior to the person or family leaving the program. This could be a time where the Housing Case Manager discusses with the client what elements of the program did not work for them or what in their life that prevents them from continuing. Following that conversation, there could be a system for documenting and tracking that information. If possible, follow up of residents after they exit the program is desirable. Programs in the study typically did this by phone or by trying to maintain case management or counseling with clients. This information would also be beneficial to have if Safe Harbor ever plans to apply for larger grants, which would want to see this information.
Characteristics of Tenant Families

Research shows that some survivors of sexual and domestic violence face numerous barriers to achieving independence free from the abuse and require long-term housing assistance and a variety of support services (Correia and Melbin 2). This plan places high priority on meeting the needs of survivors. Due to the location of Safe Harbor in Richmond, they service a vast variety of individuals coming from all different paths and walks of life. Immigrants speaking different languages, people of various races, ethnicities, and cultures, and a variety of ages and incomes come to Safe Harbor. This diversity can sometimes require innovative planning to accommodate the needs of various kinds of people. Being able to place people in rooms with others with whom they can more easily communicate and get along with might be necessary. Also, providing food and décor that will represent and reflect various cultures and identities is critical. Programs need access to language services that can translate between staff and client, as well as having staff people who are trained to provide culturally competent services to survivors of violence. Safe Harbor continues to work on this area with training and education of staff, and a sustained effort to make their services inclusive to all people. Diversity in the staff and volunteers, as well as access to language-line services enables translation for most languages.

Program Services and Policies

Safe Harbor differs from many sexual and domestic violence programs in that it avoids having too many rules or policies. There are various schools of thought on how to best run a program. Some have very stringent rules for residents, some have very few, and some in-between. Safe Harbor believes that while programs need to run and
function successfully, people experiencing recent trauma, abuse, power and control do not need to leave those situations and enter an environment which acts in the same way. Instead, they sign a contract specifying expectations. The programs in the study had some form of lease or contract with the residents, intended to accustom residents to a lease when they rent their own housing.

In conjunction with housing, programs offer supportive services to help them live independently. Counseling and case management are the two main supportive services found to be most valuable in transitional housing programs. According to the survey, these services were typically used more frequent in the beginning months of the program. While Safe Harbor has an excellent case management and counseling program, which residents have said to be incredibly helpful. It needs to be decided how often to offer services and whether they should be voluntary or mandatory are critical issues.

The best course of action is to have individual plans for each person or family. When the person or family is going to enter transitional housing, the Housing Case Manager would sit down and have a face to face discussion about what the needs of the client are, the expectations of the program, and then try to meet the client where they currently are with creating an individual action plan which will help them to be successful. For some people, counseling may be much more critical and needed more frequently than for others, but if a set rule is in place about how often one needs counseling, it is not likely to be very effective. Programs which have done individual plans are shown to be much more successful.
Programs in the study also provide financial assistance in a variety of ways, most often in the form of a housing subsidy or fee. Safe Harbor has a program fee of 300 dollars per month for the length of the stay. Some programs in the study have other forms of financial incentives, where a portion of the fee they pay goes back to the resident towards permanent housing when they are ready to successfully exit the program. This is possibly a strategy that Safe Harbor would want to implement as an incentive for residents. Another area where Safe Harbor could improve is by offering a range of other supportive services for the residents. In the study, many of the programs also offered life skills classes, cooking classes, financial education classes, conflict resolution and communication skills classes, information on being healthy, etc.

This was also a question posed to residents in the survey conducted for Safe Harbor, and seemed to be of interest. Residents are interested in doing as much as possible to take advantage of the opportunity they are being given. The more opportunities they have to be exposed to and learn new things, the better. Safe Harbor could institute more of these types of classes and include both residents from the transitional housing program and emergency shelter, and hold them on a regular or rotating basis which would give people flexibility in being able to participate, either around their schedule or as new people rotate into the program.

Finally, follow up services are another area Safe Harbor could expand and improve upon. All of the programs in the study do some form of follow up services with the residents. This is done to keep them engaged in support services, counseling and case management; or to track whether or not they are maintaining independent living successfully. The programs studied do follow up services in a range of different ways,
however, it could be very useful for Safe Harbor to track what is happening with their clients once they leave transitional housing. This could be an evaluation process for the program as much as it could be a way to remain in contact with the clients to make sure they are continuing to do well. If clients are leaving the program successfully but then cannot maintain their independence, it is possible that Safe Harbor would then be able to try and make some changes to the program to see if there were things that needed to be added or adjusted to better set their clients up for success. Even if there was not anything the program could change to affect such an outcome, being able to track and understand patterns in post-transitional housing would provide extremely valuable information.

Another policy which many programs have, which Safe Harbor does not yet have, is what will happen when people either pay their program fee continually late, or have a number of nonpayment’s. The study showed that 67 percent of programs dismiss residents for persistent nonpayment (Burt 32). Regardless of what Safe Harbor decides is best for their program, having a policy already in place which will address this particular issue is important. While dismissing people from the program is not ideal, the ultimate goal of the program is to help people be self-sufficient and successful. If they are not in some way held accountable while in the program, then it is possible that they are not really being set up to be successful, but enabled, since life after the program will not typically be so lenient. The same goes for dismissing people on the grounds of breaking rules. Programs varied much more greatly on how they handle dismissal based on breaking rules. Nearly 100 percent of programs had a zero tolerance for
Substance or alcohol use or any form of violence. Implementing such policies ahead of time before any incidents occur is important.

Program Outcomes and Indicators of Success

In order for Safe Harbor to measure their effectiveness, and ensure they are providing the best possible service, there need to be clearly defined indicators of success. The study used looked at successful exits as their indicator of success for the programs surveyed. Most programs do this by seeing how much of the service plan residents complete before their exit. A majority of the programs define a successful exit based on 100 percent completion of the program, whereas several of the programs only looked for 80 percent completion. Only one of the programs had a 50 percent requirement for completion of the service plan in order to be viewed as a successful exit. The recommendation is to have between 80 and 100 percent completion of the agreed upon service plan for Safe Harbor residents before they exit from the program.

In addition to that, a further recommendation, which has been briefly outlined above, is to define a successful exit based on follow-up within 6 months to a year after the person exits the program. This could include whether they maintain stable, permanent housing, sustain employment, remain safe, etc. It could be easier for some people to maintain success while in somewhat of a structured program, but then again feel unable to maintain that success completely on their own. Some programs said the average amount of time needed to exit successfully was 6 months, but most programs ranged at about a year. Once Safe Harbor has more clients and continues providing transitional housing longer, it will be interesting to see what will typically work for their residents.
Program effectiveness is the other component to program accountability to maintaining the best possible services. The study looks at how programs use methods and tools to track and follow up with clients after they exit. The four most commonly used tracking outcomes were recording: where families go after they leave the program, whether families obtained a stable income source, whether families are still stable in housing after a significant amount of time, and what resources are used by families to access permanent housing (Burt 38). Different tracking methods are used to obtain this information, but typically phone or personal contact at regular meetings or continued case management are most commonly used.

Safe Harbor should adopt these tracking outcomes to follow up with clients who leave the program. A potential problem to doing follow-up with this particular community is confidentiality and safety. A way to try and get around this would be to include a potential plan for contact in either the service plan, exit interview, or both. Those conducting the follow up could call during an arranged time of day, on particular days, and not leave a message, or give identifying information when they call, just in case the client is no longer in a safe, stable environment. However, this continued effort would allow the program to reconnect and offer services once again if the client has ended up in an unhealthy situation.

Currently, there has not been anyone who has successfully exited the program, but this could be a good time to work the follow-up component into the volunteer training. Since there is only one staff person dedicated to transitional housing work at this time, volunteers could be used to follow-up with residents once the time comes. They would be trained on the proper procedures for getting in touch with clients and
how to document the information they receive. This would also give Safe Harbor staff an opportunity to fine tune the details of what a successful exit would look like, how follow-up and tracking should be conducted and documented, and how that information will get conveyed to their clients during the process. Maintaining in contact with the program after completion has shown to be highly successful in other programs throughout the country, and from the way residents feel about their relationship with staff at Safe Harbor, it seems likely the same trend would be successful for this program as well.

**Resident Involvement**

After conducting quite a bit of research, I took the information I learned and created interview questions that I could discuss with residents in Safe Harbor’s transitional housing program. I wanted to be able to find out firsthand how people are experiencing the program as it is currently set up. I formulated questions directly from the different sections that were identified as areas of interest in the study written by Martha Burt. There is currently only one person living in one of the houses with her teenage daughter, so I began my interview process with her. I also spoke with different residents in the emergency shelter to see what their experience was like and what their needs were in terms of creating sustainability. The interview consists of 10 questions, all of which relate directly to the individual’s experience living and participating in the program.

The person I was able to speak with has been living in the house for a number of months now and is really enjoying it and thankful for her opportunity. Overall, she had a
very positive experience and could not think of anything she would want to change about the program. She felt like there were not a lot of rules, and that the rules that were there, were necessary and there to keep them safe. She thought the rules helped to create a peaceful environment, one that is courteous to others also living at the house. She liked that residents had to give the names of people that would regularly be visiting so that the program was aware of who was coming and going in order to maintain everyone’s safety. She felt like there was enough freedom to feel independent.

Counseling was the supportive service that she found to be most beneficial. She has difficulty scheduling and finding time to be able to see her counselor or case manager because of her tedious school schedule, but she said that everyone is very flexible with her, and always help her out a tremendous amount when she can see them. Since people are coming to the program from all walks of life, she thought it would be helpful for the program to offer other forms of supportive services such as conflict resolution and life skills classes. She suggested that anything the program can do to help women coming from the situations they do to be better would be helpful.

Having an individual action plan was extremely helpful to her. It helped her to realize what an opportunity she had and what resources were available to help her accomplish her goals. She found the process to be very motivating. The design of the house makes her feel completely at home. She likes that it is located in a neighborhood and that no one would ever know it was a transitional housing program. There were no safety concerns that she had living there and felt very comfortable and safe in the program. The house manager is what really made the difference for her. She said that the house manager was always there, and that she called on her constantly, but she was always
there to help and support her. Any time an issue did come up the case manager was right there to take care of everything. In all, she was mostly thankful for the opportunity. She was halfway through school when situations happened that forced her to involve police. Prior to this experience, she never even knew services like this existed. The police helped get her connected to Safe Harbor and as a result she was able to stay in school. She will remain in the house until she finishes school at the end of this spring and until her daughter finishes out the year in her current school. Now she feels like she is able to provide for her family on her own, and will not have to live off of any system. Having the opportunity to participate in this program completely made the difference for this young woman. If there was no transitional housing program, there is no telling where she would be right now. According to her, it would not be finishing up school. It is experiences like this, that reinforce why the continuation and growth of this work is so important.
Vision

There is enormous potential to implement a model transitional housing program that can not only meet the demand of people needing safe and permanent housing in Henrico County, but also to be replicated throughout the state and region. Safe Harbor’s transitional housing program builds a bridge from emergency shelter to permanent housing for survivors of sexual and domestic violence. With the adoption of the suggestions made in this plan, Safe Harbor can continue to grow and advance in the field. Their program is already extremely successful and well known in the Richmond metropolitan area for making a significant difference in the community. Emerging into the realm of transitional housing only seems like the appropriate next step for Safe Harbor, as its mission intends to end domestic violence; this program will help survivors to make that a reality.
Goals

After identifying and analyzing a best practices model, a comparison was done between what is successfully being done in the transitional housing field to what Safe Harbor has currently implemented. From that comparison there are a number of areas where Safe Harbor could make improvements; however, three main goals have been identified as areas where Safe Harbor can improve their services the most.

1. Enhance the program services offered to residents

2. Define and develop indicators of success and program outcomes

3. Develop and implement follow-up services and tracking methods
Implementation

Since Safe Harbor is just beginning the process of housing people in their transitional housing program, this is a great time to be implementing new policies, procedures, and making changes to enhance the effectiveness of the program. All of the recommendations being made should be able to be implemented within one to two years, with some components possibly being contingent upon funding.

Goal 1: Enhance the program services offered to residents

Program services are the supportive services a program offers in conjunction with providing housing. Typically, these services are offered to support people in their transition and equip them for living independently. This is a particular area of the study where Safe Harbor has room for growth. Counseling and case management are the two main supportive services found to be used in transitional housing programs. They were also shown to be two of the most successful resources for people in such programs. However, those services are not enough to accomplish the goal of nurturing independence and self-sufficiency. According to both national research and from inquiry
with residents at Safe Harbor, the option of being able to participate in an array of other program services is well received and desired. Options for other programs are: life skills classes, cooking classes, financial education classes, conflict resolution and communication skills classes, information on being healthy, etc.

Residents are interested in doing as much as possible to take advantage of the opportunity they are being given. The more opportunities they have to be exposed to and learn new things, the better. Safe Harbor could institute more of these types of classes and include both residents from the transitional housing program and emergency shelter, and hold them on a regular or rotating basis which would give people flexibility in being able to participate, either around their schedule or as new people rotate into the program.

Since funding could potentially be an issue for expanding services, it is vital to think of alternative ways of accomplishing this goal. One option would be to network with Safe Harbor volunteers. Many people come through the volunteer program each year eager and ready to share their ideas, help, and support with the program. It is likely that some of these individuals have the talents or community connections to facilitate some of the programs suggested. Another option is to use the skills and expertise of the staff. Each month or quarter a different staff person could facilitate a class in an area they are competent in. Finally, on a continual basis, staff should be finding ways to inform and encourage residents to participate in health fairs, community educational sessions, and other opportunities which are already being offered in the community or by other programs. These opportunities should be posted in an area or through a method of communication with which residents could easily and readily access
information. Participating in some of these events could also be connected to their individual action plans.

**Goal 2: Define and develop indicators of success and program outcomes**

In order for Safe Harbor to measure their effectiveness, and ensure they are providing the best possible service, there need to be clearly defined indicators of success. The field typically defines indicators of success based on percentage of completion of the individual action plan upon exiting the program. The recommendation for Safe Harbor is to adopt a definition that would define a successful exit as one which 80-100 percent of the individual action plan was completed. In addition to that, a further recommendation is to define a successful exit based on follow-up within 6 months to a year after the person exits the program. This could include whether they maintain stable, permanent housing, sustain employment, remain safe, or based on other areas that have been identified as needed areas of improvement in their action plan.

Once staff has adopted a definition and clear set of criteria, implementation could happen through the use of hotline volunteers to make follow up phone calls to check in with prior residents or through case management and counseling if residents continue receiving services from the program even after they exit housing. This is not only a way to offer support to residents, but it could also be a way to reconnect them to services if needed.

**Goal 3: Develop and implement follow-up services and tracking methods**

In conjunction with goal 2, developing and implementing follow up services and a way to track those services is crucial to the success of the program. Program
effectiveness is the other component to program accountability to maintaining the best possible services. The study looks at how programs use methods and tools to track and follow up with clients after they exit. The four most commonly used tracking outcomes were recording: where families go after they leave the program, whether families obtained a stable income source, whether families are still stable in housing after a significant amount of time (typically 6 months to a year), and what resources are used by families to access permanent housing (Burt 38). The recommendation is for Safe Harbor to adopt the tracking outcomes listed above, and to use that criteria in following up with residents. Different tracking methods are used to obtain this information, but typically phone or personal contact at regular meetings or continued case management is most commonly used. Again, follow up services can be completed by hotline or other volunteers as well as through counselors and case managers that continue to work with residents after they exit housing.

Safe Harbor should adopt these tracking outcomes to follow up with clients who leave the program, both successfully and unsuccessfully. A potential problem to doing follow-up with this particular community is confidentiality and safety. A way to try and get around this would be to include a potential plan for contact in either the service plan, exit interview, or both. Those conducting the follow up could call during an arranged time of day, on particular days, and not leave a message, or give identifying information when they call, just in case the client is no longer in a safe, stable environment. However, this continued effort would allow the program to reconnect and offer services once again if the client has ended up in an unhealthy situation.
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Thank you for your interest in Safe Harbor Transitional Housing. Before you begin the transitional housing process, or would like information about the program, please read the following information carefully.

What is Safe Harbor Transitional Housing?

Safe Harbor has a transitional housing program designed to provide affordable rent and utility free temporary shelter and support services so that residents can save money, regain confidence, and then move into permanent housing. The design and support of the transitional housing program is to prepare residents for success as they move forward independently.

What is the Transitional Housing Program like?

Safe Harbor has two transitional houses, Harbor House and Hope House. The program provides housing in two single-family homes at private locations within Henrico County. The program provides private, apartment style units to each client or family, but all other spaces in the house are communal. The houses are fully furnished, including; dishes, pots, pans, linens, towels, etc. There is a washer and dryer on site, as well as a telephone, internet, and cable.

What are the requirements to be involved with Safe Harbor Transitional Housing?
Some of the requirements for the program are current employment, ability to live well with others, case management, attending scheduled meetings, abiding by program rules, and maintain proper upkeep of the house and property.

Anyone interested in the program should contact the House Case Manager to see if this program would be a good fit.

TRANSITIONAL HOUSING PROGRAM CONTRACT

It is important that you are clear about the expectations that are in place to help you while you are in this program. We want to ensure that all participants understand the expectations and have a clean, safe, and healthy environment in which to live. If you have any questions as you read this, please ask staff to clarify. Please do not sign this contract until you understand it. By signing this contract, you are agreeing to the terms and conditions detailed below.

**Satisfactory Participation**

Participant agrees that being part of this program is contingent on the participant’s satisfactory participation as determined solely by Safe Harbor.

**Case Management**

Participant agrees to:

- Follow all Safe Harbor policies and procedures.
- Maintain employment for the duration of this contract.
- Work toward goals that have been mutually agreed upon with staff, and make consistent progress toward accomplishing those goals which will lead towards independence, self-sufficiency, and stable housing.
- Meet regularly with the counseling and case management staff. The frequency of these meetings will be negotiated before you enter the program.
• Actively participate in any counseling recommended by the program and follow all professional recommendations.
• Engage in services with appropriate community agencies, as coordinated by you and staff.
• Attend any scheduled house meetings.

Financial
Participant agrees to:

• Pay a monthly program service fee of $300. The program fee is due on the 5th of each month.
• Pay for any damages to your room and for any replacement keys.
• Not make any duplicate keys and be sure to report lost keys immediately. If you are ever locked out of the house, call the hotline and ask to speak to the staff person on-call.
• Give not less than a thirty-day notice when you intend to leave Safe Harbor, and have your room inspected by a staff member.
• Acknowledge that Safe Harbor is not responsible for the damage, loss, or theft of any participant personal property.

Housing Rules
Participant agrees to:

• Keep the location of the program confidential and not invite any guests without prior staff approval. Guests are prohibited between the hours of 9:00 pm and 9:00 am.
• Understand that a diverse group of people will be living in the house, and you agree to maintain respect for all individuals at all times.
• Keep your room and the community areas in a clean and safe condition.
• Allow regular inspection of rooms by staff.
• Report any maintenance or repair issues promptly. If the situation is urgent, call the hotline and ask to speak to the staff person on-call. If it is not urgent, notify the House Case Manager during normal business hours.
• Make no permanent alterations to the property without staff approval (e.g. nailing items into the walls).
• Follow the rules that prohibit:
  1. animals
  2. overnight guests
  3. smoking inside the house
  4. using the fireplaces
  5. leaving anything cooking unattended
  6. firearms or other weapons
  7. alcohol or drugs
  8. intoxication by alcohol or drugs.
Violation of Rules

Participant agrees that Safe Harbor may terminate this agreement and expel the participant if at any time Safe Harbor, in its sole discretion, determines that the participant has violated any of the terms of this agreement. Participant shall vacate the transitional housing should Safe Harbor determine that the participant has violated any of the rules governing the program or this agreement.

Termination of Program

Safe Harbor may terminate the transitional housing program at any time. If it does, Safe Harbor shall have no responsibility or liability of any sort to the participant.

Release of Liability

Participant agrees to release from liability and hold harmless Safe Harbor and its employees, volunteers, invitees, agents, or any person or entity associated with Safe Harbor in any manner. Participant understands that Safe Harbor is a nonprofit corporation and has no duty to the participant other than being fair and reasonable in its dealing with the participant.

I, _________________________________, have read the above information and I have been given a copy. I agree to follow the terms of this contract and all rules and expectations during my residency at Safe Harbor. I understand that failure to do so may result in my termination from Safe Harbor. I further understand that no tenancy is established as a result of this agreement.

I also understand that if I am not able to meet these expectations consistently in the next thirty days, I will not be allowed to remain with Safe Harbor. At any time I do not fulfill program expectations I understand that I will be asked to leave.

Program Participant                  Date
Interview Questions for Safe Harbor Transitional Housing Residents

Statement of Confidentiality: Before beginning the interview, I want to explain to you the reason for this study, and to thank you for taking your time to participate. Confidentiality is extremely important and therefore, absolutely no personally identifying information will be used to ensure your safety.

1. How do you feel about the programs rules/amount of rules?

2. Are the rules in place helpful in leading to creating your independence?

3. Are the expectations of residents fair?

4. Any other services or types of support that would be helpful? (Ex. Conflict resolution or life skills classes, etc)

5. Is the case management and counseling actually helpful or just part of a requirement?

6. Does having an individual action plan help you to develop and work towards goals?

7. Things you would change/add to the program to make it successful?
8. Does the design of the program/house make you feel “at home”? Improvements?

9. Considering its group living, do you feel like you have enough privacy and independence?

10. Do you have any safety concerns living in this transitional housing program?