

HEALTH IN ALL POLICIES BEST AND INNOVATIVE PRACTICES



SUMMARY

Health in All Policies recognizes that health is determined not only by genetics, health care, and individual behaviors but by a complex set of social, economic and environmental factors. HiAP is a collaborative approach to engage all sectors and branches of government to ensure that the potential health consequences are identified and considered during decision-making processes.

THE GOAL OF THIS DOCUMENT IS

This document draws upon the best practices and innovative approaches in the housing sector that advance positive health outcomes.

The document describes current action in Vermont and outlines approaches for future planning to synergistically meet housing and health goals.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Safe, stable and affordable housing is an essential element of healthy communities and the opportunity for living long and well.

The connections between health and housing are significant, and there is increasing recognition across the public health and housing fields that in order to combat unhealthy housing conditions and related health outcomes, a comprehensive and coordinated approach to programs, policies, and resources is vital.

SECTOR - HOUSING

The Agency of Commerce and Community Development (ACCD) helps Vermonters improve their quality of life and build strong communities.

Elaine Haney,
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The Agency of Human Services seeks to improve the conditions and well-being of Vermonters and protect those who cannot protect themselves.

Alison Harte,
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The Vermont Housing Conservation Board promotes a comprehensive approach to affordable housing and community development linked with land conservation and historic preservation.

Jennifer Hollar,
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The Vermont Housing Finance Agency seeks to finance and promote affordable, safe and decent housing opportunities for low- and moderate-income Vermonters

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BUDGET

**HOUSING
CONDITIONS**

Provide funding to private-sector landlords to remove health or safety hazards through housing loan and grants programs. Provide Rental Housing Health Code and Registration compliance support.**

Sustain and expand financial support for healthy housing initiatives, such as lead, asbestos, and mold abatement across state agencies to promote further collaboration and reach.

Provide funding for accessibility improvements to homes - particularly with funding to Vermont Center for Independent Living

Expand financial support for high utility costs through the Federal Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program, as well as similar state and voluntary programs that assist households with unaffordable cooling and electricity bills.

Increase funding and resources for, as well as expand the role of, state agencies in housing education, inspections, and enforcements at the local, state, and national levels.

**HOUSING
AFFORDABILITY**

Sustain and expand state funding that expands permanent affordable housing options that enable individual tenants to rent in privately-owned housing.

Maintain state and advocate for federal low-income housing tax credits.

Preserve existing public and private affordable housing where there is a danger of conversion to more expensive homes.

Expand state and encourage local housing trust funds for the creation and preservation of safe, decent and affordable housing.

Sustain funding for non-profit housing delivery system to ensure local capacity to develop, operate and maintain health-promoting affordable housing for the most vulnerable Vermonters.

**NEIGHBORHOOD
CONDITIONS**

Invest more in Section 4 grant dollars to build the capacity of community development organization.

Increase and target state and local government investments toward expanding the supply of permanent affordable and supportive housing options for people coming out of Corrections, as well as other vulnerable Vermonters involved in multiple service systems. Create policies that incentivize Continuum of Care and non-profit affordable housing developers to do the same.

POLICY

**HOUSING
CONDITIONS**

Strengthen priorities in state housing programs to encourage supportive housing units for vulnerable populations.

Maintain smoke-free policies for multi-unit housing and other indoor and outdoor areas.

Adopt a statewide Housing First approach so that all Vermonters have equal access to permanent, affordable housing regardless of substance use, employment status or mental health conditions. Utilize trauma-informed approaches in all housing interventions designed for formerly homeless individuals and families. Increase the supply of permanent, affordable housing with support services for formerly homeless families and individuals.

Address regulatory inefficiencies and program conflicts to allow more effective results from lead-based paint and healthy homes programs.

Expand LIHEAP as well as winterization and energy audit programs.

**HOUSING
AFFORDABILITY**

Implement state and local land use and zoning policies to promote fair housing choices in low-income communities and communities of color through the Fair Housing Trainings and Zoning for Great Neighborhoods initiative***

Continue Federal involvement in lending and fairness standards for banking and loan institutions, while improving banking and lending procedures of the private sector to create equal opportunities for credit.

Maintain affordable tax increment financing.

Harness growth to expand financial resources for affordable housing.

Improve Medicaid reimbursement for housing support services.

Encourage nonprofit health organizations to consider affordable housing in their community health needs assessments and community improvement plans.

**NEIGHBORHOOD
CONDITIONS**

Strengthen enforcement of fair housing laws, including the Federal Fair Housing Act and other state and local regulations prohibiting racial discrimination in housing markets.

Evaluate housing anti-discrimination policies for effects on health.

Through statewide permitting (Act 250) and funding priorities, facilitate housing development and improvements in areas targeted for growth and reinvestment that enable healthy lifestyles through access to health services and outdoor recreation.

Expand use of Inclusionary Zoning, a type of incentive zoning that requires developers to reserve a portion of housing units for low income residents, often with restrictions on resales that specify purchase by low or moderate-income households.

Include incentives for developers and affiliated organizations to build non-profit "co-housing" community models that are income-sensitive and income-adjusted.

Facilitate the acquisition of land for affordable housing.

PROGRAM

**HOUSING
CONDITIONS**

Educate and empower private and public-sector housing providers, owners, and tenants through national, state, and local public campaigns and programs to address the dangers of unsafe and unhealthy housing and about their rights and responsibilities.

Establish and expand permanent service-enriched housing; basic rental housing where social services are available onsite or by referral through a supportive services program or service coordinator. Focus these efforts on aging communities, low-income communities, veterans, disabled person, and communities of color.

Increase resources and expand the role of state agencies in housing education, inspections, and enforcements at the local, state, and national levels.

Create educational/training resources for Town Health Officers on available interventions or programs from all state agencies. Provide online training materials (e.g., webinars or PowerPoint slides) for their ongoing education.

Educate owners and empower tenants of pre-1978 housing about Vermont lead law to ensure properties are kept free of harmful peeling and/or chipping paint and lead paint dust (the leading source childhood lead poisoning)

Conduct Healthy Home Environment Assessments to help residents assess and remediate environmental home health risks and recommend low cost changes.

Implement multi-component falls prevention interventions for older adults and conduct risk assessments to develop personalized approaches to falls prevention among older adults.

**HOUSING
AFFORDABILITY**

Explore private initiatives, such as Habitat for Humanity and programs encouraging accessory dwelling units, to create more affordable, healthy housing.***

Create or expand a housing subsidy program to build quality housing or dedicate vouchers for vulnerable populations.

**NEIGHBORHOOD
CONDITIONS**

Ensure affordable housing development is integrated with market rate housing and promote interaction and cooperation between individuals of different backgrounds that meets the of all residents, especially children and older adults.