



Corvallis Housing First

2311 NW Van Buren Ave.
Corvallis, OR 97330

  @corvallahousingfirst



Scan to donate

Our work would not be possible without your support! Please consider including CHF in your year-end giving. Read on to see all the ways you can support us, including our donor survey.

As we strive to maximize the impact of our donors' generosity, we would like to introduce alternatives to cash giving that could not only increase the value of your contribution but also provide significant financial benefits to you.

Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCDs)

QCDs are direct transfers of funds from your IRA, payable directly to a qualified organization like Corvallis Housing First. These distributions can be counted towards satisfying your required minimum distributions (RMDs) for the year, while also excluding these amounts from your taxable income.

This giving method is particularly beneficial for donors who are 70½ years or older, as it can lower your income and taxes, while simultaneously fulfilling your philanthropic goals.

Moreover, shifting from cash gifts to QCDs would not only potentially benefit you financially, but would also allow us to plan more effectively for the future. The consistency and predictability of QCDs could enable us to expand our services, develop new programs, and reach even more individuals in need within our community.

Stocks or other appreciated assets

By donating appreciated stocks or assets, you can take advantage of a double tax benefit. Firstly, you would be eligible for a tax deduction for the full fair market value of the assets, up to 30% of your adjusted gross income. Secondly, you could potentially avoid paying capital gains tax on the increase in the value of your assets.

In addition, this form of giving can also increase the impact of your donation. For example, a stock that you may have bought for \$200, which now may be worth \$2,000, could provide ten times the support for our housing initiatives, at no extra cost to you! 🏠

Any way you choose to give--THANK YOU!

For more information, contact our office at 541-230-1297, or email development@corvallahousingfirst.org



Corvallis Housing First

Fall/Winter 2023-2024 Newsletter

HOMELESSNESS

PREVENTABLE • SOLVABLE • UNACCEPTABLE

CORVALLISHOUSINGFIRST.ORG



Corvallis Housing First, The Next Five Years

With no end in sight to the homelessness crisis, where does CHF best fit into the array of housing and services in our community and state? This is a question we have been asking ourselves recently as we update our strategic plan and shape directions for our future. We have been meeting with clients, partners, and staff to find out what we should be focusing on in the next five years.

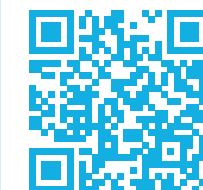
[CHF goals from our 2018 strategic planning included:](#)

- Increasing housing opportunities for people experiencing homelessness
- Expanding our supportive services staff and managerial positions to provide staff support and supervision they need
- Identifying sustainable funding and collaborating with others to develop housing alternatives.

We have met many of these goals, with most of our success being in expanding our housing to 40 units, with funding to add 46 more, and collaborating with organizations such as Unity Shelter and Samaritan Health Services to help people get into housing.

We have learned so much over the past five years and are still learning from our experiences and from others doing similar work. Providing supportive housing is a complex undertaking and takes a lot of resources. We have heard in the planning process that focusing on providing more support for clients and residents, building strong collaboration for services, and financial sustainability, are all important, as is being able to share stories about our work. We have seen possibilities and pitfalls from tours of other supportive housing sites, which has also been very helpful in reminding us we are a part of a larger effort across our state.

We would like to hear more from you, our critical partner, about what you think CHF should be doing in the next five years to help us fulfill our mission of providing solutions to homelessness in our community. We have a short survey for supporters on our website at: corvallahousingfirst.org



Scan to complete the survey



CHF staff touring ShelterCare in Eugene

STAFF SPOTLIGHT MARIA GONZALES

is a Housing Case Manager working at Third Street Commons, our facility that is operated by Unity Shelter as a non-congregate shelter.



What are the biggest challenges you see for clients?

People's individual barriers, health problems, and substance use disorders. Using substances is not necessarily a choice, but often the only way to cope with trauma. The stigma around homelessness is another huge barrier. Many people believe that they don't want services, but they just need to feel safe in trusting people, and that takes time. People in their life have let them down, and maybe they have let themselves down. It takes a lot for people to feel safe, but they are the most accepting and kind people I have ever met.

How has the relationship with Unity Shelter helped you?

The shelter staff always knows where the clients are, and are able to pass along quick communication. Working with Ryan McConnell, a Unity Shelter Community Health Worker, on medical needs has been huge. A lot of people qualify for social security disability, but they can't move forward with the process without getting a doctor visit set up, so they have a medical record of their disabilities. Ryan can help navigate health insurance and any medical assistance, and establish care with primary care providers. It helps that we prioritize a client-led approach. 🏠



Maria reviewing a lease agreement with a client

How has the process been building relationships with your clients?

The first thing I did when I came here was build rapport. They didn't know what to think of me, or why to trust me. A barrier to being successful in housing is the ability to be vulnerable. If we have a good rapport, it helps them open up. I don't ask them to tell me everything, but sometimes we do have to talk about why substance use can potentially harm chances for housing. It helps when they feel like they're not going to be judged. It's not about judgment, it's about helping clients live a sustainable life.

What is an example of the work you do to get people into permanent housing?

I write letters to advocate for clients; to paint a picture of what the human being is in the paper trail without having to take them in for a formal interview. It can be really hard overcoming the now common rental requirements, like proving you make 3-5 times the rent amount and a 700 credit score. We try to give landlords a reason to take a chance on CHF clients. I'm always honest. I never guarantee success, but I can guarantee that I can support my client and be the bridge of communication between the landlord and the client.

CORVALLIS HOUSING FIRST AND UNITY SHELTER PARTNERSHIP

Corvallis Housing First and Unity Shelter are close partners helping to ensure people experiencing homelessness have shelter and support in our community. Unity Shelter is the operator of the Third Street Commons shelter, CHF owns the site and provides housing case management services. CHF staff also work collaboratively at Unity Shelter sites to provide housing case management services. While we are two separate organizations, our work together has helped many people get off the street.



Leading a memorial service



Staff support session

WHY SPIRITUAL CARE AT CHF?

Jesse Ford is CHF's Spiritual Care Specialist, assisting clients with many things, including end-of-life counseling and grief support.

A new guest at Third Street Commons recently asked me what "spiritual care" was, exactly. Great question! My reply in the moment was that, if their spirit was troubled, I would be the one to contact. While true and useful to that person, it doesn't answer the question, does it?

Spiritual care is a process, a verb rather than a noun. It begins with deep listening, sometimes for extended periods of time. Simply hearing people into their own wholeness can be a powerful experience, especially for people who are unused to being heard or having their many challenges taken seriously. In addition to initial listening sessions, however, spiritual support can take a number of forms. Among the services I've provided are guided meditations, end-of-life conversations, and planning, recommending particular kinds of spiritual resources and practices (and helping to engage them locally), monthly (and 1-on-1) staff support sessions, facilitating complex community conversations, hospital visits/patient advocacy, cremation witness/prayer, family support/conflict resolution, and all too many memorial services.

This position began as a 12-week experiment in February 2022. The opportunity, free to CHF, was to host an interfaith chaplain as part of a 12-week Clinical Pastoral Education rotation. What, if anything, could interfaith chaplaincy services add to CHF? In those early weeks, we discovered that even the simple act of deep listening coupled with gentle probing of a client's existing spiritual resources can be a valuable benefit for clients as well as staff. Incredibly, we are now approaching the two-year mark in this experiment (now funded as a quarter-time position), and the need for spiritual services that affirm and advocate for the wholeness and worth of each individual served and serving is clear. Providing spiritual care is a privilege and a responsibility. Any random conversation can take a sudden turn into a chaplaincy moment, a window in which a different kind of listening can be potent. In those moments, I try to remember to take a breath and metaphorically remove my shoes, as I am now accompanying someone in the holy space of their soul.