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ANNUAL REPORT

RESIDENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT



Newton Housing Authority
82 Lincoln Street
Newton, MA 02461



From Left to Right: Cipher Sun, LCSW, Rebecca Camargo, LICSW, Marygrace Pier, MSW Intern, Dianelle Chaparro-Wing, LCSW, Sergei Pahrya, Supportive Services Coordinator

STRATEGIC GROWTH

At the heart of the Resident Services Department's rapid growth over the past six years is NHA's desire to provide **barrier-free** supportive services to **ALL** of NHA's tenant population. This has required that the Resident Services Department not only increase its staffing but strategically hire team members that could serve residents in their native languages.

Barrier-free service provision is a complex goal. Over the last 6 years, we have strategically sought to ensure that two things are true of the way the RSD provides services to residents 1: that we are always able to serve any NHA resident that comes forward in need of one-to-one supportive services (i.e. that we have the capacity in our caseload and the ability to meet people in their homes, the community, or in our offices) and 2: that we can ensure that speakers of other languages are able to access our services as equitably as native English speakers.

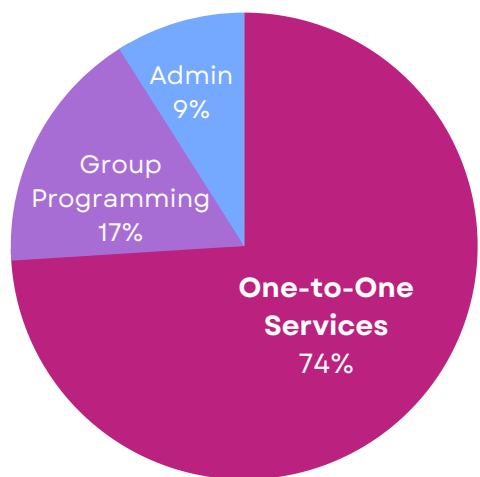
This commitment to barrier-free service provision has taken great investment from NHA's executive leadership, outside funding partners, and NHA's Board of Commissioners. Providing services in this way, has meant expanding our staffing to 4 full-time staff members and securing the funding internally and externally to make that possible. Further, not only are the majority of our staff licensed clinicians, but every staff member is bilingual or trilingual. This has been a strategic hiring practice to support the RSD's goal of providing equitable service to NHA residents.

The team you see in the photo above is a reflection of NHA's steadfast commitment to strategically growing the Resident Services Department to best meet the needs our residents.

ONE-TO-ONE SERVICES IN REVIEW

One of the primary ways that the Resident Services Department supports NHA tenants is through one-to-one case management services.

Acting as an in-house resource, the RSD is able to more efficiently address tenants' supportive services needs, coordinate services across NHA departments, and meet tenants where they are.



Members of the RSD spend the majority of their day meeting or speaking one-to-one with residents. Any NHA resident in-need of supportive services can be referred to and seen by RSD staff-- this often means that the RSD must maintain flexibility in their caseload to accommodate crisis response cases and new referrals.



OF PEOPLE SERVED

In 2021-2022 the RSD served **368** unique NHA residents.

***Unique NHA residents** refers to the unduplicated number of people served. Some residents are served multiple times throughout the year.



OF SERVICES PROVIDED

To those 368 tenants, the RSD provided a total of **1,143** types of services*.

***Types of services** include rental assistance, crisis intervention, hoarding and clutter support etc.

TOP 3 MOST FREQUENTLY PROVIDED SERVICE TYPE

Housing/Building Services

[referrals to NHA maintenance department, hoarding/clutter intervention, & reasonable accommodations]

298

Eviction Prevention

[rental assistance, resolving lease violations, and internal administrative paperwork]

212

Health and Medical

[connection to medical providers and services in the community, administration of the COVID-19 vaccine and other vaccinations]

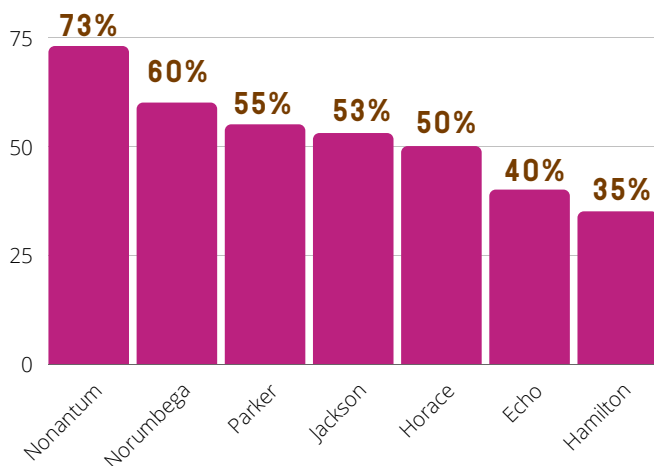
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BEING ON-SITE MATTERS

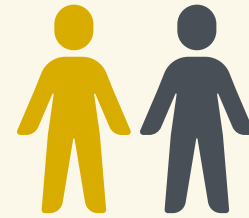
As we look at the percentage of people served at each property, a clear pattern emerges. The places where the RSD have more on-site presence (RSD staffed offices or regular group programming) we see higher rates of one-to-one service provision.

In the last three years, the Resident Services Department has grown its on-site staffing presence to two federal sites: Nonantum Village and Norumbega Gardens.

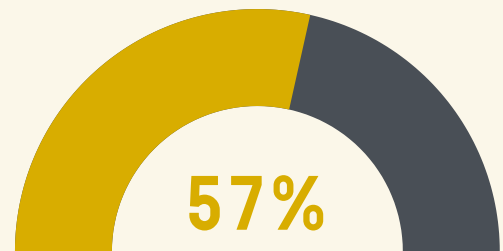
The RSD staff presence at Norumbega Gardens started in early 2022 and already the property has the second highest percentage of people served compared to the other older adult/disabled housing sites.



PERCENTAGE OF THE RESIDENT POPULATION BY PROPERTY THAT RECEIVED RSD SERVICES IN 2021-2022



IN 2021, 1 OUT OF EVERY 2 TENANTS IN NHA'S FEDERAL PUBLIC HOUSING PROGRAM RECEIVED ONE-TO-ONE SUPPORTIVE SERVICES FROM THE RSD.



57% OF TENANTS IN NHA'S OLDER ADULT/DISABLED PROGRAMS PARTICIPATED IN AT LEAST ONE GROUP PROGRAM IN 2021-2022



PEABODY ESSEX MUSEUM FALL TRIP SERIES 2021

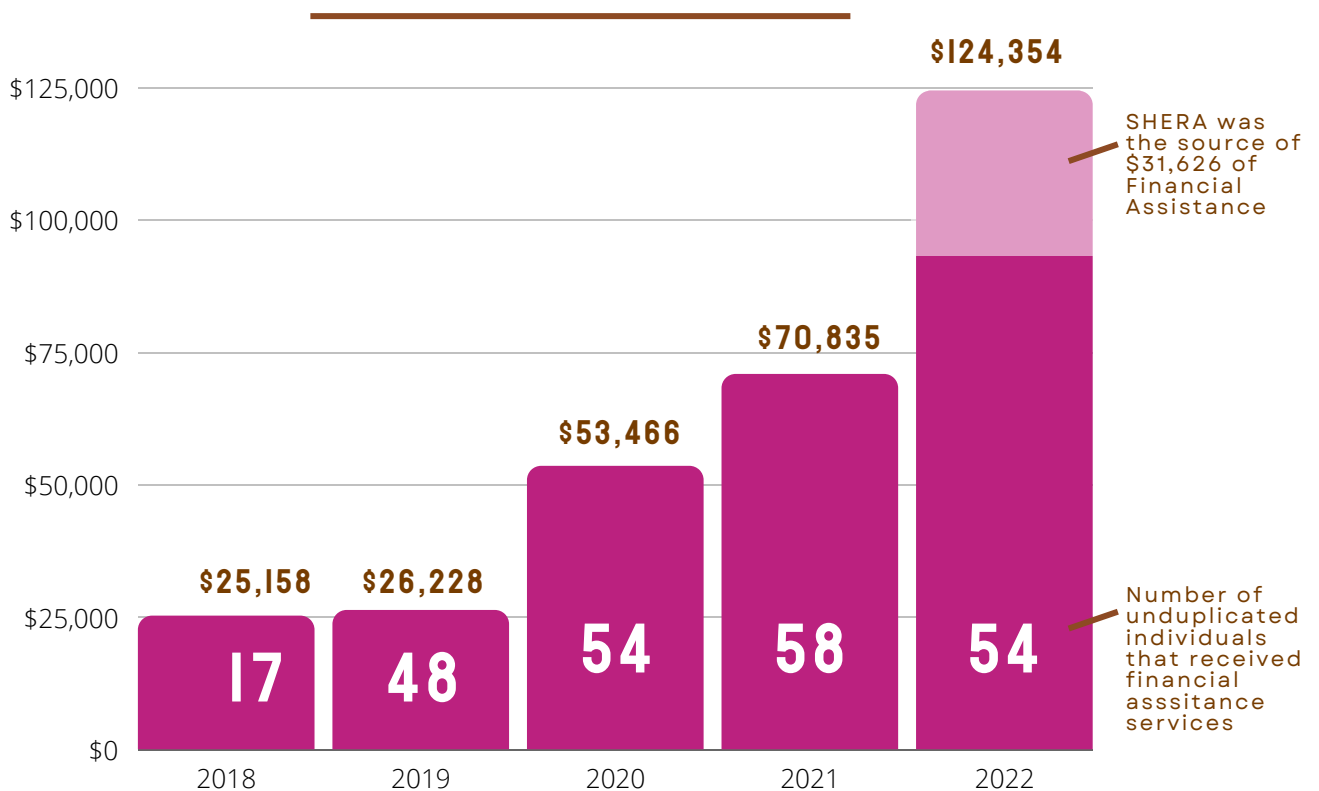
THE COST OF EVICTION PREVENTION

Help with financial assistance continues to be one of the most frequent types of services that the RSD provides to NHA tenants.

In 2021-2022 the RSD helped **54** NHA tenants with financial assistance resources. Of those 54 cases, nearly all of the funds were used to assist residents with rental payments or utility payments. On average, residents received \$2,302.85 per household.

Each year, the amount of financial assistance that the RSD helps tenants secure increases significantly. However, for the past three years the number of individuals that seek these services remains roughly the same.

What we are seeing is an average number of residents per year that struggle with housing and financial stability and the increasing cost of eviction prevention efforts.



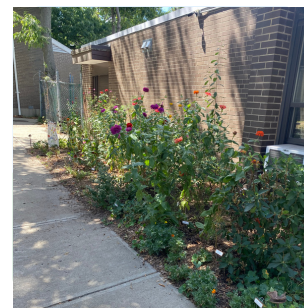
FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FUNDING THAT THE RSD HELPED SECURE FOR NHA RESIDENTS IN 2018-2022

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT: A HOME FOR POLLINATORS AT HORACE MANN

In March of 2022, the Resident Services Department reached out to Newton Neighbors Helping Neighbors to recruit volunteers that were willing and able to help older adults in NHA's programs with their spring gardening projects.

Many residents in NHA's federal public housing portfolio beautify the gardening spaces under their windows or on their balconies. This activity brings folks outside, engaged in physical activity throughout the spring and summer, and often prompts connections with their neighbors around their gardens. However, getting a garden started is a physically demanding task.

Newton Neighbors Helping Neighbors were excited to help us match volunteers with NHA tenants that needed some additional support prepping their garden. On a windy day in March, two Newton Neighbors joined Rebecca Camargo (Director of Resident Services) for a tour of Horace Mann and Jackson Gardens. After seeing the Horace Mann courtyard, and the green space that surrounded it, an idea for another volunteer project was born.



Newton Neighbors Helping Neighbors connected **The Pollinator Project** with the NHA. With the help of trained volunteers committed to growing gardens that support the vital pollinators in our environment (bees, butterflies, hummingbirds etc.), the Horace Mann Courtyard experienced a beautiful transformation. **Newton Community Farm** joined the effort and supplied the majority of the local, pollinator-friendly plantings. While residents prepared their gardens with the help of volunteers, The Pollinator Project created a beautiful community garden for all to enjoy!

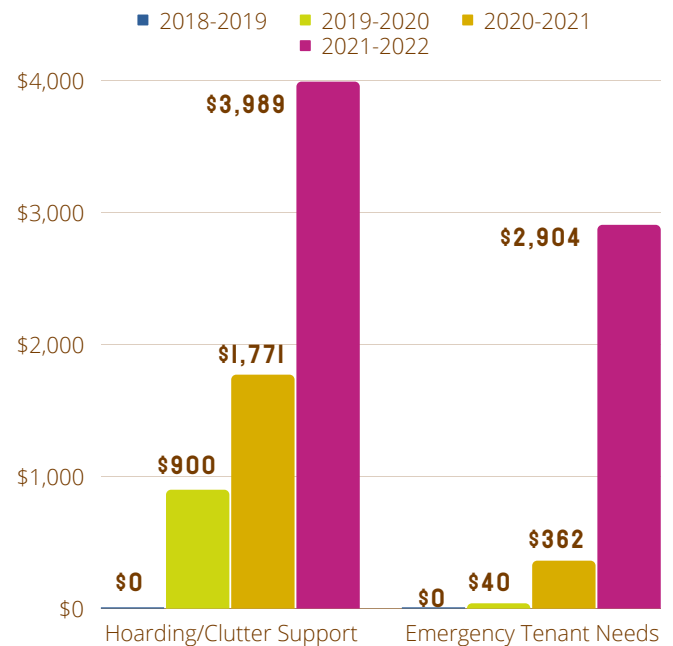
COVID-19 AND ITS IMPACT ON MENTAL HEALTH

The COVID-19 Global Pandemic continues to have an echoing impact on our residents. Both in the individual cases we have seen in our programs and in broader systemic ways, mental health and access to mental health services have become even more limited.

Residents are experiencing increased wait-times for services such as therapy, psychiatry, in-home housekeeping, personal care services, hoarding and clutter services, and addiction treatment. Often, resident cases that are not considered at a crisis-level are waiting over 3-6 months for these services.

More than ever, the RSD is utilizing its capacity to provide supportive services that are informed by clinical training to better stabilize and advocate for our tenants' access to mental health care and in-home services.

RSD BUDGET: FILLING EMERGENCY GAPS IN SERVICES FOR RESIDENTS



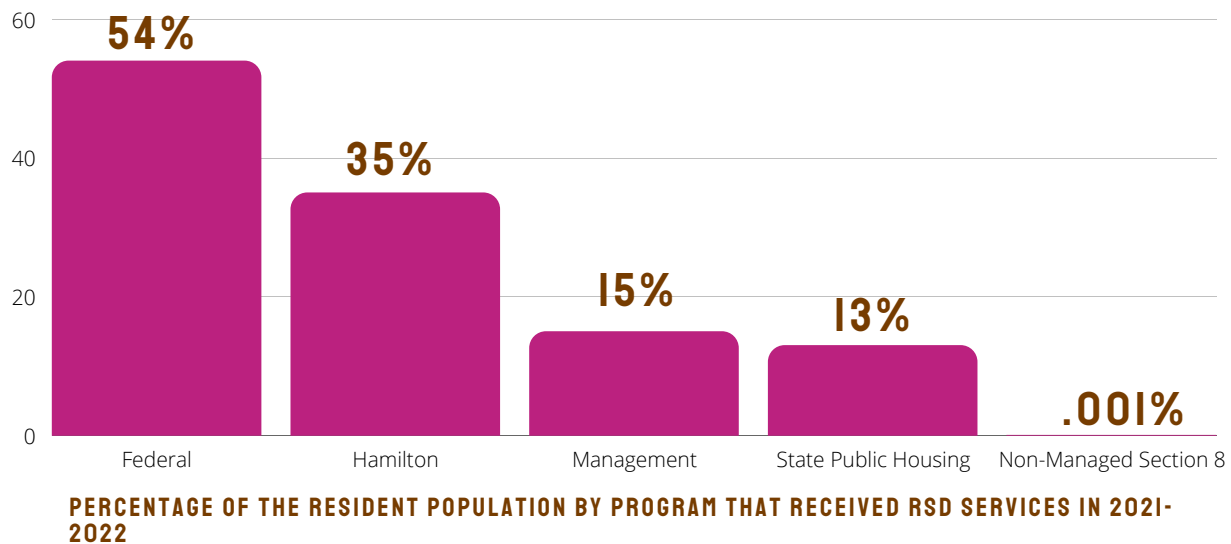
The Resident Services Department is actively filling gaps in resources when residents face critical situations like hoarding/ clutter or urgent unmet needs. Positioning our department to fill this role has been a result of the sudden impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and has continued even after quarantine and other restrictions have lifted.

SHIFTING FOCUS TO NHA FAMILIES

We are excited by the progress our team has made to outreach and engage residents in our Older Adult/Disabled programs. Over the past 5 years we have seen an increase in resident participation in programming, utilization of one-to-one services, and efficacy of our crisis response because of our relationships with tenants and their neighbors. However, when we review our work over the past year,

it is undeniable that tenants of other NHA programs are being underserved by RSD services. State Family Tenants, Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Holder participants, and Managed Units residents are significantly under-represented in the RSD's service delivery.

The RSD has a plan for expanding our service delivery to these populations and balancing our presence across all of NHA's housing programs.



OUR PLAN TO EXPAND SERVICES TO FAMILIES



Hire a Spanish-Speaking Social worker to specifically work with Families (June, 2022).



Conduct a Needs Assessment of NHA's State Public Housing, Management, and Section 8 programs (September, 2022).



Explore programs that the RSD can develop to fill gaps in supportive services resources that NHA families need (May 2023).

LOOKING BACK ON A YEAR OF HYBRID PROGRAMMING

JULY 2021

NEWTON VILLEGE TOURS



FALL TRIPS



VACCINATION CLINICS

In partnership with Union Pharmacy, the RSD helped **121** NHA residents get the COVID-19 vaccine in 2021-2022

THANKSGIVING MEAL DELIVERY

DECEMBER MEAL DELIVERY

The RSD team delivered **113** December meals to NHA residents.

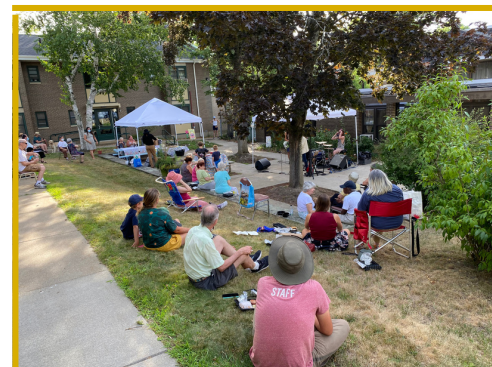
The RSD team delivered **130** Thanksgiving meals to NHA residents.

LUNAR NEW YEAR MEAL DELIVERY

The RSD team delivered **118** December meals to NHA residents.

SPRING TRIPS

JULY 2022



SUMMER CONCERT SERIES



LOOKING AHEAD

After 6 years of strategic growth, the RSD has arrived at a natural point of discernment. The Resident Services Department's group programming initiatives and one-to-one services can be developed in a myriad of ways. The RSD must decide on a clear direction for the next 3-5 years. In doing so, the department will need to answer some key questions.



BALANCING THE CALL FOR GROUP PROGRAMMING AND ONE-TO-ONE SERVICES

Through annual tenant survey data, residents in NHA's Older Adult/Disabled programs are reporting a desire for more regular opportunities to attend on-site group programming at their respective properties. Simultaneously, the department continues to grow the number of one-to-one services that are being provided to tenants each year. Where and how staff should focus their time is a critical question for the next 3-5 years.



DETERMINING THE DEPTH AND BREDTH OF SERVICES

What, if any, limitations should the RSD put on the types of one-to-one services or on-site programming it provides for residents? Should the RSD explore collaborations or contracts with other agencies to continue to grow programming or supportive services across NHA's housing programs?



MEASURING OUTCOMES FROM YEAR TO YEAR

By what metrics can the RSD gauge its efficacy and success? Eviction prevention, program attendance, tenant surveys and other areas offer many possibilities for monitoring the success of the department.



**DUMPLING MAKING CLASS
SPRING TRIP SERIES 2022**

HORACE MANN SUMMER BBQ 2022



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