

# Cincinnati Transforms Its Emergency Assistance System to Focus on Outcomes

## Positive Stories / Lessons Learned from HPRP: *Community Success Story*

HPRP Grantee:	Cincinnati and Hamilton County
CoC Name and Number:	OH-500 Cincinnati/Hamilton County CoC

### Latest CoC Point-in-Time Count:

Total persons in ES:	513	Total persons in TH:	663
Total persons in Safe Haven:	0	Total unsheltered persons:	66
Total persons, sheltered and unsheltered:	1,242		

Before 2009, a household facing imminent homelessness in Cincinnati and Hamilton County sought assistance from an uncoordinated array of individual emergency assistance centers and churches. The household would receive, typically, \$100; actually gathering enough money to overcome their crisis situation took multiple visits to multiple centers, and the household almost never received full assessment services designed to help them overcome the cause of their crisis situation or to provide on-going support as they regained housing stability.

HPRP enabled Cincinnati and Hamilton County to implement a plan including the CoC, local United Way, and other providers that they had recently developed to transform their emergency assistance system. All HPRP providers began using HMIS to track HUD’s outcome measures of income and housing. HPRP funds were used to increase financial assistance from its previous average of \$100 to up to \$2,500 per household, and served households for up to three months. To focus on housing outcomes, HPRP afforded vastly increased case management ; households received case worker support during their immediate crisis situation, as they moved to more affordable housing, and as they stabilized in existing

housing. Case managers were trained to specifically assess income and make as many linkages to mainstream benefits and programs as possible.

The outcomes of HPRP have revealed a stunningly successful prevention program. Between the program's start in August 2009 and the end of July 2011, 1,548 households entered Cincinnati and Hamilton County's prevention portion of HPRP. Of the households who have exited, 99% avoided homelessness after six months. Of those who have reached 12 months after their exit date, 97% have still not become homeless. Households received a mean length of between two and three months' service; households currently being served have an average increase in monthly income of \$133, while households who have exited had an average increase of \$151. Cincinnati and Hamilton County's use of HPRP to focus on two outcomes of households receiving financial assistance and dedicated case management has been a resounding success for imminently homeless households, and the City and County's homeless programs are increasingly adopting the same outcomes measurement and prevention model to replicate HPRP's success moving forward.

*\*Names have been changed for confidentiality.*

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