

Rapid Re-Housing Program Puts Florida Woman on Path to Secure Housing and Employment

Positive Stories / Lessons Learned from HPRP: *Individual Success Story*

HPRP Grantee:	Palm Beach County Housing and Community Development
CoC Name and Number:	FL-605 West Palm Beach/Palm Beach County

Latest CoC Point-in-Time Count:

Total persons in ES:	383	Total persons in TH:	354
Total persons in Safe Haven:	14	Total unsheltered persons:	1,397
Total persons, sheltered and unsheltered:	2,148		

Marta* and her seven-year-old daughter entered Palm Beach County's rapid re-housing program after living for six weeks in an emergency shelter. Bringing prior evictions, a criminal background, and debt from owed restitution to the table had made it nearly impossible for Marta to find a landlord willing to rent to her, and after losing her job, she soon lost hope of coming up with the start-up money to reserve an apartment even if she found one.

While HPRP helped her search for housing, Marta utilized every resource available, including her case manager. Her case manager kept her focused on her action plan, worked on budgeting skills, and helped her search for new employment while linking her to training programs. One of Marta's greatest strengths and weaknesses was her tendency to fight in reaction to conflict; literally fighting had resulted in a criminal record, but this attitude also ensured that she continually pushed for a way out of homelessness as an unacceptable living situation for herself and her daughter.

After she found an apartment, HPRP paid for her security deposit and utility deposit, and ultimately for six months of rental assistance and three months of utility assistance. This financial assistance allowed her to begin saving what she would have paid and tackle her \$1,000 restitution, a weight that had been hanging over her head for a year. She paid off her restitution in full while in HPRP and thus closed out her probation, which her case manager reported visibly affected her confidence. Assistance also gave her peace of mind for those few months, and she felt she could devote more time to both looking for a job and taking care of her daughter properly. She enrolled herself in a job training program, completed it in one month, and found a job as a medical instructor the next, earning benefits and \$10 more per hour than she previously had.

Marta exited the program six months ago, and her employment and housing are still secure. HPRP was the tool she needed to expose her to supplementary resources, provide her with the extra time and money to overcome temporary setbacks and begin saving, and supplement her own determination and drive.

**Names have been changed for confidentiality.*

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