

Long-term Stability After Mediation: Analysis of Housing Outcomes in a Homelessness Prevention Program

Clackamas County, OR

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Overview

Clackamas County Health, Housing & Human Services conducted a study on the housing outcomes of tenants who participated in landlord-tenant mediation services provided by Clackamas County Resolution Services. The analysis covers a two-year period from January 1, 2023, to April 15, 2025. Findings indicate that the mediation program *“supported positive housing outcomes for the majority of participants, with extremely low rates of returns to homelessness.”* These results demonstrate that mediation is not only effective at stabilizing housing at the time of the crisis, but it is also a critical tool for preventing homelessness and reducing strain on community resources.

Analysis

Data from the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), sourced from Clackamas County Resolution Services and Clackamas County Coordinated Housing Access, was examined to determine the last known housing status of tenants who participated in landlord tenant mediation. Beyond individual outcomes, the analysis assessed how mediation contributed to system-wide improvements in homelessness prevention.

Tenant and System Wide Impacts

After participating in mediation, participants were overwhelmingly found to be in housing arrangements with 885 tenants, or 99.9%, exiting the program in stable housing. During the two-year look back period, only one tenant, or 0.1%, was found to be experiencing homelessness. Mediation data was introduced into HMIS tracking during a time when most other homelessness prevention programs remained unchanged, which made it possible to

Housing Status After Mediation

January 1, 2023 – April 15, 2025

885
tenants (99.9%)
in housing
arrangements

1
tenant (0.1%)
experiencing
homelessness

clearly see its effect. Using metrics defined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), key system-wide outcomes include increases in exits to permanent housing (+54.5%), decreases in days in shelter (12 less days on average), and reduced inflows for first-time entries to Shelter (16% reduction). These improvements represent fewer people entering homelessness, faster transitions to stability, and reduced demand on emergency services.

Conclusion

Landlord-tenant mediation is a cost-effective, scalable solution that strengthens housing stability and reduces the need for expensive downstream interventions such as shelter stays and crisis services. By complementing existing homeless prevention programs, mediation saves public resources while delivering better outcomes for both tenants and housing providers. Investing in mediation means investing in a stronger, more resilient housing system.

Community Resolution Center

Clackamas County Resolution Services provides no-cost mediation and conflict resolution services for both housing providers and renters. The program's goal is to support all sides of the housing crisis in having direct, meaningful conversations to identify solutions that work for everyone involved.



More Information

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System Wide Impacts

**54.4%
Increase**
in System Exits to
Permanent Housing

**12-Day
Decrease**
In Shelter Stays
(Average)

**16%
Decrease**
of First-time Entries
in Shelter and
Transitional
Housing

Equity and Trauma-Informed Analysis of Exit Outcomes in a Homelessness Prevention Program: CFCC

Reporting Period: January 1, 2023 – Present

Clients Served: 1,016 | Households: 705 | Clients with Exit Destinations: 886

This analysis highlights promising outcomes and opportunities for growth within a Homelessness Prevention program serving 1,016 individuals across 705 households. Using a trauma-informed and equity-centered lens, the report explores exit destinations, racial and ethnic trends, and the prevalence of gender-based violence and human trafficking. The data reflect meaningful progress toward preventing homelessness, while also identifying areas where outcomes can be strengthened and disparities more fully addressed.

Housing Stability Outcomes

A large proportion of participants (53.7%) exited to permanent housing. This is a strong indicator that the program supported long-term stability for many households. Notably, only one individual (0.1%) exited into homelessness. This suggests a highly effective prevention response that aligns with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) definition of a positive housing destination, which refers to a stable, housed outcome at the point of program exit (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development [HUD], 2024).

An additional 45.9% of participants exited to “other” destinations. This category may reflect a wide range of outcomes, including reunification with family, informal housing arrangements, or relocation outside of the service area. However, it also introduces ambiguity that warrants further exploration. Clarifying the quality and stability of these “other” outcomes will be important for capturing the full impact of the program.

According to the 2024 HUD data standards, exit destination data is required only for the head of household and not for every individual participant (HUD, 2024). Given this standard and the program’s adherence to household-level data practices, some apparent gaps at the individual level are likely attributable to accurate, standards-aligned reporting rather than incomplete data collection.

Racial and Ethnic Trends

The program demonstrated meaningful success in supporting positive housing outcomes among several communities of color. Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander participants had the highest rate of permanent housing exits (88.9%), followed by Black or African American participants (58.9%) and those identifying as multiracial and Hispanic/Latina/e/o (62.1%). These outcomes reflect areas of strong alignment between service delivery and equity goals, particularly in the context of systems that have historically underserved these groups.

At the same time, the data suggest opportunities to strengthen outcomes for other populations. Hispanic/Latina/e/o (44.1%) and Asian or Asian American (41.2%) participants exited to permanent housing at rates below the overall program average. White participants, while comprising the largest proportion of exits, had a slightly below-average permanent exit rate of

(48.2%). These variations, while not extreme, underscore the importance of ongoing monitoring and adaptive program strategies to ensure that all households are receiving support that is culturally responsive and accessible.

Approximately (11.6%) of exit records did not include race or ethnicity data. This limits the depth of analysis and reinforces the importance of consistent, trauma-informed demographic data collection practices.

Experiences of Gender-Based Violence and Human Trafficking

Among the 1,016 participants, 124 individuals (12.2 %) reported experiencing domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, dating violence, or human trafficking at some point in their lives. Most participants (56.5 %) experienced violence more than one year prior to program enrollment, while approximately (22%) experienced harm within the past 12 months. Roughly one-third of survivors were part of households with children. This highlights the intersection of safety, trauma, and housing stability in family contexts.

The presence of survivors within the program reflects its reach to populations navigating layered vulnerabilities. Research has long documented the link between gender-based violence and housing instability, lease disruption, and forced relocation (National Alliance for Safe Housing, 2023). The program's ability to engage and retain survivors—particularly those with longer-term trauma histories—demonstrates its potential as a stabilizing resource. Continued integration of trauma-informed planning and partnerships with survivor-serving organizations will help sustain this progress.

Summary and Considerations

This Homelessness Prevention program supported positive housing outcomes for the majority of participants, with extremely low rates of returns to homelessness. The data reveal areas of strong performance, particularly among Black, Native Hawaiian, and multiracial Hispanic/Latina/e/o participants, and highlight where more focused attention may further advance equity

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The Role of Homelessness Prevention in System-Level Improvements: Evidence from Clackamas County, FY2024

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The Role of Homelessness Prevention in System-Level Improvements: Evidence from Clackamas County, FY2024

System Performance Measures (SPMs) from Clackamas County for fiscal year 2024 provide strong descriptive evidence that homelessness prevention efforts are positively influencing the homelessness response system. Three indicators in particular—reductions in the average length of time persons remain homeless, the number of individuals experiencing homelessness for the first time, and increased exits to or retention in permanent housing—suggest that upstream interventions are contributing to improved outcomes.

Reductions in the Length of Time Homeless (Measure 1)

Measure 1 focuses on the efficiency of the homelessness response system by tracking the average and median number of days that individuals remain homeless. Between fiscal years 2023 and 2024, Clackamas County experienced measurable improvements:

For Measure 1.1, which includes persons in Emergency Shelter (ES) and Safe Haven (SH), the number of people served decreased from 1,035 to 984. The average length of homelessness declined by 12 days.

For Measure 1.2, which adds Transitional Housing (TH) to the population above, the count declined from 1,075 to 1,031. The average length of homelessness decreased by 15 days.

These declines occurred during a time of widespread housing instability and increased eviction risk, following the rollback of pandemic-related protections. This trend runs counter to national patterns. As outlined in the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD, 2022) performance guidance, such reductions often reflect strengthened system capacity, improved throughput, and the effective targeting of diversion and prevention resources.

Fewer People Entering Homelessness for the First Time (Measure 5)

Measure 5 captures the number of individuals who entered homelessness without a prior shelter or housing program enrollment in the previous 24 months. Between fiscal years 2023 and 2024, Clackamas County reported:

A decrease from 832 to 702 individuals in Metric 5.1, which includes entries into ES, SH, and TH. This represents a 16 percent reduction.

A decrease from 1,529 to 1,395 individuals in Metric 5.2, which expands the scope to include Permanent Housing (PH). This reflects a 9 percent reduction.

These data are particularly meaningful in light of ongoing economic pressures and rising eviction filings in many U.S. jurisdictions (Eviction Lab, 2024). A reduction in first-time homelessness suggests that prevention programs are successfully intervening before housing loss occurs. According to the National Alliance to End Homelessness (2023),

interventions such as legal support, flexible financial assistance, and housing-focused case management are most effective when targeted toward households at imminent risk.

Improved Exits to or Retention of Permanent Housing (Measure 7)

Measure 7 tracks the ability of the homelessness response system to support exits to, or retention of, permanent housing. Between FY2023 and FY2024, Clackamas County demonstrated clear improvement across all Measure 7 indicators:

- For Metric 7a.1 (Street Outreach), successful exits to permanent housing increased from 70.79% to 76.78%.
- For Metric 7b.1 (system-wide exits), successful exits rose from 25.3% to 39.17%.
- For Metric 7b.2 (retention or permanent housing from PH projects), success rates increased from 98.51% to 99.24%.

These outcomes suggest that not only are fewer people entering homelessness and staying homeless for shorter periods, but more people are also successfully exiting the system to permanent housing—and remaining housed.

Interpreting the Relationship Between Prevention and System Metrics

While the data do not establish causality, the alignment between reductions in inflow, shorter lengths of time homeless, and increased exits to permanent housing is consistent with national research from the Urban Institute (2021) and Chapin Hall (2020). These studies indicate that prevention and homelessness problem-solving strategies are most impactful when integrated into coordinated entry systems and supported by real-time data.

HUD's system framework identifies a high-functioning continuum of care as one that:

- Reduces inflow into homelessness (Measure 5),
- Decreases length of time homeless (Measure 1), and
- Increases exits to permanent housing (Measure 7).

The improvements observed in Clackamas County's FY2024 performance measures meet ****all three of these benchmarks****, suggesting that homelessness prevention programs and cross-system coordination are effectively reinforcing system-wide goals.

Conclusion

Clackamas County's FY2024 SPM data offer meaningful insights into the local homelessness response system's performance. The reductions in first-time homelessness, shorter durations of homelessness, and improved exits to permanent housing strongly suggest that prevention strategies are contributing to a more responsive and effective system. While more rigorous evaluation is needed to confirm direct attribution, the observed patterns align with national research on best practices in homelessness prevention. These findings underscore the value of sustained investment in targeted, upstream interventions as a critical component of a comprehensive housing stability strategy.

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