

20 April 2023



Dear Friend:

It's often said that **Vermonters help Vermonters**. Here at John Graham Housing & Services (JGHS), we are proud to be a part of this close-knit community. However, we are also aware of a concerning trend—**Vermont has the second highest per-capita rate of homelessness in the country, behind only California**. Last year alone, the number of Vermonters in shelters and transitional housing increased by a staggering 133%.

The housing crisis in Addison County is particularly dire, with **a vacancy rate of less than 1%** and **rental rates that increased by almost 6% last year**. This has resulted in the average shelter stay at the John Graham Shelter lasting almost two years, which is a bottleneck for others in need of shelter. Even if someone has a job, the high cost of living in Vermont makes it difficult to adequately house their family. For instance, **a household with one adult and one child must earn nearly \$35 an hour to afford an average two-bedroom apartment in Vermont**.

At JGHS, we serve people without a home or facing housing instability in Addison County, including those fleeing domestic violence, veterans, elders, and those with mental health disorders, physical disabilities, and/or substance use disorders. The truth is, **JGHS also serves people like you and families like yours**. Our shelter guests are often healthy, hardworking, and employed Vermonters who have recently experienced a medical crisis, job loss, or the death of a caregiver. When families arrive at the John Graham Shelter, it's humbling to see their courage and resilience.



Despite the growing number of people experiencing homelessness and housing instability, philanthropic support is down. **COVID relief funding has ended, dollars for emergency rental assistance have dried up, and motel/hotel transitional housing programs are scheduled to be eliminated**. Many families are hurting, and nonprofit housing agencies are struggling to keep up.

At JGHS, we remain committed to helping individuals and families faced with homelessness and housing instability in our home state. However, **we cannot do this work without your help**, especially during these challenging times. We ask you to consider partnering with us by donating generously to this JGHS Spring Appeal today (by mail or online at <https://www.johngrahamshelter.org/donate2>).

Thank you for your consideration and your continued support.

With gratitude,

Susan Whitmore
Executive Director

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