

Interim Report

Jackson County Homeless Program

Sponsored by Southwestern Child Development Commission

May 14, 2019

Dates of Cold Weather Shelter: November 18, 2018 – March 31, 2019 (134 days)

Hotels Used: Quality Inn, Microtel, Woodland Inn¹

Adults Sheltered: 53

Children Sheltered: 26

Hotel Room Nights Provided: 1379

Cost of Cold Weather Shelter²: \$85,366.00

Program Outcomes to Date

- The goal of assuring no one freezes to death in Jackson County due to lack of shelter was achieved during the winter of 2018-19.
- 34% of the adults served in the cold weather homeless shelter have achieved permanent housing for the future.
- Progress continues in the effort to find permanent housing for the 19% of shelter residents who have not yet achieved this goal.
- Collaboration among Jackson County organizations to meet the needs of the homeless this year has been very effective and successful. Major partners have included Jackson County Government, Quality Inn, Microtel, Southwestern Child Development Commission, Community Table, Mountain Projects, Jackson Transit, and JC Advocates for Animals.

Other Observations from this Year's Homeless Program:

- The challenges of addressing homelessness on a community level are significant and unrelenting. Doing so with insufficient staff is unsustainable.
- The hotel model for housing homeless individuals acts as a magnet. Both Jackson County residents who are not truly homeless as well as residents of other locales are drawn to come and stay in our shelter. Additionally, once housed, very few residents are motivated to move from the hotel even when they have the ability to do so. These issues create ongoing challenges for program case management.
- The hotel model does provide amenities such as safety/security thru locking individual rooms, privacy for bathing, room cleaning, and daily breakfasts. These needs would be

1. One person/one night only

2. Hotel fees only. Does not include other program expenses such as food, travel, housing deposits, case management, etc.

strategically challenging and costly to address in a more traditional brick & mortar homeless shelter.

- Even with Section 8 rental vouchers and guaranteed deposits for housing and utilities, many homeless cannot find anywhere to live because landlords will not rent to them. Criminal records, poor credit histories and problems with previous rental housing all combine to create risks in which landlords are not willing to invest. As one landlord put it, *“No tenant is better than a bad tenant.”*
- Being elderly, disabled and approved for Social Security disability payments does not assure someone will qualify for elderly and disabled housing in Jackson County. Individuals with annual Social Security payments of less than \$8,500 do not meet income qualifications for subsidized housing complexes such as the Havens and River Park Apartments.
- One gentleman was immensely thankful to be accepted into the JCHP shelter after camping beside the Tuckaseegee River and struggling through endless days of cold and rain. At the end of March, however, he could not find any rental housing that would accept him. He moved back to his old spot on the river, only to be told by law enforcement that he had to leave. He asked the officers where he should go. They said they were sorry, but Jackson County does not have places where people can camp for free.

Permanent Housing Achieved	Left Shelter Voluntarily Before Achieving Permanent Housing	Evicted from Shelter by Hotel Mgt	Asked to Leave Shelter by JCHP Staff	As Yet Unable to achieve Permanent Housing	Below Freezing, Over-Capacity, Short-term Resident
18	5	10	1	10	9

