

# Flexible Housing Fund

## IMPACT REPORT

*“The Flex Fund helped me get back on track with my rent, so I did not become homeless and for that I am forever grateful.”*

Homelessness and housing crises pose significant challenges within our community. Reasons that individuals and families face losing their homes are unique and varied. They include job loss, domestic violence, medical emergencies, and other circumstances. However, it is often possible to prevent homelessness or shorten its duration by proactively addressing these issues through homeless diversion.

Homeless diversion is a person-centered, community approach to reducing homelessness. A powerful tool for systems change, it addresses homelessness at its roots and helps prevent individuals from entering or staying in the homelessness response system for extended periods. By diverting households from emergency shelters and prioritizing immediate housing solutions, homeless diversion disrupts the cycle of chronic homelessness and reduces the strain on existing resources.





# CHANGING LIVES BY CHANGING THE SYSTEM

The Community Health Partnership (CHP) Flexible Housing Fund (Flex Fund), with funding from Kaiser Permanente, exemplifies this approach. The Flex Fund provides flexible, accessible funding to help vulnerable individuals and families in El Paso County, Colorado resolve their housing crises. By addressing the underlying systems and factors that lead to homelessness, the Flex Fund enables individuals to move toward stable, permanent solutions.

By any measure, the Flex Fund was a success during its initial rollout from June 2022 to February 2023. Over the course of nine months, 269 individuals in 93 households were successfully housed at a cost of just under \$2,000 per household. To date, 84% of those who received assistance have not entered a homelessness program.

*“The use of the Flex Funds made (my tenant’s) transition process from her previous location to mine a seamless one and I hope she will want to be a long-term tenant.”*

Beyond the numbers, diversion efforts like those of the Flex Fund offer significant benefits to individuals and the community. Individuals are empowered by being involved in the problem-solving and decision-making processes. Safety and wellbeing is improved and the trauma associated with entering the homelessness system is prevented. When demand for services is reduced, community resources can be used more effectively, shelter beds are freed up for those in immediate need, and service providers save valuable time.

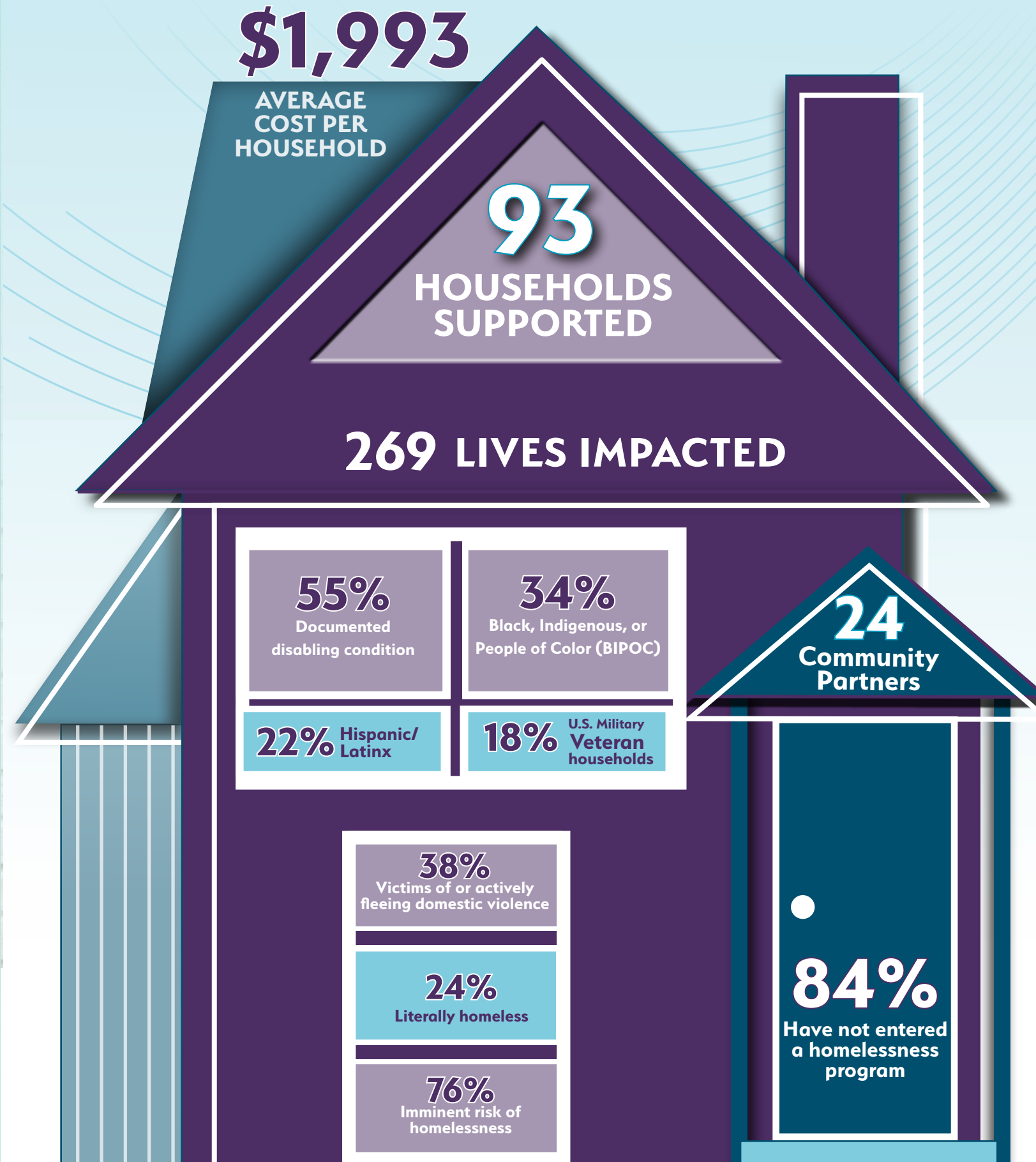
The far-reaching impact of the Flex Fund emphasizes the need to expand similar initiatives to effectively prevent homelessness or make it brief and nonrecurring.

*“The Flex Fund made it possible for us to stay in the house we lived at for almost four years and ensured that my children had a safe environment to sleep. We are an example of a family that had everything going well and just needed a little assistance to keep going.”*

## ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

- Eviction/arrears owed to previous landlord
- Fees and deposits to apply or housing
- Lease or utility assistance
- Gap funding
- Rent increase due to renewal
- Hotel/motel assistance
- Landlord mitigation assistance
- Basic household items
- Critical Documents
- Employment & Training
- Transportation
- Relocation Assistance

## BY THE NUMBERS





# A COLLABORATIVE COMMUNITY EFFORT

True systems change only happens when individuals and organizations work together to co-create solutions to complex issues like homelessness. The success of the Flex Fund depends largely on CHP's partnerships within the community. This includes service providers and landlords, who must put in the time and effort to have conversations, understand individual situations, and work through challenges. Through the Flex Fund, CHP not only strengthened its relationships with existing Pikes Peak Continuum of Care (PPCoC) partners, it formed new partnerships within the community.

## CHP Partners

- Catholic Charities of Central Colorado, housing and social services partner
- City of Colorado Springs, municipal partner
- ComCor (now Embrave), housing partner
- Colorado Community Health Alliance, healthcare partner
- Colorado Springs Housing Authority, housing partner
- El Paso County Department of Human Services, social services partner
- Family Promise of Colorado Springs, housing partner
- Homeward Pikes Peak, housing partner
- Ithaka Land, housing partner
- Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center, housing and veteran partner
- Partners in Housing, housing partner
- Peak Vista Community Health Centers, healthcare partner
- Pikes Peak Library District, education and social services partner
- Rocky Mountain Human Services – Homes for All Veterans, housing and veteran partner
- The Place, housing partner
- Floyd Lindstrom VA, housing and veteran partner
- Westside Cares, housing and social services partner

*“With the help of the Flex Fund, we were able to stay in our home and provide a safe environment for our children. It offered a much-needed lifeline during a challenging time.”*

## New CHP Partners

- Brothers Redevelopment, housing partner
- Colorado Legal Services, criminal justice partner
- Colorado Works, vocational rehab partner
- CPCD Head Start, education partner
- Office of the State Public Defender Colorado, criminal justice partner
- Silver Key, senior services partner
- Victim Advocates, District Attorney's Office, criminal justice partner

*“I was able to pay my rent and have been able to maintain payments due to being set up for success.”*