



September 8, 2021

Town Bills

- Town fund = \$64,153.79
- General Assistance Fund = \$120,491.56
- TOTAL: \$184,645.35 in expenditures

General Assistance

A monthly grant for Urbana residents who are disabled or out of work, alongside support to seek/train for work or apply for federal disability payments (SSI)

- 70 current participants (down from 85 last month)
- 15 are homeless (down from 25 last month)
- 41 males / 29 females / 0 transgender or gender non-conforming
- **Education and Employment Track:**
 - We have continued to see a decrease in GA participants due an upturn in the economy and the availability of jobs as well as the retooling and relaunch of our Employment and Education Program.
- **Disability and Wellness Track:**
 - 8 residents helped to date with intensive SOAR case management.
- Now that MTD is charging for bus passes again (\$60 per year), we have conducted outreach to 87 participants to help them access DASH passes for disabled residents or MTD passes paid for by CTSO.

Rental Assistance

Rental assistance for Urbana households behind on rent or homeless moving into housing.

- 3 households were supported with Rental Assistance last month (down from 20)
- CTSO is supporting residents in packaging and tracking their [Emergency Rental Assistance through RPC](#) which is distributing about \$12 Million to pay off back rent and utilities.
 - Nearly \$4 Million is ERA has been distributed to date.
 - **38% of recipients have lived in Urbana compared to 45% in Champaign, a city twice our size, which is a testament to CTO's advocacy.**
- CTSO is still processing:
 - Applicants who do not declare they are COVID impacted or who have already exhausted ERA funds.

- Applicants for move-in assistance for homeless residents.

Eviction Tracking & Prevention

New CTSO initiative to reduce the number of evictions in Urbana through advocacy for residents threatened with illegal or legal evictions.

- [12% of Champaign County residents are behind on rent; they owe an average of \\$3370.](#)
- CTSO staff began to attend eviction court starting on August 2, 2021 to assist residents with connecting with local resources. We are joined by RPC and Land of Lincoln.
- On September 2, the City of Urbana declared an apartment on Philo Road to be an unsafe structure and ordered 4 households to relocate by September 13th, offering relocation assistance. It is our understanding that tenants are being offered other apartments owned by the landlord. Tenants have the right to relocation assistance to the location of their choosing. We are in close communication with the city about this situation.
- We launched our Worried About Eviction? Know Your Rights publicity campaign:
 - We mailed 1375 pieces to locked apartment complexes about tenant rights and Emergency Rental Assistance.
 - For unlocked apartments, we are planning a homeless prevention day of action later in September where volunteers will drop flyers to residents.
 - We are purchasing bus ads in partnership with RPC & CoChampaign Township.

Worried About Eviction?

Know Your Rights

- There is an Eviction Moratorium temporarily banning evictions for rent owed **for those financially impacted by the pandemic** (look up current status as deadlines change).
- Submit a "Tenant Declaration Form" to your landlord to be protected during Eviction Moratorium
- The only person who can physically make you move is a Sheriff's Deputy with a judge's order
- **If you feel your rights are being violated, contact:**
 - ★ CU Tenants Union: (217) 352-6220
 - ★ Land of Lincoln Legal Aid: (877) 342-7891

Get Help with Rent

- **Champaign County Regional Planning Commission (RPC)**
*www.ccrpc.org/ERA
- **Cunningham Township (Urbana ONLY)**
*www.CunninghamTownship.org
217-384-4144
- **City of Champaign Township (Champaign ONLY)**
*www.CCTownship.com
217-403-6120



This project is being supported, in whole or in part, by federal award number 20-1892-0-1-806, awarded to the RPC by the U.S. Department of the Treasury.

Utility Support

Utility bill support for Champaign County residents who do not qualify for other support programs.

- 18 households helped last month. (down from 21 in July)
- LIHEAP reopened as of September 1, 2021

Housing Advocacy & Housewarming

Housing advocacy for participants who are homeless or at risk of homelessness to access all available subsidized housing opportunities, and help for homeless residents to furnish their new homes.

- 148 participants representing 101 households received help applying to subsidized housing since our advocacy program began July 1, 2020.
- 37 households have successfully moved in or 37% of those helped to apply.
- Pinewood is a new 25 unit development in Urbana specifically serving residents who are disabled and are awaiting SSI determinations and those on the Statewide Referral Network. This population is one of the most at risk for homelessness as their disability prevents them from working and yet they are in a lengthy process to receive federal disability payments. To date, CTSO has provided 8 referrals for Urbana residents who

meet this criteria.

- The Housing Authority has received 163 vouchers for homeless and high risk residents. 50 are expended and the rest must be used by December 31, 2021. September 6, CTSO starting making referrals to this program and has made 4 so far. Those who are interested may screen through Cunningham Township.
- 10 homeless households have been assisted with the Township Housewarming, since the program began in February, 2021. It is entirely funded by private donations which are used to provide vouchers to formerly homeless households to buy furniture and housewares at Salt and Light and Habitat for Humanity Restore. We have a partnership with HACC to offer Housewarming to their re-entry participants.

Bridge to Home

A rapid rehousing program providing housing stabilization and up to 12 months of rent for literally homeless individuals and families in Champaign County, referred by Centralized Intake for the Homeless.

- Last month we served 3 households with rapid rehousing services and 1 moved household into housing. We have 2 more referrals in process.

Emergency Housing

Emergency Housing for families with children in Urbana schools of Crisis Nursery or residents with disabilities who are referred from CU at Home. [See overview](#)

- Total served to date: 32 households including 32 adults and 35 children (since July 2020)
- Currently served: 5 households.
- All 5 households moved in August 26, 2021 and remain.
- Our Special Use Permit was approved by the City Council on August 23, 2021. We continue to seek the ability to have on-site staff to support resident safety and are having architectural review of what is needed.
- Progress this month: installing all new flooring, safety review of all program units, 35 volunteers cleaned and set up the apartments, 5 press pieces.
- Press:
 - Illinois Newsroom/WILL: <https://illinoisnewsroom.org/urbanas-emergency-housing-program-finds-a-new-home/>
 - News-Gazette: https://www.news-gazette.com/news/local/social-services/urbana-s-homeless-have-a-new-place-to-stay/article_8efbb0a0-8fbd-5194-b9ea-60bba109ea6d.html
 - WCIA: <https://www.wcia.com/news/cunningham-township-continues-to-fight->

[housing-insecurity/](#)

- News Channel 20: <https://newschannel20.com/news/local/cunningham-township-launches-permanent-covid-19-emergency-housing>
- Smile Politely: [http://www.smilepolitely.com/splog/cunningham townships emergency housing program gains stability/](http://www.smilepolitely.com/splog/cunningham_townships_emergency_housing_program_gains_stability/)





August 26, 2021
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Contact: Danielle Chynoweth
Cunningham Township Supervisor
217-721-7223 (cell)
Danielle@cunninghamtownship.org

**“We are going to end homelessness in our community, starting with our kids.”
Cunningham Township makes its COVID Emergency Housing permanent with move-ins
starting today**

Homeless families in Urbana have a new place to turn for help. After years of limited shelter options for families and residents with disabilities, Cunningham Township Supervisor’s Office (CTSO) has stepped in to fill the gap.

Starting today, CTSO’s Emergency Housing program, which was launched in a hotel during the pandemic, will move into its new, permanent location in downtown Urbana, just a few blocks from schools and transportation. CTSO purchased two apartment buildings earlier in the summer, and the Urbana City Council provided the green light Monday with approval of a special use permit.

“We are going to end homelessness in our community, starting with our kids,” pledged Cunningham Township Supervisor Danielle Chynoweth. **“Families have struggled so much more during the pandemic, and now they face the return of evictions. If the pandemic has taught us one thing, it is that we can move mountains when we come together to solve our community’s problems.”**

This move is part of Supervisor Chynoweth’s strategic plan to end homelessness in Urbana, and advances a pledge made to Urbana voters last when they overwhelmingly approved a tax increase for township last year. Last year, Cunningham Township ran a deficit responding to COVID-19, but raised over \$100,000 in private Angel Donor funds to provide emergency housing and food support for neighbors in need.

There were 188 children known to be homeless in Urbana schools in FY 2020, according to the Regional Office of Education. This number includes families who lack stable housing, as well as those who were literally without shelter, staying in cars, abandoned buildings, and other unsafe conditions.

The program has been remarkably successful, helping 31 literally homeless households, including 35 children, move into more stable housing with an average stay of 60 days. Key to the program has been partnerships with Urbana Schools and Crisis Nursery, which provides referrals, the Continuum of Service Providers for the Homeless, and dozens of township volunteers who have spent this month cleaning, furnishing, and making home in the new apartments.

Thanks to the emergency program a mother of six children was able to find stable employment and move into her own home. She shared: **“We were in a state of homelessness. I had six little ones behind me, and I used to think that if I give up, who will take care of them? It was a challenging journey, but it was worth it. Township made everything easier, and honestly, without their help, I don’t know even if I would have been in my home today.”**

“Our program participants have shown incredible dedication and perseverance in overcoming odds. These families are motivated to succeed, but they need whole community support,” said Chynoweth.

The Urbana School District has an intergovernmental agreement with Township to provide referrals and has pledged IT support:

“Urbana School District is looking forward to supporting this initiative to continue to close the digital divide for all Urbana families. We will be providing wireless networking and shared devices for these new homes. Access to technology is an expectation in modern society, and whether you are applying for a job or looking for a house. USD116 is committed to providing our families with the technology they need to meet the needs of a changing society, and we are excited to partner with Cunningham Township to provide those resources to families being served in this program.” - Dr. Jennifer Ivory-Tatum, Superintendent, Urbana School District 116

The Urbana Free Library has committed to providing library cards and outreach services to help families connect to the wealth of books, movies, music, audiobooks, learning materials, and databases in their collection.

Julie Pryde, Champaign Urbana Public Health Administrator is exploring ways public health can support ending homelessness in Champaign County.

“The importance of safe, affordable housing to health and wellness is well established in the literature. Housing is a key social determinant of health, and as such, is a critical foundation on which we build healthy communities. Lack of safe, affordable housing impacts outcomes for infectious diseases, behavioral health issues, injuries, chronic illnesses and even nutrition.” - Julie Pryde, CUPHD

State Representative Carol Ammons shared: **“I would like to congratulate Township Supervisor Danielle Chynoweth, and the Cunningham Township office for establishing the Emergency Shelter Program for homeless families in our community and Urbana schools. For generations, families in Champaign-Urbana have been made to struggle under the detrimental effects of unjust residential policies and the lack of sufficient resources to provide housing security for all. Access to stable jobs, nutritious food, quality healthcare, and childcare cannot be possible without the security and assurance of proper housing. We must look forward to a future where families don’t have to work multiple jobs to put a roof over their heads and can climb out of poverty and homelessness. I believe this family housing program is more than an opportunity to be a helping hand to those struggling with housing insecurity, it is a step forward in meeting the standard of housing as a human right.”** - State Representative Carol Ammons

Chynoweth has been reaching out to other local leaders asking them to make safe homes for all a top community priority. **“We have a very generous community, plus tens of millions of additional dollars coming into the community to support residents during the pandemic. Housing support needs to be a primary focus, especially as we face an end to the eviction moratorium and a rebuilding of our economy,”** Chynoweth said.

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