

Report of Saint Francis Center to the 135th Annual Convention Of the Diocese of Colorado— October 13-15, 2022

The mission of St. Francis Center is to offer refuge and peace for our community members who experience homelessness, helping them meet their basic needs and transition out of homelessness.

Executive Summary

In 2021 St. Francis Center embarked on several new projects as we also learned to adjust to the challenges of staying open for our guests during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Day Center continued to help hundreds of people every day with emergency services and with support to aid the transition out of homelessness. Grant funds helped us to keep a full schedule of hours and program services available, even during peak pandemic months, to meet what continues to be a growing need in the Denver Metro area. Funds also helped us continue to a long term focus on the development of affordable housing and associated wrap around service, such as Employment and Rapid Resolution case management services.

St. Francis Warren Residences opened to residents in October 2021, featuring 48 affordable work force housing units for people ready to transition out of homelessness. This innovative project, refurbishing and reconstructing the historic Warren Methodist Church, creates a community of support and stability for guests and clients.

SFC also managed a Safe Outdoor Space in 2021, partnering with Regis University to host the 60-person SOS, which provided dignified and safe shelter, showers, restrooms and access to services for residents.

Goal 1: To provide emergency services to adults who are homeless.

Projected Outcomes:

- The day shelter will serve 10,000 different individuals annually.
- The St. Francis Center outreach team will have 2,000 encounters with homeless men and women, and connected many with shelter and emergency services.

Actual Outcomes:

- We provided shelter to 8,842 different guests, serving a daily average of 458 different people.
- Our outreach team had 9,500 encounters with homeless individuals in downtown Denver, helping hundreds access shelter, healthcare and emergency services.

Goal 2: To provide stabilizing services that help men and women end their homelessness.

Projected Outcomes:

- 800 jobseekers will receive employment services, with 500 full-time job placements. Of the individuals receiving intensive employment case management, 90% will be placed in jobs. Three-quarters remain employed for at least six months after placement.

- An estimated 200 of our guests will access healthcare services, with 2,000 encounters per year. In addition, 300 will access behavioral healthcare visits.
- More than 2,500 different men and women will receive help accessing resources such as birth certificates, bus tickets, transportation, and information/referrals

Actual Outcomes:

- Employment Services served 1,174 different individuals and helped place people in 579 full-time jobs.
- The Wellness Team served 306 different guests, providing 611 different services.
- Social Services staff served 3,353 different individuals and provided over 15,500 different services.

Goal 3: To support men and women after they transition out of homelessness, helping them to continue to remain housed and meet goals for self-sufficiency.

Projected Outcomes:

- Case managers will provide intensive support to residents living in 120 units of supportive housing, with at least 90% remaining housed at year’s end.
- Staff will help 400 men and women retain or access housing, including 99 units of permanent supportive housing that we operate. We will also refer 500 individuals to housing resources.

Actual Outcomes:

- St. Francis Center helped 400 different individuals find or retain housing.
- Case Managers provided intensive support to residents in 168 units of housing.
- 97% of those who received case management support across all SFC housing programs stayed either in supportive housing or moved on to other permanent housing arrangements.

2. Were there any unanticipated results, either positive or negative, that you have not already described in A2 above? If yes, please describe the implications.

With the onset of the pandemic, CCH experienced staffing issues which effectively closed the satellite clinic at St. Francis Center. Healthcare services were dramatically reduced by these changes. SFC’s in-house Wellness program continued to operate although it was likewise affected by staffing issues.

3. Describe collaborations, if any, related to the work funded by this grant and how it impacted your efforts.

St. Francis Center continues to maximize resources by seeking partnerships with outside groups and having those groups provide services on-site. On-site partnerships include:

On-Site Partner	Service
Mental Health America of Colorado	Provides on-site mental health counseling resources at St. Francis Center
Veterans Administration	Provides on-site services for veterans at SFC
Denver Department of Human Services	Provides on-site benefits acquisition services to guests

In addition, we work with many community partners beyond the shelter walls. We coordinate services with all area shelters through formal meetings and ongoing contacts. SFC also provides leadership to the Metro Denver Homeless Initiative and Denver's HOST to coordinate with other agencies and reduce the number of people who are homeless in Denver.

B. Lessons Learned

- 1. Describe what you learned based on the results/outcomes you reported in Section A above and what, if any, programmatic or organizational changes you will make based on your results/outcomes.

St. Francis Center has been operating without closing for the entire 2 year run of the pandemic. Denver shelter providers have made significant changes to day and overnight shelter configuration. The 24/7 shelters that have been operating since the pandemic have reduced guest traffic patterns with numbers reduced at St. Francis Center. Even with fewer guests visiting the Center, the behavioral wellness of our guests has been negatively influenced by the pandemic with more behavior issues and volatility. SFC has had to make physical changes to the Day Center to protect guests, staff and volunteers from volatile behavior. Security has been a real priority as the SFC community navigates the continued pandemic.

- 2. Did external or environmental factors (e.g. a flood, an economic downturn, a partner organization stopped providing services, etc.) affect the achievement of your program or organizational goals or the anticipated timeline? If yes, what did you do to address these issues?

The ongoing CV-19 health outbreak continued to affect programs and services at SFC. SFC complied with masking mandates and distancing requirements. This necessary compliance has had a clear effect on community building and interaction for all (guests, volunteers and staff). The Day Center still limits the number of guests allowed entry to 120. The labor shortage has had an impact on staffing for the organization with positions remaining unfilled. Thankfully volunteers have returned to augment the staffing numbers

C. Future Plans

- 1. If you will be continuing this program, what are the plans for sustaining or expanding the program, including a future-funding plan? (For a general operating grant, please answer in terms of the organization.) If discontinuing the program, what factors led to this decision?

St. Francis Center continues to grow and expand its locations and service offerings. New programs in 2021 included the Regis University Safe Outdoor Space and a Denver area Starbucks Outreach Program. Our staff numbers have grown into the 80's and we are managing the complexities of staff in multiple locations. St. Francis Center will be developing more supportive housing in west Denver with a 60 unit, senior project.