

Northwest Michigan Coalition to End Homelessness



Official Press Release

Coalition to End Homelessness Issues Challenge to Grand Traverse Community: Find 20 Rentals for 20 Families in 100 Days

Incentive Program for Landlords and ADU Owners includes Guaranteed Rent and Case Management

Traverse City MI — The Northwest Michigan Coalition to End Homelessness has issued a 100 Day Challenge to permanently house 20 families experiencing homelessness in the Grand Traverse area by December 1.

“100 Day Challenges have been successfully used by communities nationwide to prevent and end homelessness,” said Coalition Director Ashley Halladay-Schmandt. “The system that supports people experiencing homelessness is under a lot of strain due to the pandemic. It’s crucial that we find housing for 20 families experiencing homelessness before the snow flies. The highly-visible, compressed timeframe of 100 days is intended to inspire rapid progress before winter hits.”

Incentives for landlords and ADU owners are central to the effort’s success. New landlords willing to work with a Coalition program are eligible for a \$1,000 lease signing bonus. Plus, families who get housing through the program receive rental assistance and comprehensive in-home case management support services, making it easier for landlords and ADU owners to rent to program participants.

Local landlord Rob Beardsley has had success renting his units through the program. “If I have problems with a tenant, I can work with case managers to start talking about solutions instead of having to go it alone and take tenants to court,” said Beardsley. “Evictions are almost non-existent, about an \$800 savings.”

Renting through the program relieves potential headaches landlords experience when renting units. “Having case workers meet tenants in the home helps reduce maintenance issues because they bring any issues to my attention versus finding out after the tenants move out,” Beardsley added. “You never know what you’re going to get when you rent to a person, and you still don’t when you rent to the Coalition. But you never have to go it alone [with this program]. They’re always there to help you resolve the situation.”

The Challenge is being led by three community champions in the work to end homelessness: Goodwill Northern Michigan, Northwest Michigan Community Action Agency, and Northwest Michigan Supportive Housing. These partner agencies that form the Northwest Michigan Coalition to End Homelessness have each committed funding and staff to get the landlord incentive program off the ground and to find 20 new units to rent by December 1.

“Being homeless is always stressful and dangerous. It’s even worse when you have to worry about quarantining and limiting exposure to others,” said Dan Buron, Goodwill Northern Michigan Executive Director. “This winter, our community’s two emergency homeless shelters, the Goodwill Inn and Safe Harbor, must reduce our capacity so we can keep everyone safe. If we can house 20 families in the next 100 days, we will have more room in the shelters for individuals who will otherwise be on the streets.”

Landlords, ADU owners, and others who may be interested in the program incentives are asked to call Becca Binder, Executive Director of Northwest Michigan Supporting Housing, at 231-463-0201. For more information on the program, visit endhomelessnessmi.org.

MEDIA CONTACT

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