



THE CENTENNIAL BRIEFING



CHEYENNE · ELBERT · KIT CARSON · LINCOLN · LOGAN · MORGAN · PHILLIPS · SEDGWICK · WASHINGTON · YUMA

Our mission is to achieve excellence in the provision of behavioral health services that lead to optimal health and well being

HOUSING HAPPENINGS

Right now the demand for housing is high, the Housing Team receives approximately 15-20 requests per day for housing assistance, over the course of the last several months, the COVID pandemic has many individuals and families facing housing and food insecurities. With the uncertain landscape for both the tenant and landlord, the Housing Team at Centennial is here to provide education and support to those experiencing hardships.

The week of November 15 – 22, 2020, is National Hunger and Homeless Awareness Week. During this week people from across the county come together to draw attention to the problems of hunger and homelessness in our communities.

According to Hunger and Homelessness Week's website: 43.1 million Americans live below the poverty line; in one year, over 3.5 million people will experience homelessness nationwide; in that same struggle 42 million American's are at risk of suffering from hunger and 1 in 5 children in the United States live in poverty.

Metro Denver Homeless Initiative (MDHI) recently released a report on the state of homelessness within the counties they serve. In this report they eloquently described that homelessness is not limited to the individuals we often see as characterized as visible homeless. There is an entire subset of this population comprised of children, families, youth and others who also comprise the invisible homeless. This description holds true regardless of where one lives in the metro or rural regions of Colorado.

According to the National Center for Homeless Education, there are 22,369 homeless children and youth enrolled in public schools in Colorado in the 2018-2019 school year. In March 2020, there were 750 youth and children in Centennial's ten county catchment area that were considered homeless. Nearly 1 in 8 Colorado kids may not always know when or where they will get their next meal and nearly 1 in 11 Coloradans struggle with hunger. The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, ensures the rights of students to go to school even when they are homeless or do not have a permanent address. The Act aims to reduce barriers that prevent homeless youth from enrolling, attending and succeeding in school. In July 2020, we received funds from Northeast Health Partners

(NHP) for Members of Medicaid to provide temporary hotel/motel assistance. With NHP funds, we have been able to serve 51 adults and 13 children, with 374 nights of temporary hotel/motel stays. These individuals and families struggle with homelessness. Centennial's PATH program provides homeless outreach and case management services to hard-to-reach homeless individuals with serious mental illness. Outreach is done to identify those persons in the community who are homeless for the purpose of connecting them to community mental health and substance use disorder services. Through PATH we are able to provide a hygiene kit that includes personal care items, a water bottle and blanket. In Program Year 20 (August – July), Centennial served 82 men, women and children, with 270 services. This is a significant increase from Program Year 19, where 49 individuals were served with 114 services.

The Housing Team continues to work with the Colorado Division of Housing to secure a variety of funding and housing options to assist eligible families. Over the course of the last several months, Centennial has received a significant amount of funding for the Emergency Housing Assistance Program (EHAP). This program can provide rental/mortgage assistance for homeless prevention activities to eligible households who have experienced an economic crisis as a result of COVID-19. To date, we have served 14 households, paying landlords \$23,341.37. Outside of providing rental/mortgage assistance for the individual renter, the Division of Housing also has a program for landlords who own multiple properties. For more information about the Property Owner Preservation Program (POP) visit: <https://cdola.colorado.gov/rental-assistance>. In addition to EHAP, Centennial also received funds from Morgan County United Way to provide COVID housing related needs in Morgan and Logan Counties. These funds assisted 10 families, expending \$15,000 to landlords.

Other rental assistance programs offered through the Housing Program have specific eligibility criteria and include:

- Housing Choice Voucher Program, also known as Section 8, serving 76 households;
- Housing Choice Voucher Homeownership Program, serving 4 households;
- State Housing Voucher Program for Justice Involved Persons, has a fluid by name list of 114 individuals who have been screened and possibly eligible for one of the 30 allocated vouchers;

- Centennial's Fourth Street House, located in Sterling; and
- The Homeless Prevention Activities Program (HPAP).

Karla Rosas, Community Resource Director and Kirstin Schelling, Housing & Supported Employment Program Manager for Centennial Mental Health Center, along with Trae Miller, Logan County Economic Development Director just completed the Pathways Home Colorado Permanent Supportive Housing Toolkit with a video presentation to potential project development partners and funders. Through this process, we were able to learn about project design, development and financing, operations and property management, supportive services, community engagement and Fair Housing. We are looking forward to bringing this life changing opportunity to Logan County, where we could offer safe and stable housing to our very most vulnerable homeless population who may have justice involvement, chronic homelessness, substance use disorders and or serious mental illness.

For more information about Centennial's Housing Programs, please contact any of the housing staff via Housing@Centennialmhc.org distribution email.



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JEANS FOR JOY REMINDER

Due to COVID, our voluntary staff fundraiser "Jeans for Joy" has a new look this year as many of you may have already been enjoying wearing jeans to work. All Centennial employees will have the opportunity to raise funds by contributing a minimum of \$5.00 every Tuesday by either wearing jeans and/or fun attire.

Here is a reminder of the fun Tuesdays to participate in:

November 17:

Your favorite sports team

November 24:

Color Day: Wear as many colors as you can!

December 1:

Wear flannel/plaid

December 8:

Tie-Dye

December 15:

Wacky socks

Please consider sending (socially distanced) photos to JaciY@CentennialMHC.org for the Briefing

Please share in the excitement and fun during Centennial's 11th year of our "All Centennial" Employee fundraiser.

SUPPORT LINE AVAILABLE



University of Colorado **Anschutz Medical Campus**

Stressed? Virtual learning and changing plans wearing you down? Want support around COVID chaos?

We're here for you.

**Teacher/Educator
Well-Being Support Line**

303-724-2500

Call or text.

Talk to a trained Crisis Counselor volunteer who can listen and support you. 8 a.m.-8 p.m. 7 days a week via telephone or text message. Free & immediate access to mental health services available as needed.

The Well-Being Support Line is a free service for all educators and school employees including ECE, K-12 programs, and higher education. The support line is available to any educator across the state including teachers, administrators, para-professionals, health care teams, and support staff.



BRAIN HEALTH for all, for life.

In collaboration with the University of Colorado Department of Psychiatry and CDPHE Colorado Spirit's Crisis Counseling Program