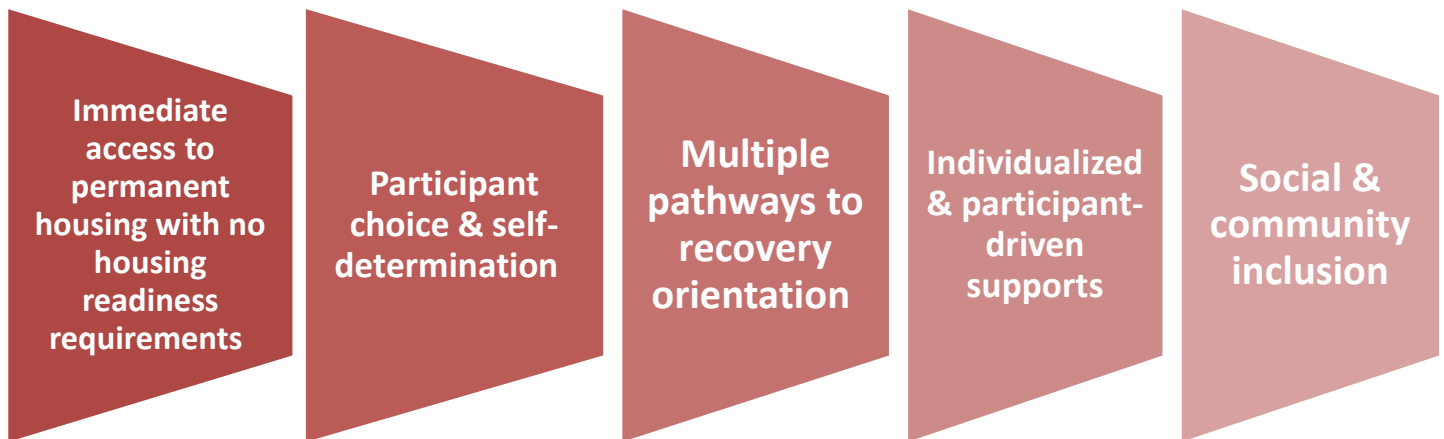


The Five Key Principles of Housing First



- 1. Immediate access to permanent housing with no housing readiness requirements.** Everyone deserves a safe, permanent place to live. We believe that housing is a basic human right— not a privilege, and not something we expect someone to “earn.” Housing First recognizes that treatment and recovery are *secondary* to safety and shelter, and that everyone is “ready” for housing.
- 2. Participant choice & self-determination.** Housing First is person-centered at its core, promoting the inherent worth and dignity of all people, and promotes empowerment for participant decision-making. Housing is based on client preferences and availability. Our participants guide what services they access, when they start, and are provided with multiple service options and continual staff support.
- 3. Multiple pathways to recovery orientation.** We do not force abstinence or treatment on anyone, but instead, support participants in defining what recovery looks like to them. We are inclusive of harm reduction strategies, peer support, and holistic well-being, acknowledging the role of social, recreational, educational, occupational, & vocational activities in the recovery process.
- 4. Individualized and participant-driven supports.** Standardized policies ignore individual experience. In Housing First, there is no one-size-fits-all approach. Choice is incorporated into all areas of programming—housing, health, mental health, substance use, life skills, etc. This allows participants to access supports on demand, and challenges stigma and systemic barriers to care.
- 5. Social and community inclusion.** Housing should not stigmatize or isolate our clients. Housing First programs must offer opportunities to reintegrate into the community following the experience of homelessness. We encourage our participants to engage in meaningful social activity, including cultural, spiritual, and civic engagement; employment, vocational, and recreational activities; financial wellness; and family, friends, and intimate relationships.