



We can do it.



CARITAS and its partner agencies believe that we can break the cycle of homelessness in Richmond. Together, we transform lives and restore dignity. Let's end homelessness.

# CARITAS Shelter



**We can end homelessness.  
This is how:**

### **Housing First**

The only way to end homelessness is with housing. The CARITAS Shelter does not provide housing. It is a necessary step for many on the way to housing, but it is not a permanent solution.

### **Prioritization**

Everything we do at CARITAS, we do with the understanding that it is possible to end homelessness. We do not give up on the hardest-to-house clients. In fact, we use a proven assessment tool to ensure that we serve the most vulnerable clients first.

### **Partnerships**

CARITAS is a part of a continuum of care designed to end homelessness. CARITAS is not the final stop; it is the first. With the help of local congregations, CARITAS plays a crucial role as one player on the team, temporarily sheltering clients on their way to permanent housing solutions. We provide case management services to guide our clients as they navigate their way to back to stability.

## **Support The Shelter**

Volunteers from more than 160 congregations, financial contributors, local businesses, other service providers, and our staff work together to change the lives of our clients. You can help by making a financial contribution, hosting a collection drive, or volunteering as a host congregation. If your congregation would like to host a shelter or a drive please call 887-1595. To make a financial contribution, please call Clara Stokes, the Chief Development Officer, at 887-1571.

# Bound for Housing: A Story

I moved to Richmond from Colorado with my teenaged son, Grayson, fleeing a bad marriage. We knew absolutely no one, so we had no choice but to move into a hotel that cost \$237 a week. I still remember it to the dollar. At an employment office, at the end of my rope, someone told me about CARITAS.

What I found wasn't a scary institution, but a loving family of congregations, CARITAS staff, and other clients. For my son, every week was a new adventure. Often he would make friends with members of that congregation who were his age, and it made the week go by so much faster.

Meanwhile, I was getting help from other clients, congregation volunteers, classes, and my case manager to get back on my feet. I found a job within one month, and was able to save almost everything into an escrow account because I didn't have to worry about food and shelter. When I started looking for housing, my case manager came with me, helping me avoid some pitfalls that could have jeopardized my stability.

Today, I work as the Deputy Chief Operating Officer for the housing authority, and I decided to give back to CARITAS by working as one of the shelter staff. CARITAS clients say, "You don't know what I'm going through," they are shocked when I say, "Yes, I do. I was a client. I know exactly what you're going through." I carry that knowledge and that empathy with me every day.

- Carol



## What kind of housing solutions exist for CARITAS clients?

CARITAS focuses on serving the most vulnerable people -- those with the lowest level of functioning. People are prioritized for services this way (think emergency room). The most vulnerable clients will be assisted with Rapid Rehousing or Permanent Supportive housing, but most will find it necessary to self-stabilize.

### Rapid Rehousing

Rapid Rehousing is integral in ending homelessness. It provides a short term subsidy for a person to get their own name on a lease in a market-rate apartment. Once a client achieves stable housing, it becomes easier to provide other needed services to that client. As more Rapid Rehousing funding becomes available, the average length of stay in emergency shelters decreases.

### Permanent Supportive Housing

VA Supportive Housing offers income-based housing through a permanent voucher system for low-functioning individuals that need immediate access to permanent case management services. Often these clients can work toward independence and eventually move on from supportive housing to financial subsidy only.

