



*Department of* **Human Services**  
Monroe County, New York

**Maggie Brooks**  
*County Executive*

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*Commissioner*

**HOUSING / HOMELESS  
SERVICES  
ANNUAL REPORT**

**For Calendar Year 2011**

**April 2012**

## **EMERGENCY HOUSING / HOMELESS SERVICES - 2011**

### **Emergency Housing Placements**

In 2011, the Monroe County Department of Human Services (MCDHS) made 8,672<sup>1</sup> emergency housing placements for individuals and families. This represents a 3% decrease from the 8,904 emergency housing placements made in 2010.

### **Emergency Housing Placements - Families / Individuals - 2007-2011**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Families</b>	<b>Individuals</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Change from previous year</b>	<b>% Change</b>	<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>Average cost per placement</b>
<b>2007</b>	2,169	6,760	8,929	-84	-1%	\$4,356,846	\$488
<b>2008</b>	2,386	6,592	8,978	49	1%	\$4,520,802	\$504
<b>2009</b>	2,629	6,556	9,185	207	2%	\$4,863,995	\$530
<b>2010</b>	2,494	6,410	8,904	-281	-3%	\$4,610,586	\$518
<b>2011</b>	2,559	6,113	8,672	-232	-3%	\$4,755,997	\$548

*The 2011 emergency housing placement numbers do not include Monroe County residents that were placed in domestic violence shelters outside of Monroe County. In 2011, an additional \$287,357 was issued for out of county domestic violence placements.*

### **Leading Causes for Emergency Housing Placements - 2011**

The primary cause of homelessness in 2011 continued to be eviction by primary tenant (individuals and families residing in the homes of relatives or friends are often asked to leave due to overcrowded conditions, substance abuse, domestic disputes, family breakups, and strained relationships.) This cause represented 63% of the total emergency housing placements that were made in 2011.

The second leading cause of homelessness in 2011 was a result of being released from an institution without a plan for permanent housing (institutions include hospitals, substance abuse treatment programs, and the Monroe County Jail.) This cause represented 15% of the total emergency housing placements that were made in 2011.

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<sup>1</sup> The number of emergency housing placements made is not unduplicated, and does not include canceled placements or certain no show placements.

**Emergency Housing Placement - Causes - 2007-2011**

<b><u>Cause of Homelessness</u></b>	<b><u>2007</u></b>	<b><u>2008</u></b>	<b><u>2009</u></b>	<b><u>2010</u></b>	<b><u>2011</u></b>
Eviction by Primary Tenant	55%	55%	61%	63%	63%
Released from Institution	19%	18%	16%	15%	15%
Evicted by Landlord	7%	9%	7%	8%	7%
Domestic Violence	10%	9%	7%	6%	6%
Arrived from Out-of-County	6%	5%	5%	5%	6%
Fire	<1%	1%	2%	1%	1%
All Other Causes	2%	3%	2%	2%	2%

**Emergency Housing Placements - Youth**

In 2011, 828 youths (ages 16-21, unduplicated) were placed in emergency housing. As some youths experienced multiple bouts of homelessness, the total number of youth placements into emergency housing for 2011 was 1,409. Of the total youth placements made in 2011, 50% were placed in the adult shelter system, 40% were placed in the youth shelter system, and 10% were placed in hotels.<sup>2</sup>

**Emergency Housing Placements - Youth (Ages 16-21) - 2007-2011**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Youths Placed</b>	<b>Change from Previous Year</b>	<b>% Change</b>	<b>Total Placements</b>	<b>Change from Previous Year</b>	<b>% Change</b>
<b>2007</b>	777	129	20%	1,398	462	49%
<b>2008</b>	800	23	3%	1,255	-143	-10%
<b>2009</b>	921	121	15%	1,502	247	20%
<b>2010</b>	890	-31	-3%	1,511	9	1%
<b>2011</b>	828	-62	-7%	1,409	-102	-7%

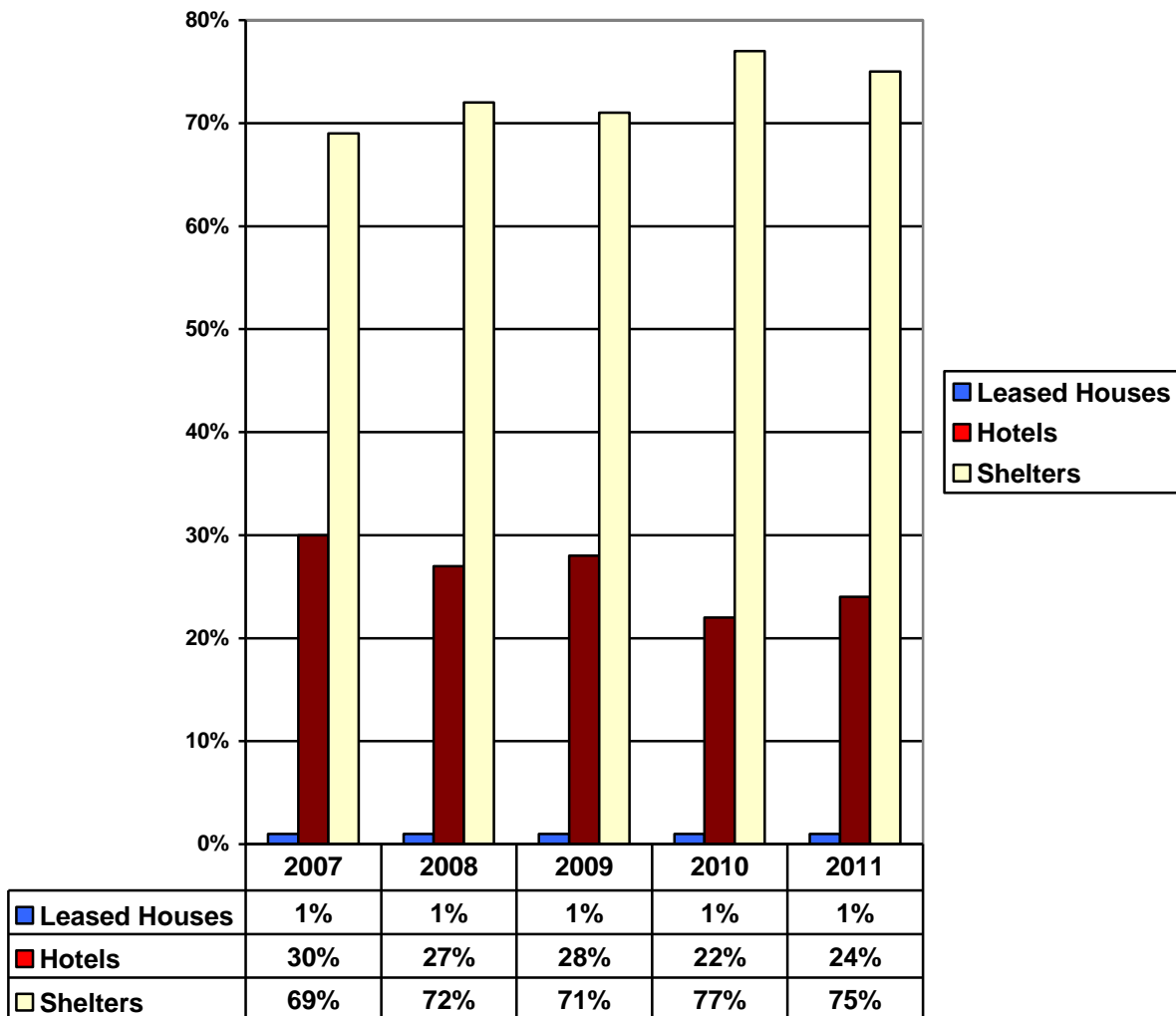
<sup>2</sup> These percentages are based on the unduplicated numbers.

## Emergency Housing Placements – Shelters, Hotels and Leased Houses

Shelters and the leased houses provide case management services that are not provided at a hotel. When making a placement the shelters are always used first, and a hotel placement is only made when a shelter bed or leased house is unavailable. Staff at the MCDHS Emergency Housing Unit works with those families and individuals who have been placed in a hotel to move them as quickly as possible to a shelter or leased house.

In 2011, 75% of the emergency housing placements were made at homeless shelters. Hotel placements accounted for 24% of the total emergency housing placements, and leased houses 1%

**Emergency Housing Placements  
in Shelters, Hotels and Leased Houses - 2007-2011**



### Average Length of Stay

The goal of MCDHS is to assist the homeless in securing appropriate permanent housing as quickly as possible. In 2011, the average length of a placement in a shelter increased by two days for families and one day for individuals. The average length of stay in a hotel remained unchanged at two days, and the length of stay in the leased houses decreased by two days.

### Average Length of Stay (Days)

	FAMILIES			INDIVIDUALS		
	2010	2011	Change	2010	2011	Change
<b>Hotels</b>	2	2	N/C	2	2	N/C
<b>Shelters</b>	11	13	2	8	9	1
<b>Houses</b>	38	36	-2	-	-	

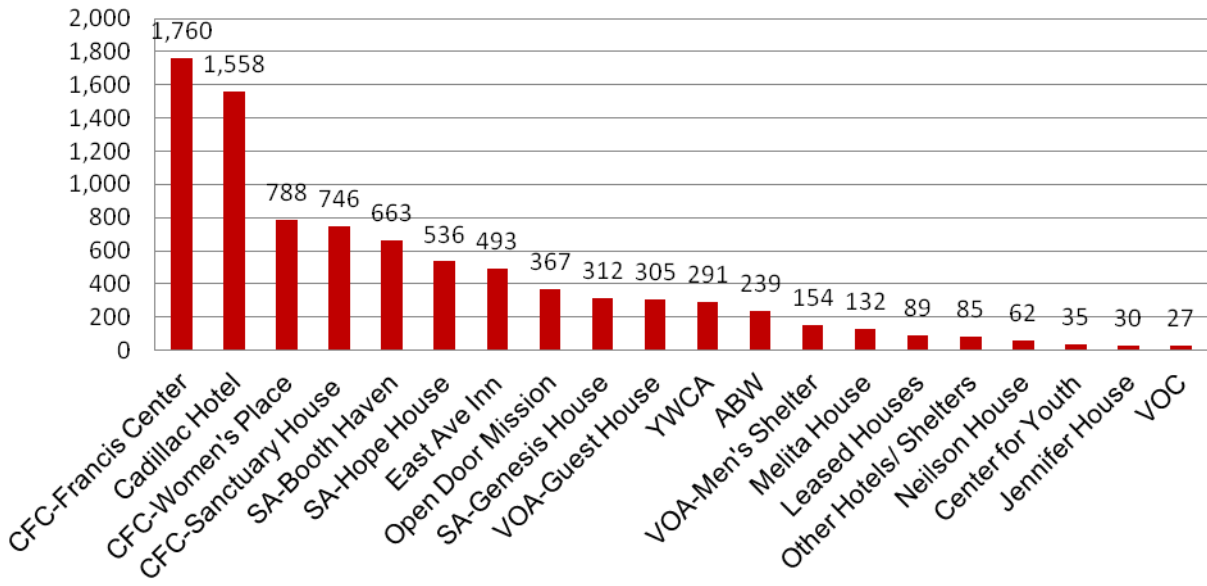
### Available Beds

During 2011, MCDHS contracted with various community agencies for approximately 447 emergency beds for homeless individuals and families. These are approximate numbers as rooms can be reconfigured based on need, and some of the shelter beds are “moved” between various programs when necessary. When the shelters are unable to accommodate a placement MCDHS utilizes various hotels and motels in Monroe County.

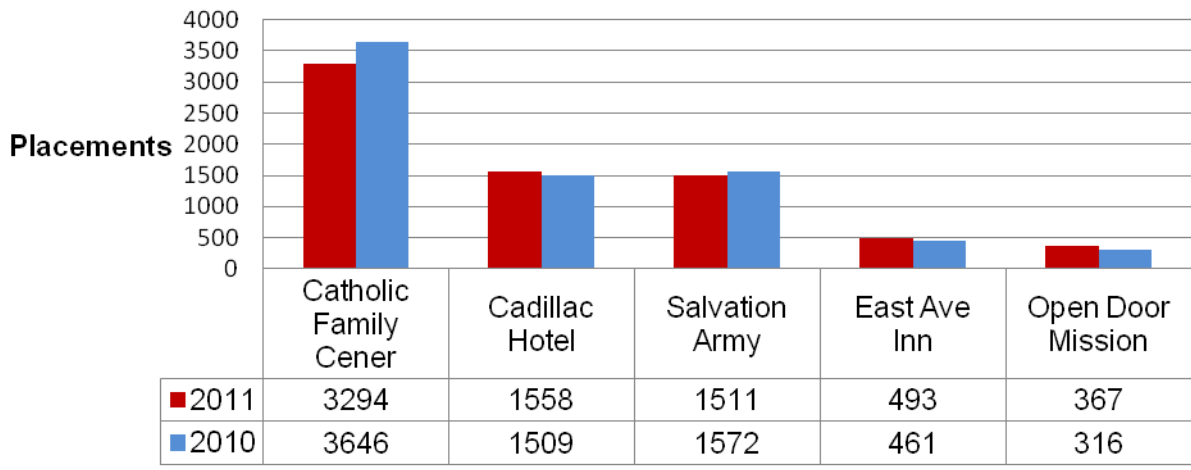
### **Emergency Facilities with MCDHS Contracts**

Alternatives for Battered Women	38 beds	Women- single and with children
Catholic Family Center-Francis Shelter	36 beds	Single men only
Catholic Family Center-Sanctuary House	42 beds	Women- single and with children (17 Rooms)
Catholic Family Center-Women's Place	43 beds	Women- single and with children (18 Rooms)
Center for Youth	13 beds	Youths (16-20) - male or female
Melita House (Mercy Residential)	12 beds	16-20 year old pregnant or parenting women
Open Door Mission	40 beds	Single men only
Salvation Army Men's Shelter-Booth Haven	39 beds	Single men only
Salvation Army Youth Shelter- Genesis House	14 beds	Youths (16-21) - male or female
Salvation Army Women's Shelter-Hope House	19 beds	single women only
Spiritus Christi Prison Outreach (Jennifer House)	8 beds	single women only
Spiritus Christi Prison Outreach (Neilsen House)	12 beds	Single men only
Tempo Development (Temple B'rith Kodesh)	58 beds	Families (11 units)
VOC-Richards House	6 beds	Single men only
Volunteers of America –Guest House	44 beds	Families, couples and singles (12 Rooms)
Volunteers of America –Men's Shelter	4 beds	Single men only
YWCA	19 beds	Women- single and with children (13 Rooms)
<b>Total Shelter Beds</b>	<b>447</b>	

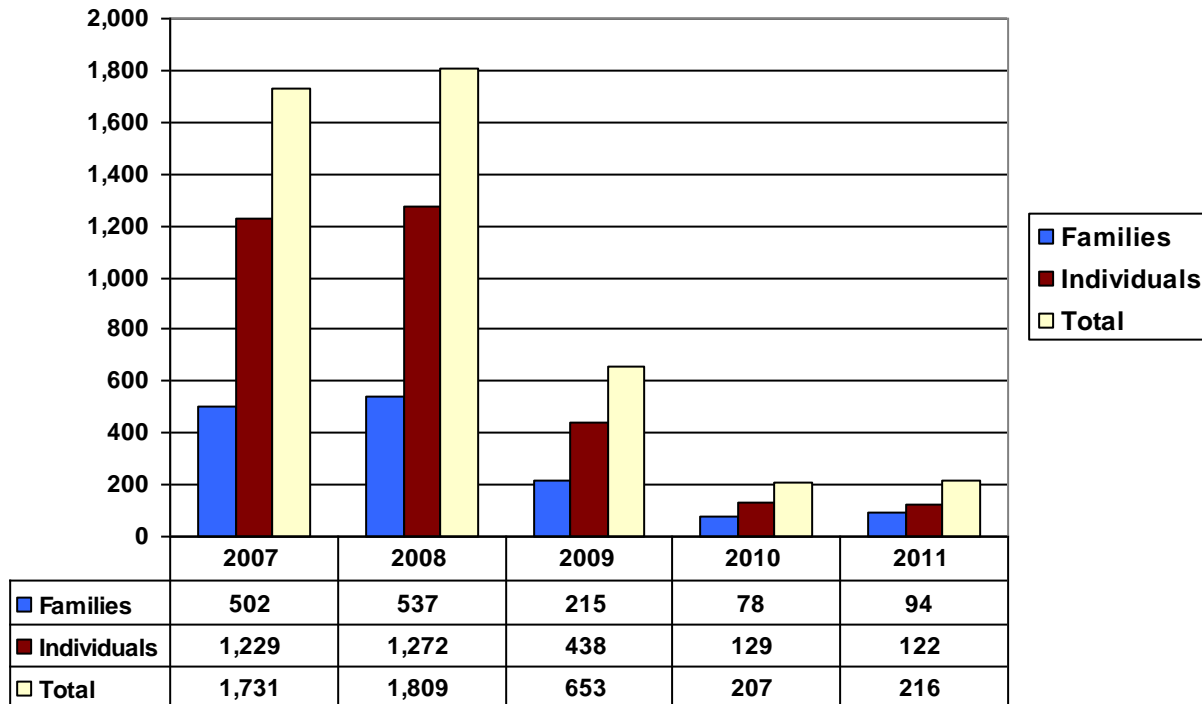
**2011 - Emergency Housing Placements by Site**



**2011 - Top Emergency Housing Placement Sites**



### Emergency Housing Placement No Shows - 2007-2011



Effective June 8, 2009, MCDHS established a policy regarding how certain “No Show” shelter placements are handled. When a family or individual is placed by the Emergency Housing Unit they are instructed to report to the shelter by 5:30 PM. If they have not arrived by 6:00 PM, their placement is canceled and their bed(s) are released and are available for placement for other homeless individuals or families. During 2011, 1,153 “No Show” placements were released and their beds were available for utilization through the MCDHS After Hours coverage program.

### Tenant Accountability Training

Tenant Accountability Training (TAT) was part of the original Proactive Property Management Program; training was discontinued in early 2003 due to budgeting constraints. The goal of TAT is to assist recipients of Temporary Assistance (TA) in achieving their highest level of self-sufficiency. The training focuses on the value of being a good tenant and neighbor, along with the costs to the individual, their children and the community of a transient life-style. The client’s attendance is considered a continuing eligibility requirement for TA, and failure to attend would be cause to discontinue the client’s TA grant. In September 2009, MCDHS, the City of Rochester and the Housing Council collaborated to resurrect TAT. Situations that will generate a referral for a recipient of TA to be scheduled for TAT include: Two moves within the last 12 months, a former landlord has filed a claim on a Landlord Tenant Security Agreement for \$500 or greater, two emergency housing placements within a 12-month period, the head of household is under the age of 21, administrative discretion, a TA household that contains a child under the age of 6 and is residing in the areas that have been identified by the City of Rochester as posing the highest risk of exposure to lead poisoning, or a request from a city, town or Housing Council inspector, the Health Department, a MCDHS case worker or investigator.

In December 2010, the curriculum for half of the training sessions was revised to include a segment on Healthy Homes and specifically lead poisoning. The goal of this portion of the training is to increase the tenant's knowledge and awareness of potential lead hazards. The participants are also given instructions, resource materials, and contact information to use in the event that they identify a potential lead hazard in their home. In August of 2011, this was expanded and now all TAT trainings include a segment on Healthy Homes and specifically lead poisoning. A survey of the participants found that 99% of those who responded felt that as a result of the presentation they were better able to identify lead hazards in their home. During 2011, 1,651 recipients of TA attended TAT. Since its resurrection in September 2009 through December 31, 2011 there have been 2,800 participants in TAT.

### **Monroe County Department of Human Services' Emergency Housing Unit**

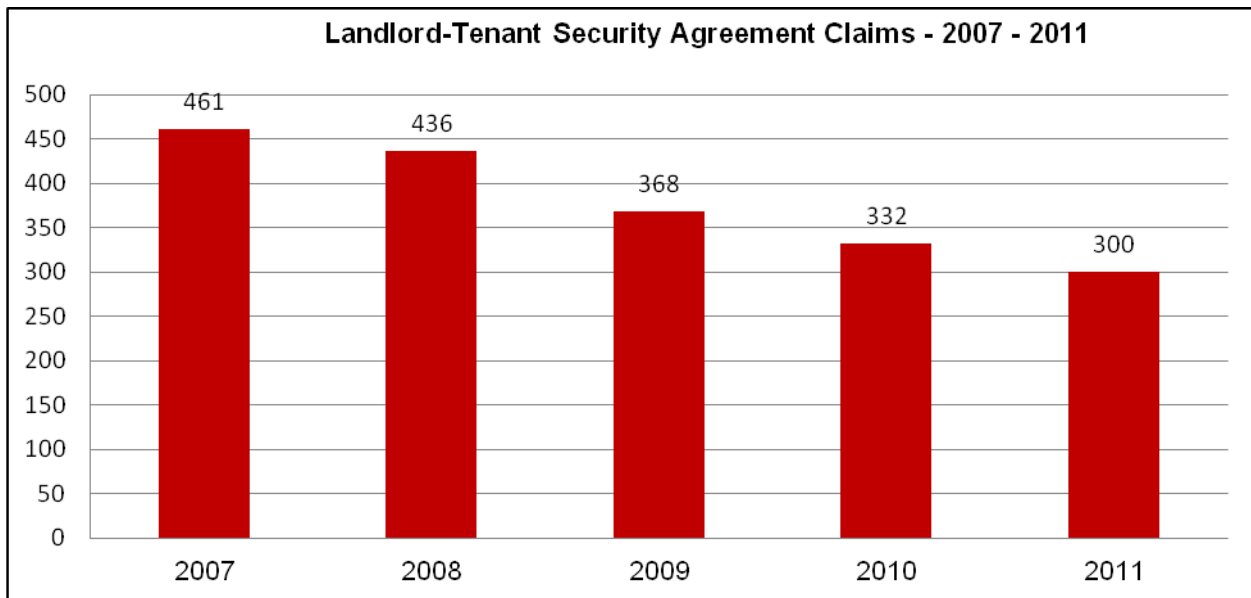
The Monroe County Department of Human Services' Emergency Housing Unit was established to serve the emergency needs of the homeless and the housing needs of the low-income residents in our community. The following services are provided by the Emergency Housing Unit and various other units within MCDHS:

- One Emergency Housing Unit staff person is assigned to each of the shelters to serve as a liaison with shelter staff and to work with shelter providers to assist residents in securing financial assistance, locating housing and providing relocation services such as moving, utility turn-on, and acquiring needed furniture and appliances.
- The Emergency Housing Unit provides the homeless with housing assistance and linkages to other County staff, including: Adult Protective, Child Protective, Financial Assistance, Mental Health, Youth Bureau, Probation, as well as community service providers.
- The Emergency Housing Unit has two workers designated as a single point of entry for any youth between the ages of 16 to 18 that are homeless and/or applying for cash assistance as the head of household. MCDHS staff conducts investigations to locate responsible adults, or, in the event no adult is available, work with community providers to locate appropriate permanent housing and link the youths to needed services.
- MCDHS operates a 24-hour placement line. After hours telephone coverage is available during non-business hours to provide emergency assistance to the homeless (442-1742.) Coverage staff work in collaboration with Lifeline and the Salvation Army's after-hours staff to provide assistance during non-business hours.
- The Emergency Housing Unit is the central point of entry for MCDHS placement into emergency housing. Staff coordinate the placement of the homeless into available beds. A daily census is taken at the shelters and hotels to maximize use of available beds and identify and address any client-specific barriers to relocation into permanent housing.
- Screening of all homeless individuals and families who are not receiving Temporary Assistance to determine eligibility for temporary housing assistance. When appropriate, expedited Food Stamps, personal needs allowances and assistance with first month's rent are issued.
- The Emergency Housing Unit operates a Landlord Complaint "Hotline" (753-6034.) Complaints are resolved quickly, and in many instances have prevented evictions. Staff work directly with landlords to resolve agency/landlord disputes.
- The Emergency Housing Unit conducts periodic inspections of the emergency shelters and hotels



to ensure that safe and sanitary housing is being provided to the homeless.

- The Emergency Housing Unit operates the Rent Withholding Program which works to ensure that buildings with open health and safety violations occupied by Temporary Assistance recipients are brought up to code compliance. When necessary, rental payments are withheld until major violations are corrected. In 2011, the Emergency Housing Unit processed 849 referrals for rent withholding. To date on 151 of the referrals the property has been brought up to code.
- MCDHS issues a Landlord Tenant Security Agreement (LTA) in lieu of a cash security deposit. The LTA secures the landlord against tenant-caused damages and unpaid rent up to a maximum amount equal to two months of the household's Temporary Assistance shelter allowance. The Emergency Housing Unit is responsible for processing claims made on Landlord Tenant Security Agreements. In 2011, there were 300 claims filed on Landlord Tenant Security Agreements.



- Provide emergency payments to financially eligible home-owners which include payments to prevent tax or mortgage foreclosures or help with necessary repairs to maintain current occupied housing.
- MCDHS, in partnership with the Rochester Housing Authority (RHA), operates a Shelter Plus Care grant. The Shelter Plus Care program is funded through HUD and provides rent subsidies to low-income households. This program helps house homeless individuals and families in which the head-of-household suffers from mental illness, chronic substance abuse and/or other disabilities. Rochester Housing Authority manages the rental subsidies and MCDHS Emergency Housing Unit staff assists in locating housing. Ongoing case management services are provided by various agencies in the community. Currently, 414 households in Monroe County are receiving rent subsidies through this grant.
- Emergency Housing staff are a component of the Homeless MICA Program. This program, funded by MCDHS's Office of Mental Health, uses a team approach to serving homeless MICA individuals. Staff from MCDHS, Strong Memorial Hospital, and Rochester Mental Health Center work together and are able to draw upon the resources of their respective agencies. The program is able to assist these individuals in securing financial assistance, emergency, supportive and permanent housing. Case managers at Strong Memorial Hospital and Rochester Mental Health Center provide linkages to mental health services and ongoing case management. During 2011, 370 homeless individuals with mental health issues were assisted through this program.

Monroe County Department of Human Services staff are also active participants in the following organizations:

- **Homeless Services Network:** This organization facilitates networking, coordinating, consulting and fundraising among individuals who work for, or with agencies who provide high quality accessible and effective health, social, housing, and other services to people who are homeless. Members represent over 50 community agencies, including County and City departments.
- **Homeless Continuum of Care Team:** This team that is composed of staff from Monroe County, the City of Rochester, the United Way of Greater Rochester and the Homeless Service Providers' Network facilitates and evaluates the implementation of the local Homeless Continuum of Care Plan. Each year, this group is responsible to coordinate the community's submission for the HUD Super NOFA. This includes collecting community data, ranking proposals to meet community needs, and writing the Rochester/Monroe County application for HUD funds.