Services for our Community

The Needs We See in Response to Covid 19
Catholic Social Services has operated emergency shelter in Anchorage for almost 40 years. Over that time we have become the local expert on providing this emergency service.

- **Brother Frances Shelter** – emergency shelter for adults, low barrier, trauma-informed, highly trained staff, client-centered approach.
  
  LONG TIME CAPACITY 240

- **Clare House** – emergency shelter for women with children and expectant mothers, low barrier, trauma-informed, highly trained staff, client-centered approach.
  
  LONG TIME CAPACITY 60-70
BFS Capacity change to 114: Confirmed our belief that having more space between people allows for a healthier and less stressful environment.

- Clients seem healthier in terms of normal viral illness – less coughing and respiratory symptoms.
- Clients have more space and so are able to seek more quiet space in tense or challenging times – a reduction in our list of people trespassed (not allowed to use services) to zero for the past 2 months

Having the same clients allowed and encouraged to stay in the day and night

- No need for guest to spend all day looking for safe day shelter, so more time to connect with supportive sources – incredible success in moving people in shelter to housing.
- Increase in people reducing or stopping substance misuse because they have a safe place to stay inside and are encouraged to stay with us.

Closed shelter campus outside because now a single operator operates one service on the small campus

- Reduced harmful activities around campus – reduced drug sales and other risky behaviors
- Dramatically reduced camping on Karluk
- Safe space for BFS clients to be outside safely
Catholic Social Services Homeless Family Services is the largest provider of housing case management services in Anchorage.

We serve many populations including single adults, families, and Veterans.

We moved over 300 households to permanent housing in FY2019.

In November 2019 CSS received a grant from the Day 1 Foundation to house 60 families a year for 5 years.
CSS Housing Case Management
Learnings From Covid Response

- CSS has leveraged and redirected resources to focus to an even greater extent on moving people from congregant settings (shelters) to safe housing.

- In 10 weeks we have moved 188 people to safe housing and kept 280 people safely in their existing housing (prevented homelessness).

- There are people who are very motivated to move to housing now because of risk of Covid-19.

- Our evidence-based model, critical time intervention, allows our staff to utilize shorter or longer intervention times based on the needs and vulnerability of the clients.

- These services extend to prevention services which we have increased in the past 2 months with support from AHFC.

- We have strong support from the community and funders to continue to extend and expand our housing services and capacity internally.

- National data indicates that there will be a sizable increase in need for prevention case management (40% increase in the coming year).
St. Francis House Food Pantry is the largest food pantry in Alaska. We serve on average 80 to 100 households every day we are open. At Brother Francis Shelter we now serve breakfast, lunch and dinner every day. At Clare House dinner is provided every day by volunteers (a donation of over $250,000 annually) and food is provided for families to use to cook for themselves during the day.
The number of clients at St. Francis House increased dramatically in the first six weeks, an increase of 50% in clients, and 30% of them were new to St. Francis House.

The services have leveled off more recently closer to normal levels which may speak to availability of food from other entities, including the school district.

We are expecting a tough summer in terms of food needs in our community. Data we collect shows that people at St. Francis House use money saved to pay for rent, a utility bill or medical bill.

We expect with the economic downturn to see an increasing need for emergency food.
CSS Employment Services

- CSS provides employment support generally as a part of our case management service.
- CSS provides the high quality employment case management as a part of the wrap around services provided in our Refugee Assistance and Immigration Services program.
- Within 3 months of arrival in the US, more than 90% of our clients are employed.
- Within 2 years of being in the US, 100% are off all Public Assistance.
More than 50% of our RAIS clients have lost their job or been furloughed in the past 2 months.

We have increased our efforts to make sure our clients are signed up for available federal resources in all of our programs and referred them to available prevention services.

We anticipate this trend to continue and are working to find new employment opportunities.
Recommendations

- Make a plan for shelter and work with all of us in the shelter-providing community
  - More smaller shelters
  - All low barrier
  - Support them all to be day and night (no need for a separate stand alone day shelter)
  - Do not create a shelter for those with the highest behavioral health needs – they need the behavioral health intervention of permanent supportive housing

- Keep focused on housing - that is the solution
  - Fund housing case managers
  - Fund resource and referral case managers

- Increase efforts around prevention – keeping people in housing through the next year is going to be critical

- Reduce barriers to resources for rental and food subsidy

- Assure adequate food resources through out the summer, when ASD will not be in session

- Consider work programs in the coming year
Thank you

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