

**THE KING COUNTY
HOUSING AND ESSENTIAL NEEDS (HEN) PROGRAM**
SEATTLE/KING COUNTY COALITION ON HOMELESSNESS
PUBLIC BENEFITS IS KEY TRAINING: ABD/HEN

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- Trisha Matthieu, Director HEN KC
- Emma Hodgson, Supervisor, HEN Homeless Services



WHAT IS HEN AND WHO FUNDS IT?

- HEN is a statewide program funded by the WA Department of Commerce. **Eligibility** is determined by the **Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS)** and services are provided through a network of homeless and homeless prevention service providers. King County contracts with **Catholic Community Services of Western Washington (CCSWW)** to manage the program locally.
- The HEN program provides access to **essential needs** items and **potential rent and utility assistance** for low-income adults who are:
 - **Unable to work due to a physical and/or mental incapacity** (Regular HEN referral–5.1% in KC), or
 - **Eligible for Aged, Blind, or Disabled cash assistance** (ABD HEN referral–94.8% in KC), or
 - **On the Pregnant Women’s Program** (PW HEN referral–0.1% in KC)

WHO DOES DSHS QUALIFY?

- Be 18+ (or emancipated), and meet citizenship/alien status requirements
- Be unable to work for at least 90 days due to a physical and/or mental and/or SUD) and have limited income/resources
- Or be receiving ABD (Aged, Blind and Disabled) cash benefit program
- Or be on the Pregnant Women's Program (PW)
- ABD/HEN income Limits: \$339/month (1 person) or \$428/month (2 people)*
 - Resource Limit: \$12,000* (up from \$6,000 in 2023)
- **Must live in King County to be served in King County.**

WHO WOULD NOT RECEIVE A DSHS REFERRAL TO HEN?

People who:

- Are able to work and have earned income over federal limits*
- Are eligible for TANF
- Are eligible for SSI benefits or are an ineligible spouse of an SSI recipient
- Do not pursue federal aid assistance (e.g. Medicaid) without good cause
- Do not follow a Social Security Admin program rule or application requirement and SSA denied or terminated their benefits.
- Do not participate in SUD treatment (when required) without good cause

**Earned income and assets will be evaluated by DSHS to determine if resources do not exceed income level guidelines. Applicants must be evaluated and be deemed HEN eligible by DSHS before enrollment in the program.*

HOW TO ENROLL IN HEN

With DSHS: Enroll in Cash Assistance

- Online at washingtonconnection.org
- By phone at 877-501-2233
- At any Community Service Office (DSHS)

They will let people know if they qualify for HEN and provide them with a referral letter.

WITH CCS—KC HEN: Verify Eligibility & Get On “Rent Assistance List”

- Once someone has received a DSHS Referral to HEN, and want to enroll, they should [call the KC HEN Resource Line at 206-328-5755](tel:206-328-5755) to confirm eligibility and ask to be place on Rent Assistance List.



WHAT KING COUNTY HEN PROVIDES

All HEN-eligible people with a DSHS referral in KC can call the HEN Resource Line at 206-328-5755 right now and register to get:

Transportation and Essential Needs

- A fully subsidized **ORCA LIFT** annual bus pass
- A **monthly bag** of hygiene and cleaning supplies*, such as cleaning products, shampoo, deodorant, lotion, toilet paper, tissue, toothpaste and other special EN items like mops, dustpans, air filters and fans.
- **Resource Referrals**
- Access to **HEN Rent Interest List**. When rent becomes available, a case manager will call.

*Valued at \$65-\$75

NOTE: The “TEN” program as offered in 2023 is now closed. We are no longer doing official intakes or offering light case management services due to capacity constraints. We are currently working to serve those currently enrolled in TEN in 2023, and then will work through the new “Rent Interest List”.



WHAT HEN PROVIDES

When funding allows, HEN also may provide:

Monthly Rent and Utility Assistance (currently no deadline)

- Combined monthly rent and utility assistance
 - Up to **\$1,106*** for renting an apartment (client is on lease)
 - Up to **\$700/month** for renting a room with private amenities (client is on lease)
 - Up to **\$400** for renting a room with shared space or living with friend or family, not on lease.
 - Rent and utility payments are made directly to landlords; this is a subsidy, not a cash grant.

Move-in Assistance

- Includes application fees and deposits of up to \$400, \$700 or \$1,106, (depending on living situation), renewable every two years.

One-time Past Due Rent/Utility Assistance

- Up to \$400, \$700 or \$1,106, (depending on living situation), for past due rent/utilities payments, renewable every two years.

**As of 2023, KC HEN apartment rental rate is now tied to Fair Market Rate in King County. It is equal to 50% of FMR of an Efficiency Unit.*



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HEN KC PROGRAMS

Homeless Prevention Services

- For people needing rental support to stay stably housed
- Clients already are in housing, but often facing eviction
- Case Managers (CMs) work with clients and landlords to get housing documents in and troubleshoot situations such as arrears due.
- CMs also help folks identify viable long-term housing options.
- CMs do NOT provide wraparound case management services, but rather, lighter referrals; do not go out with clients to meet with landlords.
- Prevention CM caseload currently 150-175. Trying to add to team to decrease caseload.
- Over last 6 months, enrolled 350 clients to HEN from TEN waitlist and 50 new call-ins; currently paused again on new intakes.



HEN KC PROGRAMS

Homeless Services/Rapid Rehousing

- For unhoused people trying to move into housing.
- CMs work with clients to remove barriers to housing and to get into appropriate housing situations, including PSH.
- Clients with slightly higher, on average, needs than Prevention folks.
- CMs enroll clients in CEA and onto housing lists.
- RRH/Homeless Services CM caseload is 40-50.
- HEN will be bringing on unhoused clients from TEN list throughout 2024.



HEN KC PROGRAMS

HEN-Stability Program (for SSI/SSDI Recipients)

- When clients lose HEN eligibility due to obtaining SSI/SSDI services, they may be eligible to transfer to HEN-Stability (HEN-S)
- Requirements
 - Must be enrolled in HEN Prevention or HEN RRH and be housed, with HEN paying rent.
 - Cannot be in subsidized housing
 - Have an Income cap of 30% of AMI (currently \$2,400 for 1 person HH),
 - Need continued support to stay stably housed
- Clients are required to pay 30% of their income towards rent, so HEN's subsidy amount is frequently reduced (but not always).
- Program is currently committed to funding through December 2024.



STAYING HEN ELIGIBLE

- **Eligibility Check:** Every 90 days, we check for eligibility in DSHS's Benefits Verification System (BVS).
 - If a client is ineligible, they may still receive 90 more days of service.
 - This allows them time to go back to DSHS to try to become re-eligible.
 - If they are ineligible because of SSI/SSDI, we screen them for HEN-Stability and transfer them after the 90 days to their (potentially) reduced subsidy.
- **Required Check Ins:** Clients must check in with us at least every 90 days to confirm their contact information & living situation.
 - At 90 days of no check in, we are required to **HOLD RENT**.
 - Clients receive a letter, and are reached out to by their CM to try to re-engage.
 - They have an additional 90 days to check in before exit.



A NOTE ABOUT WHAT HEN KC PROVIDES

What we do well:

- HEN is really good at providing financial backbone, essential needs supplies, and light-to-moderate case management.
- We are working on building up our RRH program in 2024.

Where we struggle:

- HEN is not set up to support higher needs clients
- Due to high caseloads, can only provide light housing navigation for unhoused folks.
- We also do not have funding or staff capacity to match the current need.

What we don't do:

- HEN cannot do new intakes for anyone not currently HEN eligible by DSHS.
- HEN cannot provide rental assistance to people living in subsidized housing or who are homeowners, though they may still be eligible for one time assistance and monthly EN bag.
- HEN cannot serve folks living in other counties.

REFERRALS

The primary referrals HEN makes are to:

- CReW (Counseling, Recovery, and Wellness) Program
- Tenant Law Center
- Housing Connector
- FCS (Foundational Community Support) (Medicaid)
 - Supported Employment Services
 - Supportive Housing Services



CURRENT STATISTICS

- Number in KC currently eligible for HEN: **10,364 (Feb)**
(over 30,000 statewide)
- Total Enrolled Clients in HEN: **3,243**
 - Fully enrolled in HEN: **2,404**
 - Housed: **2,269 (94%)**, Unhoused: **135 (6%)**
 - Still on TEN from 2023: **839**
 - Housed: **409 (50%)**; Unhoused: **430 (50%)**
- EN Bags distributed: about **205/week** through 4 sites
- ORCA Lift Cards distributed: about **200/month**.
- Total added to HEN “Rental Assistance Interest List” in 2024: **612** (about 40/week).
 - We are also transferring housed TEN folks to this list over next few months. They will retain enrollment date in TEN.



HEN KING COUNTY SERVICE LOCATIONS

HEN Resource Line (New and Existing clients)

- (206) 328-5755, HENKCC@ccsww.org

HEN Services & EN Bag pick up (Existing clients)

- **Randolph Carter Center**, 100 23rd Ave, Seattle 98144 (Central District)
 - Mon thru Fri, 9:00am – 4:00pm (call Resource Line from Lobby phone)
- **Phoenix Center**, 2329 Rainier Ave S., Seattle 98144 (Central District)
 - Tues-Wed-Thurs, 10:00am – 2:00pm
- **Kent Family Center**, 1225 W. Smith Street, Kent
 - Mon thru Fri, 9:00am – 3:30pm (ask at Front Desk), or at **EN Bank** on Wed, 1:00-3:00pm
- **Federal Way Day Center**, 33505 13th Place S., Federal Way, WA 98003
 - Fridays, 1:00pm – 3:00pm

QUESTIONS?

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CATHOLIC COMMUNITY SERVICES
CATHOLIC HOUSING SERVICES
OF WESTERN WASHINGTON