



sarah's inn
together strong

Housing Forward and Sarah's Inn to launch Safe Bridge Housing for domestic violence survivors.

MAYWOOD, Illinois (February 16, 2024) - Housing Forward, which works to end homelessness, and Sarah's Inn, a comprehensive domestic violence agency, are coming together to form Safe Bridge Housing, a housing program designed for families fleeing domestic violence. The program, funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, will provide up to two years of housing and case management services for households experiencing domestic violence in west suburban Cook County.

The partnership brings together two well-established organizations whose joint goal is for survivors to find and maintain safety through stable housing. Survivors will have access to low-barrier, temporary housing and the financial support necessary to help them quickly move into and maintain permanent housing.

After receiving referrals through the Cook County Coordinated Entry process, this partnership will connect households with immediate access to basic needs, supportive services, safety planning, advocacy services, and temporary housing. Sarah's Inn will provide families with comprehensive counseling and advocacy services to assist them as they heal from domestic violence, and Housing Forward will provide short-term transitional housing and rental assistance to help families establish permanent housing. Throughout their time in the Safe Bridge Housing program, individuals and families will receive case management focused on employment services and life skills. They will also have access to additional wraparound services, including mental health support.

"Finding safe and affordable housing for clients trying to leave an abusive relationship for them and their families is an ongoing unmet need," says Sarah's Inn Executive Director Carol Gall. "We are excited that the Safe Bridge program will provide an opportunity for survivors to be connected to a safe place to heal and begin to rebuild their lives with the support of the Sarah's Inn and Housing Forward teams."

The Safe Bridge Program will match families with two different types of housing, based on their immediate needs. Transitional Housing is designed to quickly move survivors and their families to immediate safety. Once stabilized, they can transition to Rapid Re-Housing in their preferred geographic area. In Rapid Re-Housing, program participants contribute 30 percent of their

income towards rent. These housing options support survivors in finding stability and independence as they heal at their own pace.

“When families don’t have a safe, stable place to live, it disrupts every aspect of their life,” says Housing Forward CEO Lynda Schueler. “We are excited to partner with Sarah’s Inn and begin to strategically address two issues that are so often linked to one another.”

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If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic violence or the threat of domestic violence, call the 24-hour Sarah’s Inn Crisis Line for help at 1-708-386-4225, or visit <https://the-network.org/get-help-dva/> for anonymous, confidential online chats, available in English and Spanish.

About Housing Forward: Housing Forward works to end homelessness in west suburban Cook County. We are dedicated to making homelessness rare, brief and non-recurring for residents of this community. We prevent homelessness whenever possible, respond to housing crises, and stabilize residents facing homelessness with permanent housing. For more information about Housing Forward, please visit <https://www.housingforward.org/>

About Sarah’s Inn: Sarah’s Inn is a comprehensive domestic violence agency serving the City of Chicago and the Western Suburbs. Our mission is to improve the lives of those affected by domestic violence and to break the cycle of violence for future generations. For more information about Sarah’s Inn, please visit <https://www.sarahsinn.org/>

Media Contact:

Libby Foster
Director of Communications, Housing Forward
lfoster@housingforward.org

Marilyn Tamayo
Development Director, Sarah’s Inn
marilynt@sarahsinn.org