

# An Impact Assessment of the Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP)

*Prepared for Housing Corporation of Arlington (HCA)*



**UEP 255: Field Projects | May 2025**

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# Acknowledgments

First and foremost, we would like to express our gratitude to our project partners, Erica Schwarz, Renea Duran, and Jackson Hamilton. Their insight, guidance, and feedback throughout this project was essential to this project.

We'd also like to thank the Housing Corporation of Arlington community, specifically HPP recipients and partner organizations. We could not have done this without their willingness to participate and provide honest feedback on the impacts of the Homelessness Prevention Program, which speaks volumes about the importance and value of HCA's work.

Finally, we'd like to recognize our teaching team, Melissa Peters and Gina Pryciak, for their unwavering enthusiasm, support, and encouragement. We could not have completed this challenging learning experience without the both of you!



(Source: HCA)

# Executive Summary

The Housing Corporation of Arlington (HCA) engaged a graduate-student team from the Tufts University Department of Urban and Environmental Policy and Planning (UEP) to conduct the first comprehensive impact assessment of its Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP). Created in 2001, HPP provides one-time emergency grants—currently up to \$2,500—to Arlington residents earning  $\leq 60\%$  of area median income (AMI) and facing housing crisis. These grants aim to help community members stabilize their housing situations by covering back rent, security deposits, or moving. The assessment had four goals:

1. Measure HPP's long-term effects on recipients' housing, finances, and well-being;
2. Identify opportunities to enhance the program through changes to eligibility, grant amounts, or service delivery;
3. Gauge recipients' interest in HCA civic-engagement activities; and
4. Surface other themes to help guide HCA's broader housing-advocacy work.

To answer these questions, the UEP team applied a mixed-methods approach that included a survey, interviews, and literature review.

- A 33-question online survey designed to take about 10-12 minutes to complete was emailed to ~200 households that received HPP assistance between 2020 and 2025, and 44 complete responses were analyzed.
- Semi-structured interviews with 6 grant recipients, 4 staff at partner agencies, 3 current and 1 former staff at HCA were completed to add qualitative depth.
- Best practices from state and local rent-relief programs (e.g., RAFT, HomeBASE) and peer-reviewed research on rental assistance and program evaluation informed the project design and recommendations.

We found that HPP delivers durable housing stability, with 73% of surveyed recipients remaining in stable, long-term housing, and 70% not receiving an eviction notice since receiving the grant. Furthermore, self-reported housing instability, stress, and financial anxiety all fell immediately after assistance and remained substantially lower over time. In addition, we found that:

- Positive impact extended beyond housing, with many recipients crediting HPP with improved budgeting skills and financial management—benefits likely linked to the required financial-literacy course and case-worker support.
- Awareness, not process, is the chief barrier, given that applicants rated the process itself as easy while a lack of awareness as the most common obstacle to applying.
- Demand for repeat or continuing aid is high, with ~90% of survey respondents

reporting they would reapply if multiple grants were allowed, underscoring ongoing vulnerability after one-time assistance.

- An appetite for deeper engagement exists: while only 16% are “definitely” interested in volunteering or committee service, another 41% are “unsure but want to learn more,” suggesting a pipeline for resident leadership if pathways are made clearer.

Accordingly, we’ve proposed five recommendations to help amplify HPP’s impact and sustainability:

- **Evaluate the resources and wraparound services** that could be supplement HPP awards so that the impacts of the grants are equally positive no matter the amount awarded.
- **Increase focus on attendance tracking for the budgeting and financial literacy course** that’s required to receive HPP funds and explore new ways of enforcing that requirement.
- **Continue to raise awareness about HPP** through new outreach, as it currently is a “hidden gem” in Arlington that community members may struggle to find when they need it.
- **Investigate new ways to deflect re-applicants and mitigate the need for frequent, recurring support**, including earlier interventions like financial education or potential to redirect clients to other programs or resources.
- **Set a bigger picture goal** to advocate for the inclusion of HCA and coordination with other agencies in the Town of Arlington’s upcoming master plan update.

Evidence from surveys, interviews, and other research confirms that HPP is a vital, efficient safety net that helps prevent stabilize housing and prevent evictions, lower stress, and enhance financial resilience for Arlington residents. Modest refinements can extend these benefits, position HPP as a gateway to deeper resident engagement, and strengthen HCA’s leadership in housing stability across the Greater Boston area.

# Table of Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction and Context.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Goals and Research Questions.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Methodology .....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Summary of Findings.....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Discussion and Recommendations.....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Conclusion.....</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>References.....</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Appendix.....</b>	<b>47</b>

# List of Tables, Figures, and Images

## TABLES

**Table 1.1:** Cost Burden by Household Type of All Households in Arlington ..... 10

## FIGURES

**Figure 1.1:** HCA Program Areas.....8

**Figure 1.2:** HCA’s History (Timeline).....8

**Figure 1.3:** Homelessness Prevention Program History (Timeline) .....9

**Figure 1.4:** Net New Housing Units in Arlington by Type, 2016-2021..... 11

**Figure 1.5:** Map of Environmental Justice Populations in Arlington, MA..... 12

**Figure 1.6:** Share of Arlington’s Housing Units by Property Type (%) ..... 13

**Figure 1.7:** Median Market Rents in Arlington and Neighboring Communities (\$k)..... 13

**Figure 1.8:** Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI) in Arlington and Nearby Communities..... 14

**Figure 3.1:** Overview of Methods ..... 18

**Figure 3.2:** Summary of Interview Groups ..... 21

**Figure 4.1:** Best Practices for Rental Assistance Programs (from Literature Review) ..... 26

**Figure 4.2:** Comparison of HCA’s Homelessness Prevention Program with Similar Programs ..... 28

**Figure 4.3:** Housing Instability, Stress, and Financial Anxiety, Before and After HPP ..... 29

**Figure 4.4:** Housing Instability by Award Size, Before and After HPP..... 30

**Figure 4.5:** Stress Level by Award Size, Before and After HPP ..... 30

**Figure 4.6:** Financial Anxiety by Award Size, Before and After HPP..... 30

**Figure 4.7:** Positive Externalities, in Addition to Stabilizing Housing Situation..... 31

**Figure 4.8:** Familiarity with Other HCA Programs..... 32

**Figure 4.9:** Interest in Financial Literacy Programs ..... 32

**Figure 4.10:** Interest in Reapplying to HPP for Additional Grant Funds..... 32

**Figure 4.11:** Application Difficulty at Different Steps in the Process..... 33

**Figure 4.12:** Barriers to Applying for HPP Assistance ..... 33

**Figure 4.13:** Interest in Volunteering with HCA or Joining a Committee ..... 34

**Figure 4.14:** Summary of Interview Topics for Past HPP Grant Recipients ..... 35

## FIGURES (continued)

**Figure 4.15:** Themes and Insights from Interviews with Past HPP Grant Recipients.....36

**Figure 4.16:** Summary of Interview Topics for Current/Past HCA Staff, Partners, and HPP Committee Members.....37

**Figure 4.17:** Themes and Insights from Current/Past HCA Staff, Partners, and HPP Committee Members .....38

## IMAGES

**Image 1.1:** HCA Headquarters..... 10

**Image 1.2:** HCA’s Newest Property, the Downing Square Broadway Initiative (DSBI) ..... 10

**Image 1.3:** Affordable Housing Units in Arlington (20 Westminster Avenue) ..... 11

**Image 1.4:** Affordable Housing Units in Arlington (Forest Pierce).....11

**Image 1.5:** Affordable Housing Units in Arlington (Kimball Farmhouse) ..... 11

**Image 1.6:** Most Recent Affordable Housing Projects in Arlington (10 Sunnyside Avenue) ..... 11

**Image 1.7:** Most Recent Affordable Housing Projects in Arlington (35 Parker Street)..... 11

**Image 1.8:** Most Recent Affordable Housing Projects in Arlington (Downing Square).....11

**Image 1.9:** Arlington Draft MBTA Communities Map ..... 14

**Image 3.1 and 3.2:** Survey Snapshots ..... 20

**Image 3.3:** Interview Consent Form..... 23

**Image 3.4:** Massachusetts Avenue in Arlington Center..... 24

**Image 4.1:** Logos of Similar Program Operators..... 27

## APPENDIX

**Appendix A:** Interview Guides..... 47

**Appendix B:** Interview Consent Forms..... 51

**Appendix C:** Survey Instrument.....55

**Appendix D:** Survey Outreach Materials.....63

**Appendix E:** Survey Demographics ..... 64

**Appendix F:** Descriptive Statistics on Past HPP Recipients .....70

## Introducing the UEP student team:

This report was created by a team of graduate students in the Tufts University Department of Urban and Environmental Planning (UEP) in fulfillment of UEP 255: Field Projects. Our team is composed of five members, each with unique experiences and backgrounds.



**Zachary Boughner-Diaz** is a part-time student in his second year in the M.A. program. He works full-time at the City of Cambridge and earned a B.A. at Columbia University.



**Sheila Joyce** is a second-year part-time student enrolled in the M.S. program who works full-time for the Town of Chelmsford. She earned her B.S. in environmental engineering from the UMass Lowell.



**Lauren Chapman** is a first-year student in the M.A. program. Prior to Tufts, she received her B.A. in Sociology from William & Mary.



**Emmanuel Obeng** is a first-year student working towards an M.S in Sustainability. He completed his B.Com degree at the University of Cape Coast.



**Diego Rodriguez** is a first-year student in the M.S program. He earned his B.S at Florida Southern College in Lakeland, FL.

## Introducing the HCA team:

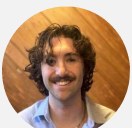
This report was prepared for the Housing Corporation of Arlington, whose staff collaborated with the UEP team to design key features of the project.



**Erica Schwarz**, Executive Director, has led HCA since 2022, and brings expertise in affordable housing development and policy as well as nonprofit leadership. She is a UEP alumna.



**Renea Duran**, Social Service Manager, has been with HCA since 2020 and brings over 25 years of experience in resident services in affordable housing.



**Jackson Hamilton**, Civic Engagement Coordinator, has been with HCA since 2024 and has helped run a survey of residents in HCA managed buildings.

# 1 Introduction and Context

Founded in 1986, the Housing Corporation of Arlington (HCA) is a community-driven non-profit organization with a mission to provide affordable, stable housing and empower residents to build a supportive and equitable community. Serving Arlington, Massachusetts, HCA works to fight the rapidly growing affordable housing crisis in the town. The homelessness epidemic in the Greater Boston area has only worsened in the last three decades—only 20% of renters throughout Massachusetts can afford new market-rate rental housing today and 70% of the homeless in Greater Boston are in family units (Housing Corporation of Arlington, 2024). These distressing statistics are just a small preview of the harsh reality facing thousands of people in Massachusetts, and this already troubling issue has been exacerbated by the end of COVID-era benefits, such as stimulus checks, food and cash benefits, and housing assistance. HCA responds to this crisis by supporting the community through three integrated programs: affordable housing, social services, community engagement and leadership development.

Figure 1.1: HCA Program Areas

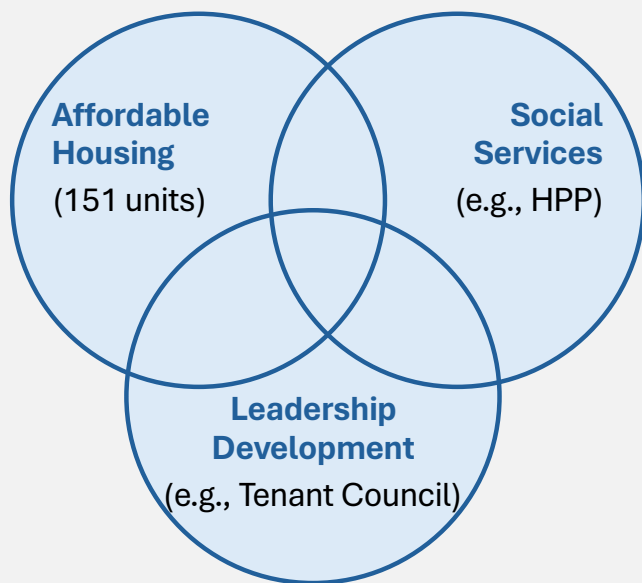
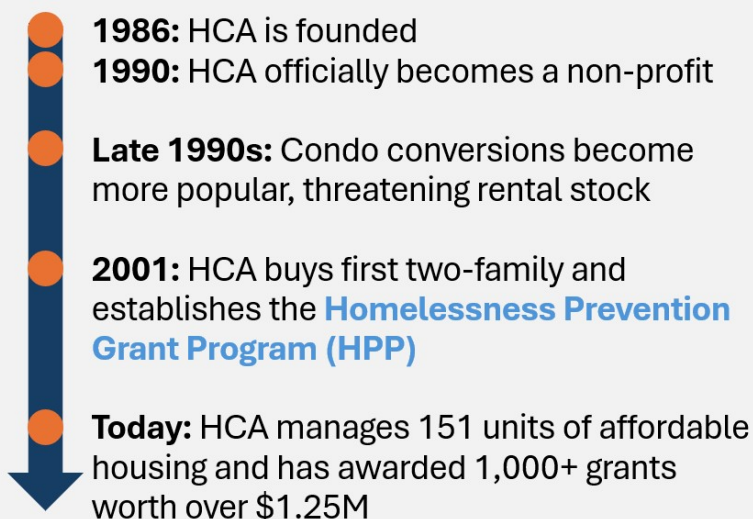
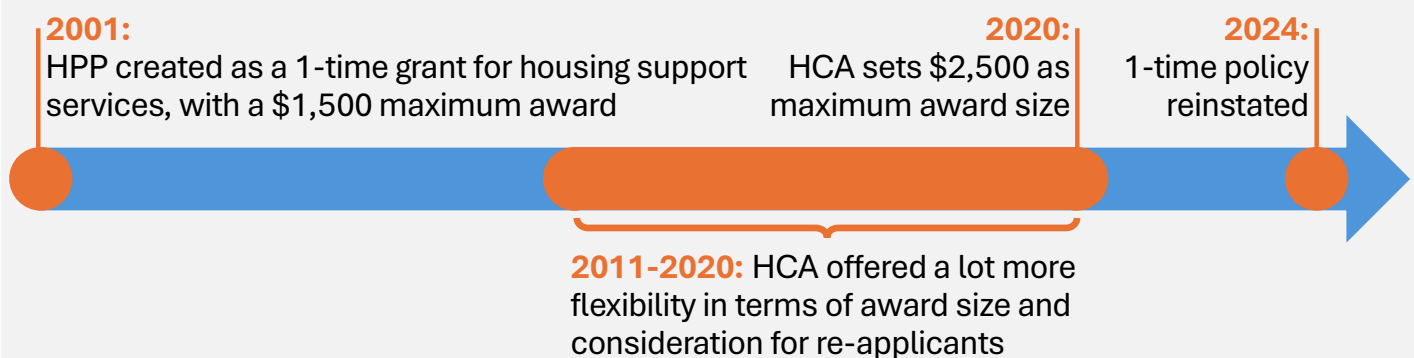


Figure 1.2: HCA's History (Timeline)



In addition to managing 151 units of affordable housing, HCA has provided grants to Arlington residents experiencing emergency housing crises that could lead to homelessness through its **Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP)**. Created in 2001 as a one-time grant with a maximum \$1,500 award for housing support services, HPP has evolved considerably over the past 20+ years, as shown in the figure below. Currently, grants are available to Arlington residents earning at or below 60% of the area median income (AMI) and can be used for a variety of housing-related expenses, such as back rent, first or last month's rent, security deposits, or moving expenses. The program is funded through a mix of sources, including Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds from the Town of Arlington as well as donations from individuals and organizations in the local community. The short application asks the applicant to sketch out their monthly budget and to provide documentation of their income and residency. Applications are reviewed monthly, and funds are awarded by a three-person review committee, which includes a community member and a representative from the Town of Arlington, in addition to an HCA staff member. Before receiving funds, applicants are required to complete a financial literacy course either at HCA or through a local bank, and funds are then disbursed to the applicant's landlord—not to the applicant directly.

**Figure 1.3: Homelessness Prevention Program History (Timeline)**



HCA requested the support and resources of our UEP Field Projects team to perform an assessment of this grant program, including:

- Fully understand the needs of program participants;
- Recommend changes to the program qualification requirements, maximum grant amounts, or other elements;
- Provide recommendations to the program to maximize effectiveness and efficiency of use of limited staffing and resources;
- Provide HCA with comprehensive and strong, up-to-date data to be used in grant proposals and to relay to current funders; and
- Identify former HPP program recipients who may have an interest in increasing involvement in HCA's civic engagement work.

## Community Context

Arlington, Massachusetts, located eight miles outside of Boston, is just under 5.5 square miles, but its dense development has allowed it to become home to more than 46,000 people (United States Census Bureau, 2024). Arlington is considered affluent and ranks highly among towns in the state of Massachusetts for household income, with a median household income of \$141,440 (2019-2023) compared to the State’s average of \$89,026 (United States Census Bureau, 2024). Despite this, nearly 1 in 3 Arlington households have low or moderate incomes (< 80% AMI of \$141,440) and more than 5,700 households require deed restricted affordable housing (Town of Arlington, 2024). More than 25% of all households in Arlington are considered housing cost burdened, which means these households pay at least 30% of their income solely on housing costs.

**Table 1.1: Cost Burden by Household Type of All Households in Arlington**

Household Type	Households	Cost Burden			Severe Cost Burden
		Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Elderly (1-2 Members)	2,260	675	30%	280	12%
Elderly (Non-Family)	2,920	1,470	50%	835	29%
Small Related (2-4 Persons)	7,795	1,785	23%	700	9%
Large Related (5+ Persons)	829	244	29%	60	7%
Other	5,269	1,459	28%	694	13%
Total	19,073	5,633	30%	2,569	13%

(Source: Metropolitan Area Planning Council, 2016)

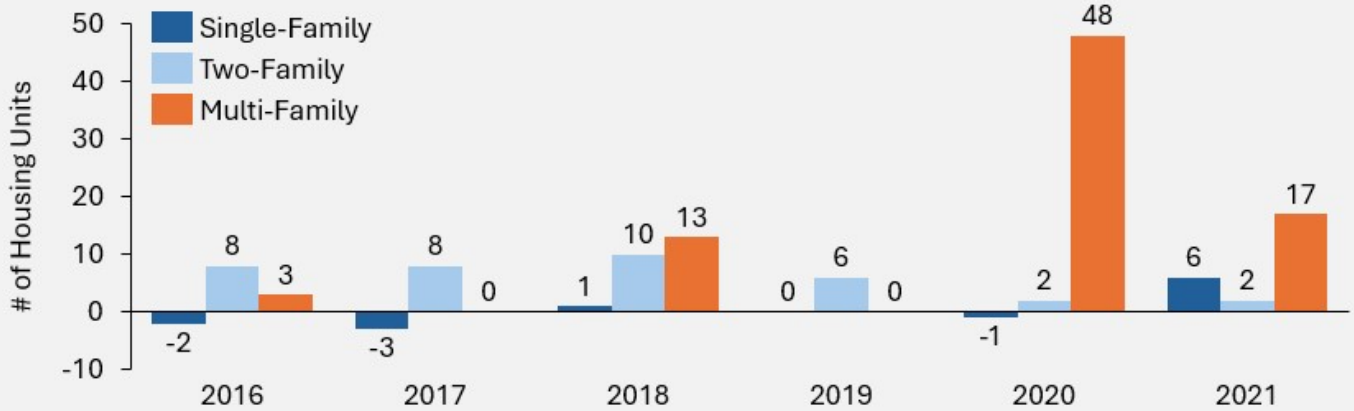
**Image 1.1: HCA Headquarters**



**Image 1.2: Downing Square**



**Figure 1.4: Net New Housing Units in Arlington by Type, 2016-2021**



(Source: Barrett Planning Group LLC et al., 2022)

**Image 1.3-1.5: Affordable Housing Units in Arlington**

From left to right: 20 Westminster Avenue, Forest Peirce, and Kimball Farmhouse



(Source: HCA, 2024)



(Source: HCA, 2024)



(Source: HCA, 2024)

**Image 1.6-1.8: Most Recent Affordable Housing Projects in Arlington**

From left to right: 10 Sunnyside Avenue, 35 Parker Street (ADU), Downing Square



(Source: HCA, 2024)



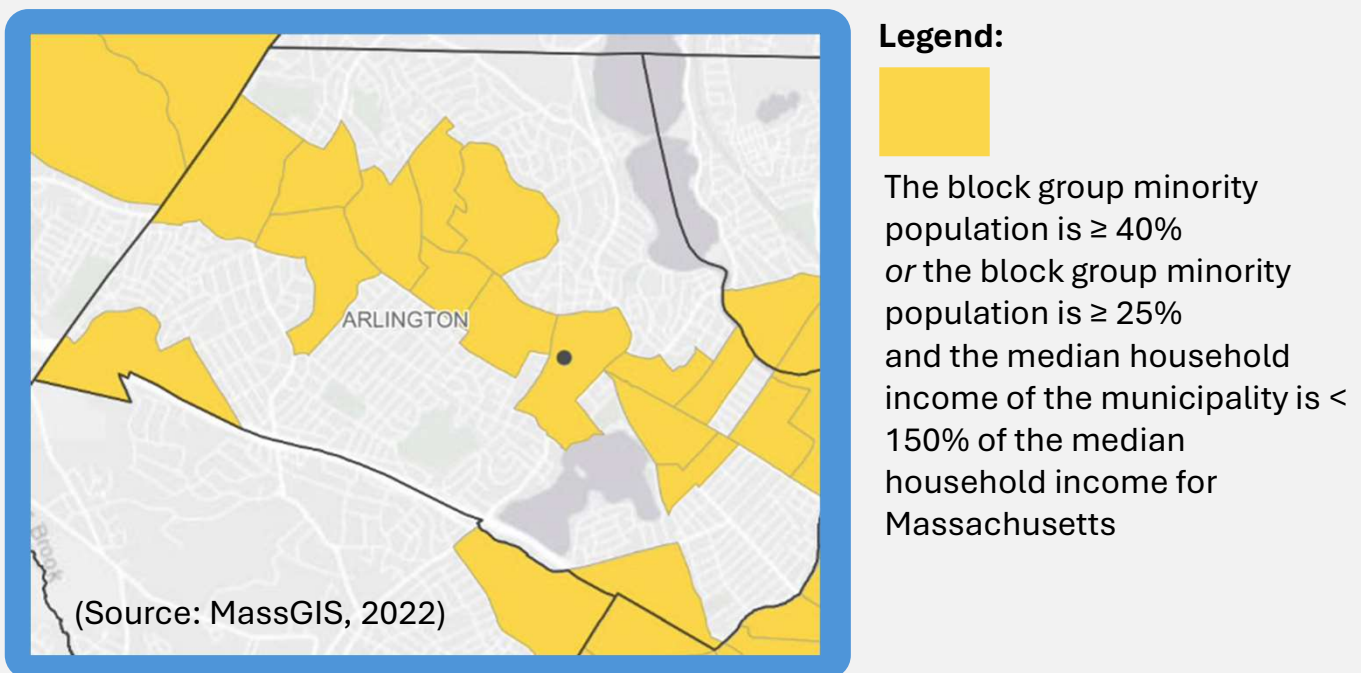
(Source: HCA, 2024)



(Source: HCA, 2024)

Arlington's two most vulnerable populations susceptible to these housing cost burdens are their environmental justice communities and the elderly. In Massachusetts, an environmental justice population is defined as a neighborhood that meets certain criteria related to income, race, and language, including minority population, median household income (of the block group, the municipality of the block and the state), and English language isolation by household (MassGIS, 2024). In Arlington, the primary environmental justice community in the town as of 2020 is minority, which means that at least half of its residents in that block identify as: Black or African American, Asian, American Indian or Native Alaskan, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and Hispanic or Latino. This environmental justice population inhabits approximately one third of Arlington by land area, making it a significant population (MassGIS, 2022).

**Figure 1.5: Map of Environmental Justice Populations in Arlington, MA**

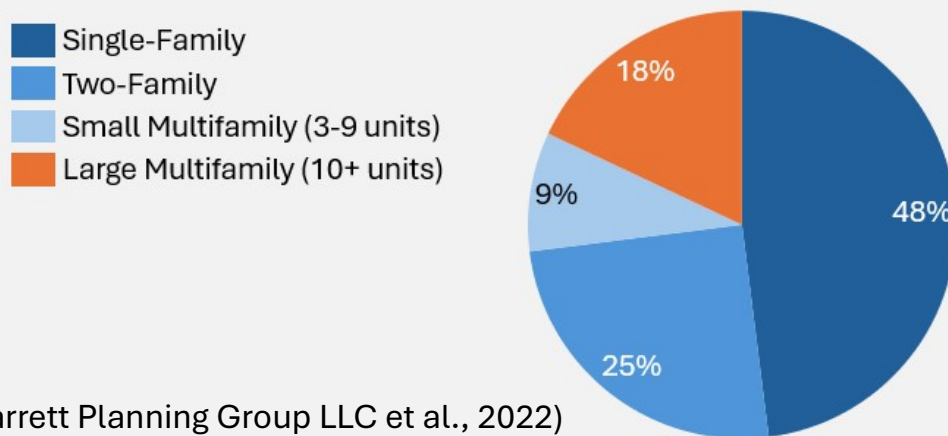


The elderly population of Arlington is particularly vulnerable, as this demographic is typically unable to work due to medical reasons or age and tends to be more reliant on financial support services, which are not increasing to match the escalation in housing costs. Arlington's diverse and welcoming community makes it a coveted place to live, and it is HCA's goal to provide focused and actionable support to these particularly vulnerable populations to continue to embody the town's mission of fostering an engaged, culturally diverse, and civically active community (Town of Arlington, 2018).

## Rent and Housing Trends in Arlington, MA

Arlington, Massachusetts faces significant affordability challenges. The town has seen a 32% increase in rental costs since 2020, with median rents reaching \$2,043 per month (United States Census Bureau, 2024). Historically restrictive zoning has exacerbated housing shortages, though recent efforts to zone for multi-family housing near transit stations signal a shift toward increasing affordability.

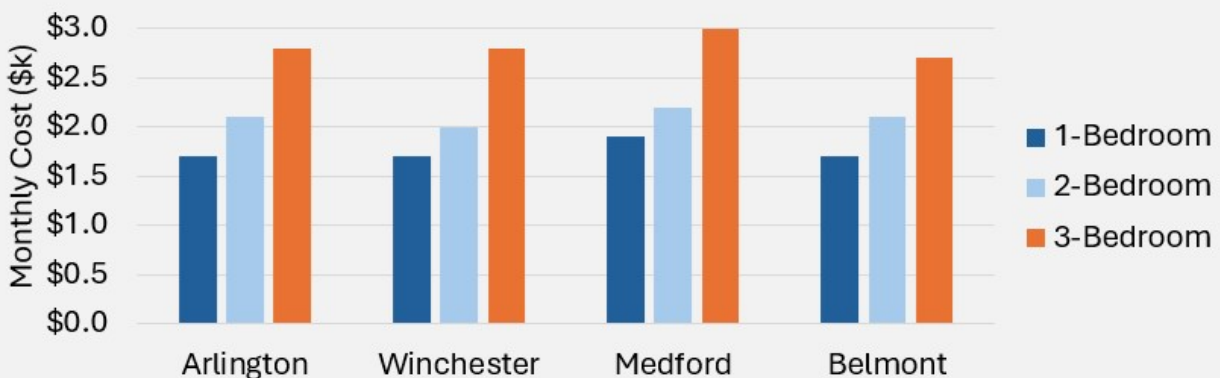
**Figure 1.6: Share of Arlington’s Housing Units by Property Type (%)**



(Source: Barrett Planning Group LLC et al., 2022)

Between 2019 and 2023, census data indicated the owner-occupied housing unit rate was 60.6%, with median gross rent being \$2,043 per month (United States Census Bureau, 2024). Although averages for rent vary based on size of residence and location, the state of Massachusetts’s average is \$3,200 per month, 60% higher than the nation’s average (Zillow Rentals Data, 2025). With 40% of Arlington’s being occupied by renters, this is a significant population being impacted by rising housing and rent costs, as well as high risk of housing instability.

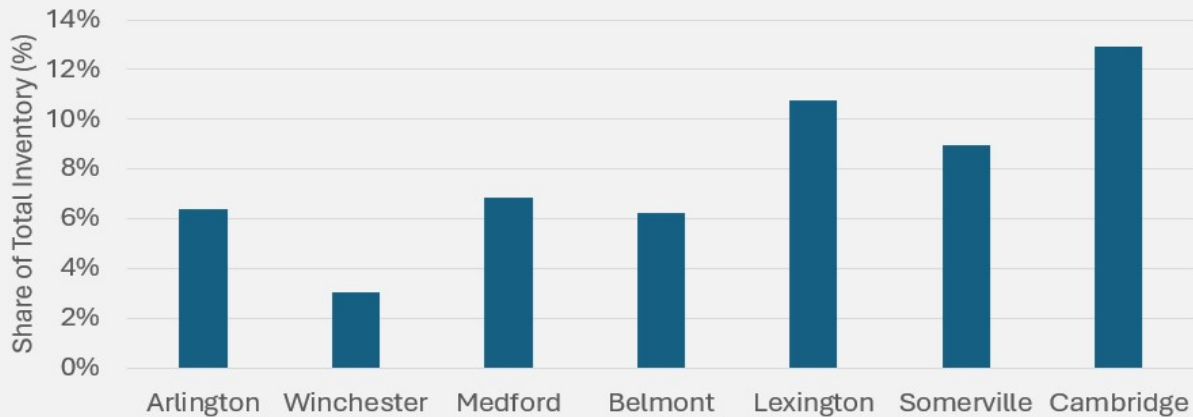
**Figure 1.7: Median Market Rents in Arlington and Neighboring Communities (\$k)**



(Source: Barrett Planning Group LLC et al., 2022)

Arlington is currently only meeting 20% of the need for affordable housing in town: 713 units are public housing units managed by the Arlington Housing Authority (AHA), 146 units are Section 8 (private owner), 151 units are managed by HCA, and 292 units are other affordable housing, such as units produced through Inclusionary Zoning or by MGL Chapter 40B.

**Figure 1.8: Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI) in Arlington and Nearby Communities**

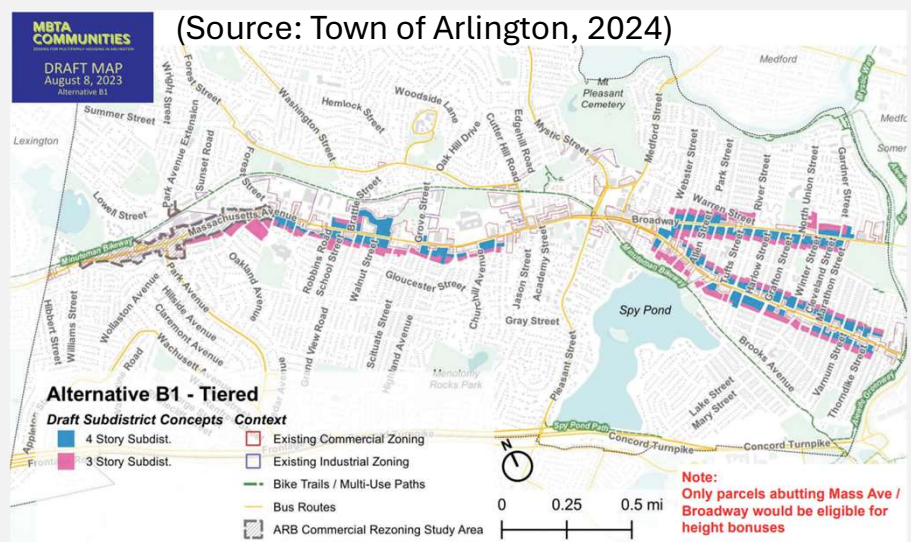


(Source: Commonwealth of Massachusetts, 2023)

Additional affordable units are already being added by 40B projects under development, as well as HCA which has projects in development that will add at least 43 more units to its inventory. Despite this, there are still large strides that need to be made to make up for this deficit (Town of Arlington Department of Planning and Community Development, 2024). Restrictive historical zoning in the town heavily favored single-family units, which limited the supply and development of diverse housing options in town. One major and recent development on the zoning front, however, is the adoption of the MBTA

Communities Act in January 2021, which requires 177 Cities and Towns to establish “at least 1 district of reasonable size in which multi-family housing is permitted as of right (Office of the Attorney General, 2025). As an MBTA community, Arlington is currently reversing these limitations by planning to zone for multi-family housing within half a mile of a transit station (Moschetto, 2023).

**Image 1.9: Arlington Draft MBTA Communities Map**



Although these challenges are extensive, HCA is eager to collaborate with local government and organizations to combat them with meaningful and actionable measures.

## 2 Goals and Research Questions

The main goal of our project was to assess the long-term impact that HPP grants have had on recipients' housing stability, financial security, and mental health. Due to the nature of the Homelessness Prevention Program, members of the HCA rarely hear back from participants after the grant (or grants) have been distributed, or after participants move out from HCA housing. This means that the HCA does not often receive feedback on how the program has impacted residents, what areas to improve, and how residents feel about the program or HCA as an organization. As part of our collaboration, we used this assessment to identify potential areas for improvement on the programs' reach, accessibility, and viability for potential recipients, which included eligibility for HPP grants, grant amount, service delivery, and grant frequency. In addition, the project sought to determine the level of interest amongst former HPP recipients in engaging in HCA's current civic engagement initiatives, as well as their willingness to participate in future initiatives. These assessments were used to provide evidence-based recommendations to the HCA on how the program can improve in the future.

Our assessment seeks to answer four research questions:

- 1 How have HPP grants, and related services, impacted participants' housing stability, financial stability, and mental health over time?
- 2 Are there any changes or improvements that could be made to the HPP, such as grant amounts, eligibility, or service delivery?
- 3 How much interest is there in involvement by HPP grant recipients in HCA's civic engagement or leadership development programs?
- 4 What themes or trends can be identified that may inform the expansion of HCA's affordable housing advocacy and community organizing work?

The goal of these questions is to provide the HCA team with clear recommendations on potential avenues to improve HPP. Following up with past HPP grant recipients can help inform HCA how to modify community outreach programs that meet the current needs of the Arlington community. Our team used these questions to create a survey for past participants that would help us answer these questions and meet the research goals discussed above. For this purpose, our research questions were broken down into multiple sections, each addressing one of our project goals, with each question being designed in the most clear and accessible manner for survey takers.

# 3 Project Methodology

## 3.1 Overview

This evaluation of the Housing Corporation of Arlington’s (HCA) Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP) utilizes a mixed-methods research design, integrating quantitative and qualitative data sources alongside a review of best practices from a literature review and from comparable programs. This approach is consistent with the most effective methodologies identified in recent research on homelessness prevention (Aiken et al., 2022; Schapiro et al., 2021), which emphasize the need to pair breadth of insight with contextual depth to understand not just whether a program works, but how and why it works—or doesn’t—for those it serves.

The design of this project was somewhat limited by documented gaps in the literature: while there is strong evidence that rental assistance programs reduce homelessness and improve household stability, fewer studies rigorously evaluate community-based models, especially those operating at the municipal level with flexible program parameters (Oudshoorn et al., 2020; Airgood-Obrycki, 2022). This underrepresentation makes it challenging to fully understand which strategies yield the most sustainable outcomes across diverse contexts. Our team sought to contribute to this evidence base while supporting HCA’s efforts to strengthen, refine, and adapt its program model.

Figure 3.1: Overview of Methods



## 3.2 Quantitative Component: Survey of HPP Recipients

To capture the broad impact of HPP grants across its recipient population, we worked closely with HCA staff to design a short, online assessment for recent HPP recipients. The survey was distributed to approximately 200 individuals who had received HPP assistance between 2020 and early 2025, with the goal of understanding the extent to which the program supported their housing stability, financial resilience, and mental health.

### Survey Design

The final survey consisted of 33 questions, organized into five thematic sections:

- 1) Background Information (e.g., Award Size)
- 2) HPP Impact on Housing Situation, Financial, and Mental Wellbeing
- 3) Experience Applying for the HPP Grant
- 4) Engagement with HCA and Other Support Services
- 5) Demographic Information

Most questions utilized 5-point Likert scales to measure subjective assessments of stress, financial anxiety, and perceived stability (e.g., from “Strongly Agree” to “Strongly Disagree” or from “Much Better” to “Much Worse”). Where appropriate, we also included open-ended questions to gather narrative insights.

We drew heavily on the survey design principles outlined by Schapiro et al. (2021), including:

- **Clarity and simplicity:** Questions were written at an accessible reading level and screened using an online tool, Hemingway Editor, to ensure accessible language was used.
- **Avoidance of jargon:** We used everyday terms and minimized technical language, especially when referring to housing or financial conditions.
- **Balanced and neutral response options:** We ensured that Likert scales had equal numbers of positive and negative options to reduce acquiescence bias.
- **Pilot testing:** Ten individuals tested the survey to ensure that it was comprehensible, appropriately timed (10–12 minutes), and mobile-friendly.
- **Sensitivity and ethical considerations:** We framed sensitive topics (e.g., eviction risk) in a non-judgmental manner whilst emphasizing confidentiality to encourage honest responses.
- **Demographic and contextual Variables:** We included relevant demographic questions (e.g., disability status, household size) to capture nuanced experiences of housing insecurity to reflect diverse realities.

The survey was administered via Qualtrics, with survey links sent using an HCA-branded email address to improve legitimacy and response rates. The survey ran from Friday, March 7, through Friday, April 4. Survey responses were anonymized upon collection. We also followed up with participants via phone when email addresses were missing or bounce-backs occurred.

### Image 3.1 and 3.2: Survey Snapshots

0% Current Progress 0% 100%

**HCA**  
Housing Corporation of Arlington

The Housing Corporation of Arlington and Environmental Policy Institute is conducting a survey to assess your experience with the Homeless Prevention Program (HPP). Your survey will help us learn how we can improve our services, our finances, and well-being. Your feedback is important to us, and we will use it to help us improve how we can better serve you.

The survey takes about 10 minutes to complete. Complete the survey for a chance to win gift cards! To be entered, you must provide your contact information below.

**Thank you for your participation!**

**Survey Raffle Entry**  
If you'd like to be entered into the gift card raffle, please provide your contact information below. This could be a phone number or an email address.

Preferred Contact Information (i.e., phone number or email)

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: "I am satisfied with my current housing situation."**  
Please select one of the options below.

Strongly Agree  
 Agree  
 Neither Agree nor Disagree  
 Disagree  
 Strongly Disagree

**Q7. How did you feel about your housing situation at the following points in time:**  
For each row below, please select one of the options from the columns. If you have received multiple HPP grants, then please speak to your experience with your most recent grant.

	Very Unstable	Fairly Unstable	Somewhat Stable	Fairly Stable	Very Stable and Secure	Don't Know or Don't Remember
Before your grant award	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Immediately after award	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Today	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### Outreach and Participation Challenges

Several challenges emerged in reaching this population, many of which are characteristic of housing-insecure groups:

- Some participants had changed contact information since applying for HPP.
- Others lacked consistent internet or phone access.
- Individuals in crisis may not have the time or emotional bandwidth to complete a survey, particularly without strong institutional trust.

We addressed these barriers through multiple strategies:

- Offering a raffle of five \$30 Stop & Shop gift cards, exclusively for HPP recipients who completed the survey.
- Following up with recent recipients via personalized phone calls to confirm receipt and encourage participation.
- Ensuring that the survey was accessible by smartphone, as many recipients do not use desktop computers.
- Using plain, empathetic language in both the survey and its outreach materials

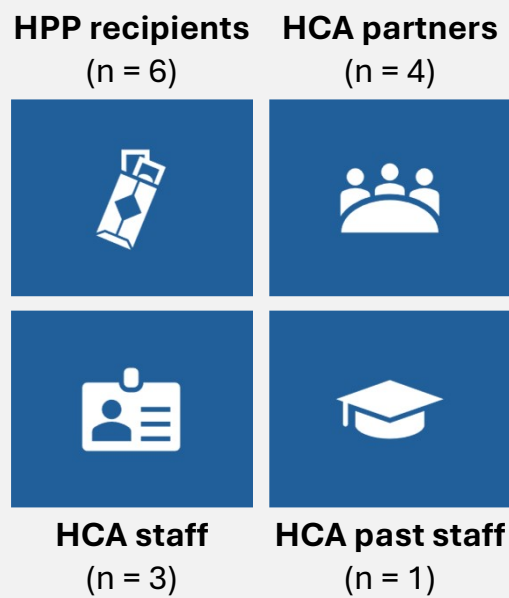
To protect data integrity, only fully completed surveys were analyzed—of the 62 responses initially captured, 44 were complete and valid for inclusion.

Despite these efforts, we recognize—consistent with the literature—that non-response bias is a limitation. Those who are most financially or emotionally distressed may have been least likely to respond, and as a result, our data may overrepresent those who are relatively more stable. We explicitly account for this in our findings and recommendations.

### 3.3 Qualitative Component: Interviews with Key Stakeholders

Aiken et al. (2022) highlighted the rich data that came from the interviews performed and how it captured important insights that the survey did not. To complement and enrich the survey results, we conducted semi-structured interviews with four stakeholder groups:

**Figure 3.2: Summary of Interview Groups**



- HPP recipients (n=6) to form a deeper understanding of the impact of HPP grants on recipients' lives, including housing stability, mental health, and financial well-being, as well as the experience applying for HPP funds.
- HCA staff (n=3) to understand how current staff run HPP, including fundraising and grantmaking decisions, recent policy decisions, and future changes to consider.
- HCA partners (n=4), including the Arlington Council on Aging and Arlington Housing Authority, to better understand the HPP referral and application process, as well as their perspectives on what works well, where there are challenges, and in what ways HPP might improve. We also received feedback on survey outreach and solicited suggestions to maximize survey participation.
- Former HCA staff (n=1) to understand the history of HPP, including key policy changes and their dates, and to understand the perspectives of former HCA staff regarding the program and its effectiveness.

Interviews were conducted over Zoom or phone and lasted approximately 30–45 minutes. At least two members of the UEP project team attended each session—one as the lead interviewer and one as the note-taker. Participants signed a consent form prior to the interview in accordance with our IRB-approved research protocol.

### Compensation and Ethical Considerations

To acknowledge the time and lived expertise of HPP recipients, each recipient interviewee was offered a \$25 Stop & Shop gift card. This incentive was not provided to HCA staff or partners. We prioritized confidentiality and transparency throughout the process, and no names or identifiable information are shared in the report.

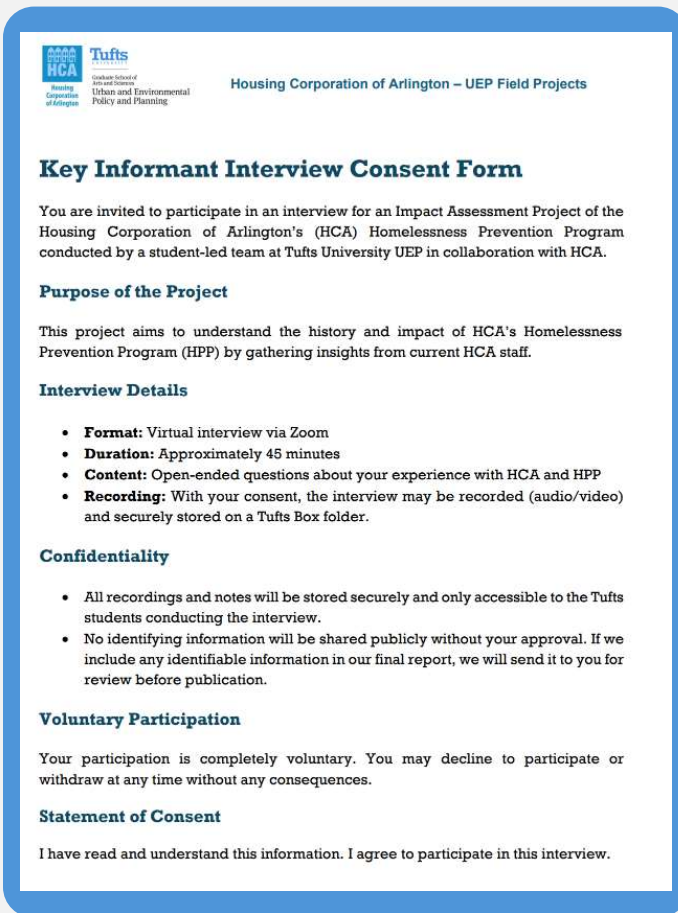
Interviews with grant recipients helped us better understand personal housing trajectories, interactions with HPP, and emotional responses to both the crisis and the support received. Interviews with partners and staff illuminated the program's operational strengths and constraints, including barriers in the application process and ideas for future programmatic evolution.

Following the approach modeled by Aiken et al. (2022), we used interviews to:

- Identify gaps between program goals and user experiences;
- Explore how staff balance efficiency with compassion in their delivery model;
- Understand the degree of alignment between participant needs and service structure;
- Surface operational challenges not visible in the survey data.

These conversations brought human depth to our findings and underscored the lived importance of responsiveness, dignity, and clarity in housing support programs.

### Image 3.3: Interview Consent Form



### 3.4 Literature and Case Review

Understanding the effectiveness of homelessness prevention programs requires robust research designs that capture both quantitative impacts and qualitative experiences of program participants. Two notable studies, Schapiro et al. (2021) and Aiken et al. (2022), offered insights into effective research methodologies and data collection strategies. Drawing on Schapiro et al. (2021), Aiken et al. (2022), and others, we grounded our recommendations in both emerging research and local context, recognizing that program design must respond to evolving needs, especially in high-cost housing markets like Arlington.

Schapiro et al. (2021) examined the relationship between rental assistance and four dimensions of housing access associated with well-being: housing

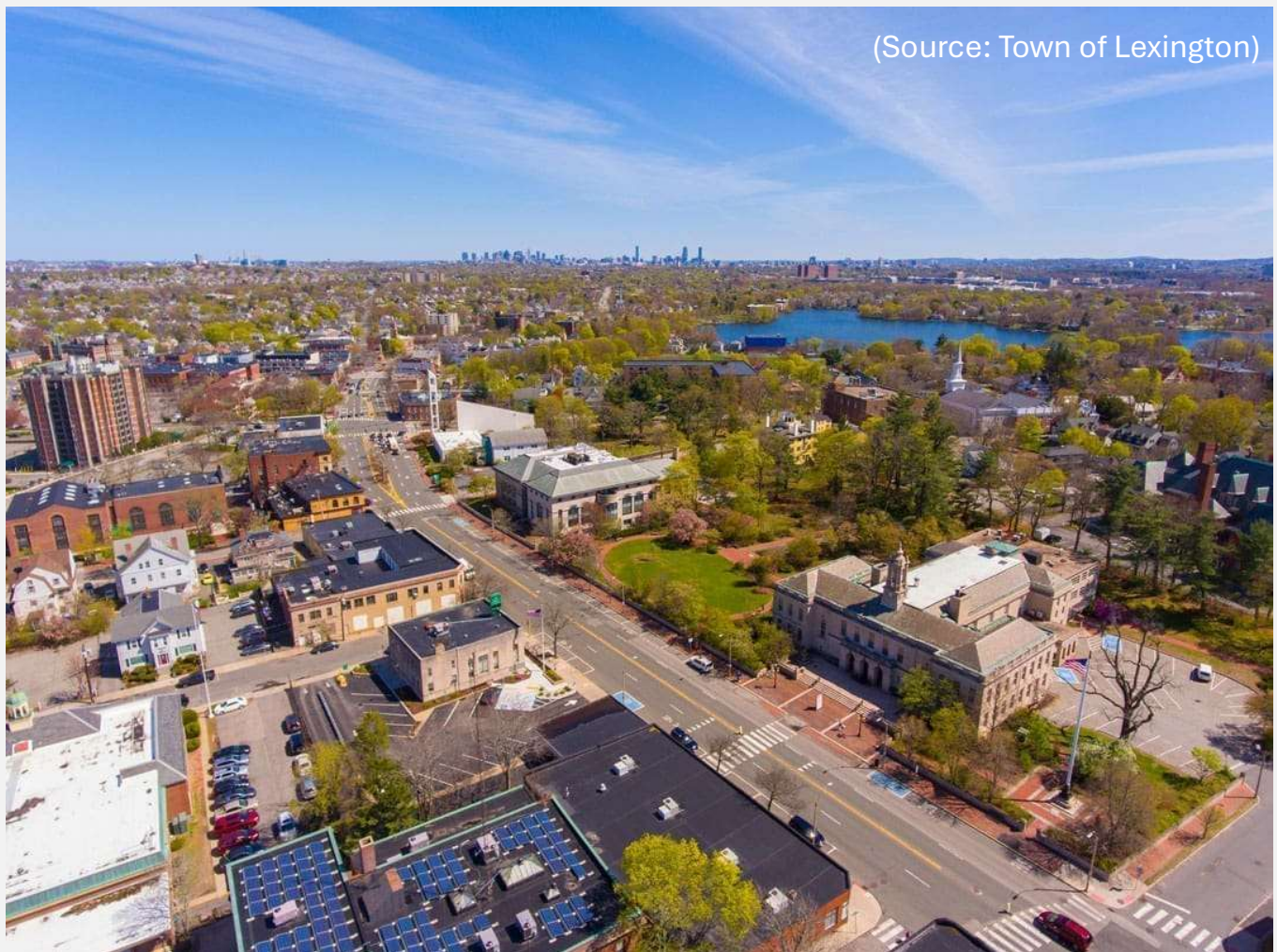
stability, housing quality, housing autonomy, and housing affordability among low-income adults in New Haven, CT. The study hypothesized that individuals on the waitlist for rental assistance would report less housing stability, lower housing quality, reduced autonomy, and greater affordability challenges compared to those receiving assistance (2021). Participants were recruited through snowball sampling and community outreach via flyers in public spaces and social service providers (2021). Surveys were administered via Qualtrics over four waves and assessed subjective housing stability, quality, autonomy, and affordability through perception-based questions, Likert scales, and time-bound inquiries (2021).

Aiken et al. (2022) investigated the design of Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) programs to determine their effectiveness in preventing homelessness, highlighting the importance of clearly defined goals, targeted outreach, balanced eligibility criteria, adequate subsidies, and program flexibility. They identified challenges such as resource limitations, difficulties in identifying high-risk individuals, and balancing efficiency with accessibility (Aiken et al.). Using a mixed-methods approach, the study combined two

waves of national surveys of ERA program administrators (N=220 initial sample; N=64 follow-up) with 15 qualitative interviews (2022). The surveys captured data on program goals, outreach strategies, eligibility criteria, documentation requirements, and subsidy structures, while the interviews provided qualitative context on program operations and decision-making (2022). This comprehensive approach allowed for a deeper understanding of program variations and effectiveness in preventing homelessness.

The third pillar of our methodology also involved a synthesis of published research and program comparisons. We reviewed evaluations of rental assistance programs—particularly ERA, RAFT, HomeBASE, and the Somerville Homeless Coalition’s HPP—to benchmark HCA’s program against peers. This helped us identify key features that contribute to successful outcomes.

**Image 3.4: Massachusetts Avenue in Arlington Center**



# 4 Summary of Findings

## 4.1 Key Insights from Literature Review

At the outset of our project, we conducted a literature review to better understand the structural drivers of homelessness and housing instability, as well as the effectiveness of existing homelessness prevention programs. This review focused on evaluating the roles of community-based organizations (CBOs), the impact of rental assistance, and best practices for program design and implementation.

Research consistently highlighted the pivotal role of CBOs in the delivery of homelessness prevention services (Aiken et al., 2022; Fischer et al., 2016; Hahn, 2021; King-Viehlend, 2022; Wagner, 2023). Programs operated by or in partnership with CBOs often yield stronger client outcomes and greater service efficiency than those administered solely by public agencies. CBOs are uniquely positioned to meet clients' needs due to their mission-driven models, deep community roots, and ability to deliver culturally specific services, attributes that proved especially valuable during the COVID-19 pandemic (Bailey et al., 2024; King-Viehlend & Tajo, 2022; Wagner, 2023).

Homelessness prevention programs that provide direct rental assistance are among the most effective strategies for reducing eviction risk and its associated negative outcomes (Airgood-Obrycki, 2022; Evans et al., 2016; Wagner, 2023; Wood et al., 2008). Both cross-sectional and longitudinal studies demonstrate that households receiving rental assistance are significantly less likely to experience homelessness, often at rates one-quarter to one-third lower than their unassisted peers (Fisher et al., 2019). Additionally, early intervention with rental support has been shown to improve economic outcomes and mental and physical health for program recipients (Oudshoorn et al., 2020; Schapiro et al., 2021; Wagner, 2023).

The short-term benefits of Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) programs are well-documented. Airgood-Obrycki (2022), analyzing data from the U.S. Census Bureau's Household Pulse Survey, found that ERA recipients were significantly less likely to be behind on rent, struggle with expenses, or report poor mental health. Only 25% of recipients were behind on rent, compared to 65% of applicants. Beyond housing stability, rental assistance is associated with reduced school absences and improved health outcomes for both adults and children (Fisher et al., 2019; Schapiro et al., 2021; Wagner, 2023). These findings emphasize the need for continued support as emergency funding dwindles, in order to sustain the positive effects on financial security and well-being (Airgood-Obrycki, 2022; Bailey et al., 2024).

Several programmatic insights emerged from the literature regarding how to enhance the effectiveness of ERA and similar homelessness prevention efforts. These include the importance of:

**Figure 4.1: Best Practices for Rental Assistance Programs (from Literature Review)**

- 1 Clearly defined program goals focused on prevention
- 2 Targeted outreach to those at imminent risk of homelessness
- 3 Balanced eligibility criteria that maintain both equity and accessibility
- 4 Sufficient subsidy amounts tailored to need
- 5 Flexibility in program design to respond to shifting circumstances and community-specific needs (Aiken et al., 2022; Bailey et al., 2024)

These best practices are particularly critical in high-cost housing markets like Arlington. Our demographic and housing analysis of the town reveals deep affordability challenges for low- and moderate-income households, compounded by racial disparities and limited access to social services. Rising rents, shrinking affordable housing options, and the growing housing cost burden on seniors and low-income residents further highlight the need for targeted, community-led interventions, such as the Housing Corporation of Arlington’s Homelessness Prevention Program, to prevent displacement and ensure housing stability.

#### 4.2 Key Insights from Similar State and Local Programs in Massachusetts

A comparison of the Housing Corporation of Arlington’s (HCA) Homelessness Prevention Grant Program with similar initiatives, such as RAFT, HomeBASE, and the Somerville Homeless Coalition’s Homelessness Prevention Program, highlights several key similarities and distinctions in approach, scope, and support services. Like HCA, all three programs offer financial assistance aimed at stabilizing housing for individuals and

families facing a crisis. However, RAFT and HomeBASE, as statewide programs, provide more generous funding caps (\$7,000 and \$10,000 respectively) and serve a broader demographic, while HCA's program operates on a smaller scale, with funding supported by local donations and municipal contributions.

What sets many of these programs apart, particularly HomeBASE and Somerville's approach, is their integration of wraparound services such as case management, housing search assistance, and landlord mediation. These complementary services not only address immediate housing insecurity but also work toward long-term stabilization. The Somerville Homeless Coalition's inclusion of longer-term subsidies and landlord incentive programs demonstrates how expanding the toolkit beyond one-time assistance can offer deeper, more sustainable solutions. Another key takeaway is the importance of program accessibility and the role that partnerships with local stakeholders, such as city governments, housing authorities, and nonprofit coalitions, can play in enhancing reach and responsiveness. For instance, Somerville's model benefits from robust municipal collaboration, enabling it to identify households at risk earlier and coordinate services more efficiently. This proactive approach contrasts with more reactive models that only intervene at the point of eviction. These structural nuances point to the need for programs like HCA's to continue identifying low-barrier entry points and preventive strategies that meet clients upstream, before housing crises escalate.

Ultimately, the broader landscape of homelessness prevention programs demonstrates that financial assistance is most effective when paired with individualized support and flexible program design. Learning from both state-funded initiatives and community-based programs reveals actionable strategies for enhancing HCA's impact, whether through expanded partnerships, capacity-building for case management, or policy advocacy for increased local and state funding. These insights are especially valuable as HCA considers how to evolve and sustain its program in a shifting housing landscape.

#### Image 4.1: Logos of Similar Program Operators



**Figure 4.2 Comparison of HCA's Homelessness Prevention Program with Similar Programs**

### Housing Corporation of Arlington: Homelessness Prevention Program

**Purpose:** Created to provide financial support to Arlington residents facing housing crises.

**Location:** Arlington, MA

**Key Benefits:** One-time financial assistance to stabilize housing during a crisis (e.g. back rent, moving expenses, security deposit)

**Financial Support:** Variable (\$2,500 maximum award)

**Eligibility Summary:**

- 1) Resident of Arlington
- 2) Must be at or below 60% of the area median income (AMI)

**Funding Source:** Combination of public (e.g., CPA funds) and private funding

### Residential Assistance for Families in Transition (RAFT)

**Purpose:** Prevent homelessness by helping low-income households retain or obtain housing

**Location:** Massachusetts (statewide), administered regionally by HCECs)

**Key Benefits:** One-time financial assistance for housing-related crises (e.g. back rent, utilities, moving costs)

**Financial Support:** Up to \$7,000 in a 12-month period

**Eligibility Summary:** Household must be at risk of homelessness or housing instability, income must be at or below 50% of Area Median Income (AMI), or 60% AMI if fleeing domestic violence

**Funding Source:** Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC)

### HomeBASE

**Purpose:** Provide alternatives to shelter entry and assist families in exiting emergency shelter through re-housing and stabilization services

**Location:** Massachusetts (statewide), administered by regional agencies like Metro Housing Boston

**Key Benefits:** Comprehensive housing support for families facing or experiencing homelessness

**Financial Support:** Up to \$10,000 per household

**Eligibility Summary:**

- 1) Must be determined Emergency Assistance (EA) eligible by DHCD
- 2) Income at or below 115% of the federal poverty level
- 3) Must include a child under 21 and be experiencing or at imminent risk of homelessness

**Funding Source:** Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC)

### Somerville Homeless Coalition: Homelessness Prevention Program

**Purpose:** Prevent homelessness and re-house individuals and families experiencing housing instability

**Location:** Somerville, Massachusetts

**Key Benefits:** Tailored case management and financial assistance to prevent eviction or support housing transition

**Financial Support:** Variable

**Eligibility Summary:**

- 1) Must be homeless or at risk of homelessness
- 2) Some programs prioritize individuals who live or work in Somerville
- 3) Additional assistance available for voucher holders and specific relocation needs

**Funding Source:** Combination of public and private funding

### 4.3 Key Insights from Survey Data

Ultimately, we collected 44 complete responses from HPP grant recipients, and the results speak very positively about the program's impact. While survey participation challenges and non-response bias should be kept in mind, these findings offer important insights into HPP's effectiveness and future areas for growth. Overall, the data suggest that the HPP has had a lasting and meaningful effect on participants' housing stability, financial resilience, and emotional well-being.

The key lessons from the survey analysis are organized around seven major findings:

#### 1 HPP grants have a sustained positive impact on recipients' housing instability, stress, and financial anxiety.

**73%**  
HPP recipients have consistently lived in stable, long-term housing

##### HPP recipient interviews:

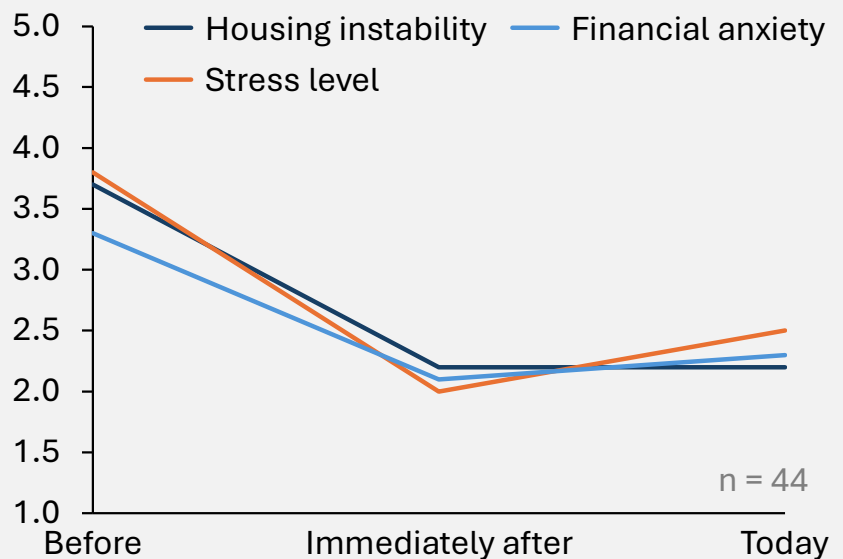
“Really been a god send.”

“HPP enabled [me] to provide [my] children a better life.”

“HPP saved [my] entire life.”

**70%**  
HPP recipients have not received another eviction notice

**Figure 4.3:**  
Housing instability, stress, and financial anxiety, before and after HPP (1 = best, 5 = worst)

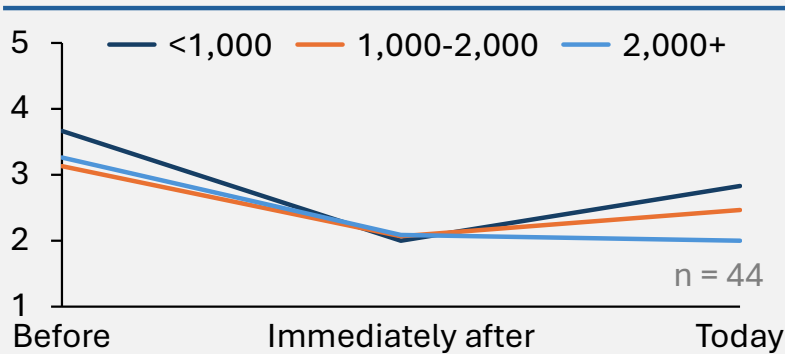


Topline survey results indicate that HPP had a positive, lasting impact on recipients housing situations as well as their stress levels and financial anxiety. As shown above, 73% of survey respondents report consistently living in stable, long-term housing since receiving their HPP grant, and 70% of respondents report not receiving an eviction notice in that same timeframe. Furthermore, we asked HPP recipients to gauge their housing instability, overall stress level, and financial anxiety at various points in relation to their HPP award, shown in the line chart above. These questions were based on a Likert scale, where respondents selected from five options ranging from most negative to least negative. We recoded each to a quantitative variable, averaged the responses, and have

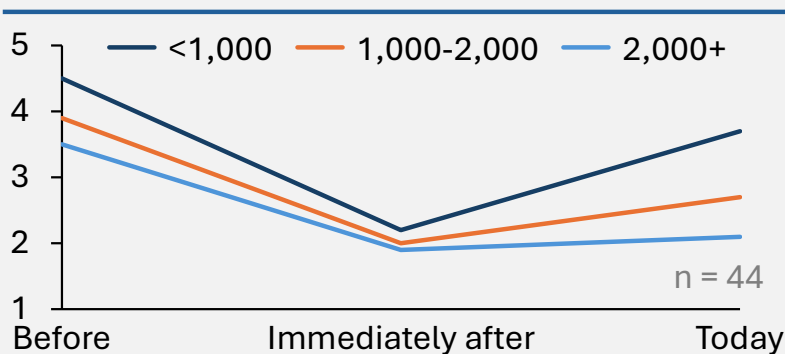
plotted that in the line chart above, and you can see that respondents' perceptions in all three areas became less negative immediately after HPP and that these improvements largely persisted over time.

**2** However, there was less long-term, positive impact for households that received a smaller grant award.

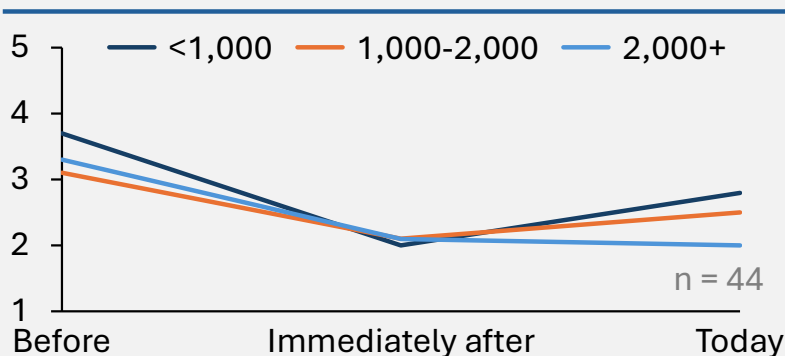
**Figure 4.4: Housing instability** by award size  
Before and after HPP (1 = best, 5 = worst)



**Figure 4.5: Stress level** by award size  
Before and after HPP (1 = best, 5 = worst)



**Figure 4.6: Financial anxiety** by award size  
Before and after HPP (1 = best, 5 = worst)



The charts on the left present the before-and-after comparisons in each area by award size: grants under \$1,000, between \$1,000 and \$2,000, and over \$2,000. In each area, the survey data shows that perceptions in each area were similar for each category immediately after HPP, they're most positive today among recipients of larger grant awards.

**HPP recipient interviews:**

“I felt like they could breathe for a moment.”

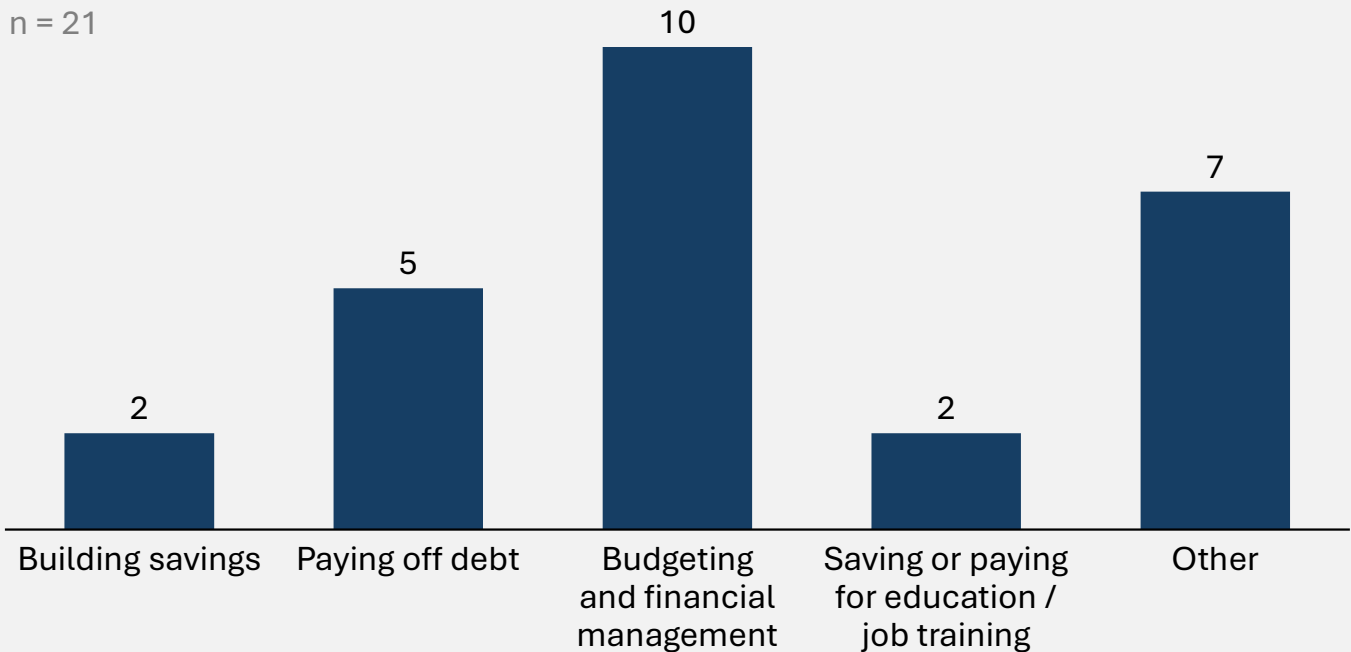
“HPP allowed me the freedom to put my money towards other important things.”

“HPP enabled [me] to find a job [I] want to work rather than just working a job to survive .”

This suggests that while an award of any size provides immediately relief, recipients of larger awards are more likely to experience sustained, positive impact. However, this doesn't necessarily mean larger award sizes are better, and further study is required to determine the underlying cause of this pattern.

**3** Improved budgeting and financial management emerged as positive secondary outcomes for HPP recipients.

**Figure 4.7: In addition to stabilizing your housing situation, did receiving an HPP grant help you with any of the following? (count)**



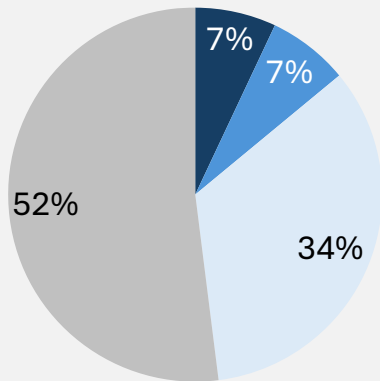
Beyond stabilizing a recipient’s housing situation, budgeting and financial management stood out as a meaningful externality, as shown in the chart above. Combining these results with findings from our interviews, it appears that HPP’s application process—which requires applicants to submit a monthly budget—may be the first time many recipients have formally created one. It may also reflect the program’s requirement that recipients complete a financial literacy course before receiving funds, or the additional support and education provided by HCA caseworkers. Although HPP’s primary goal is housing stabilization, these findings highlight its broader contribution to financial empowerment, which aligns with national best practices in rental assistance programs.

**4** HPP recipients were interested in additional financial literacy programming, but awareness of HCA’s other programs and services remains limited.

While HCA offers its own financial literacy programs and other wraparound services that help to empower its clients, many HPP recipients were not aware of these other programs and services—even while many recipients expressed interest in additional financial literacy programming.

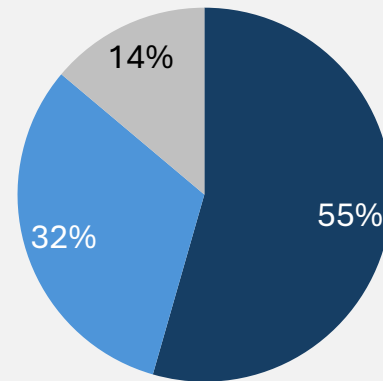
**Figure 4.8**  
**Familiarity with other HCA programs**  
 (% total)

- Very familiar n = 44
- Moderately familiar
- Slightly familiar
- Not familiar at all



**Figure 4.9**  
**Interest in financial literacy programs**  
 (% total)

- Yes n = 44
- Maybe
- No



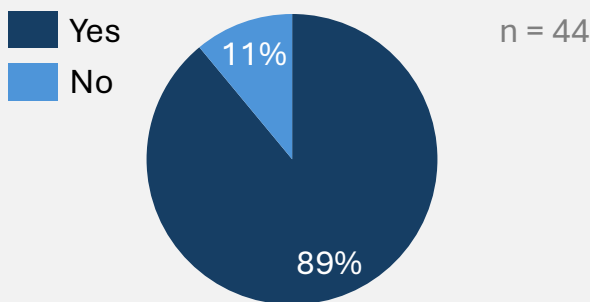
**HPP recipient interviews:**

“I was unaware that part of the offerings of HPP is the financial course referral to a local bank.”

Strengthening visibility around these wraparound services could extend HPP's positive impacts beyond the immediate housing crisis and support more sustained financial resilience.

**5 Past recipients would overwhelmingly reapply if allowed.**

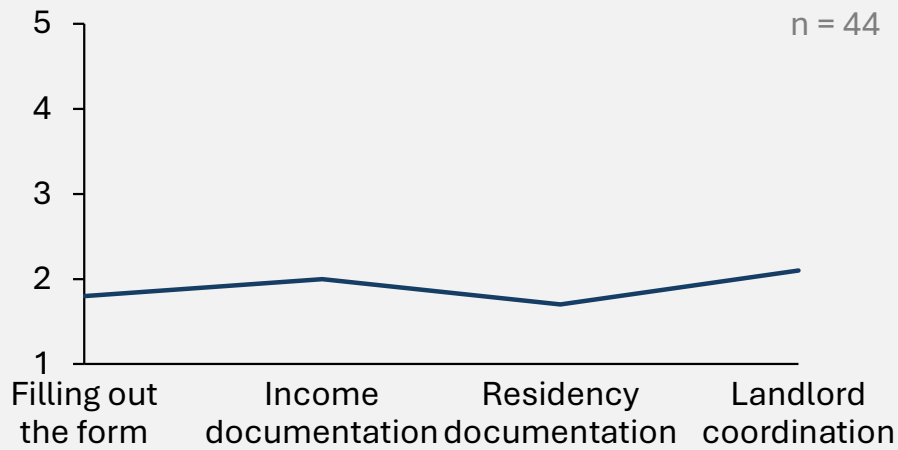
**Figure 4.10**  
**Would you have applied for another grant, if that were allowed? (% total)**



The survey found that almost 90% of recipients indicated they would have reapplied for another HPP grant if permitted. This strong interest suggests that many recipients face ongoing vulnerability, even after receiving initial assistance. While HPP’s design intentionally focuses on one-time support, these findings suggest the need to explore complementary programs or support systems for clients who remain at risk over the long term.

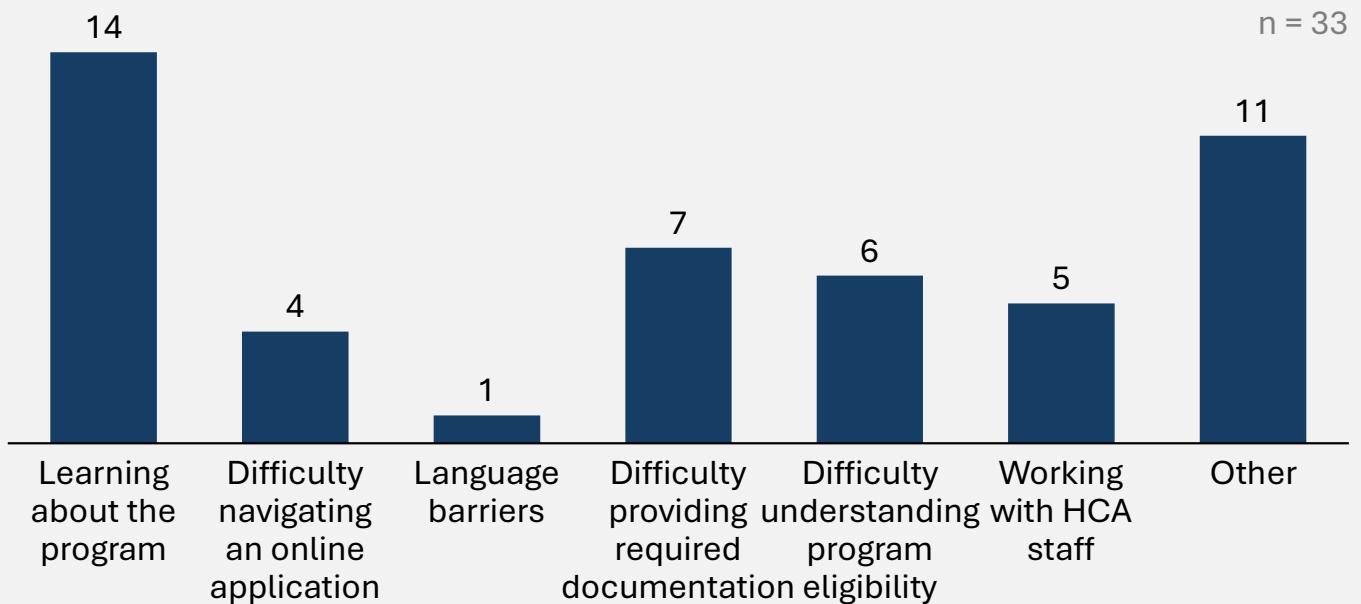
**6** The primary barrier to applying for HPP funds was lack of awareness, not difficulty.

**Figure 4.11:**  
Application difficulty at different steps in the process  
(1 = easiest, 5 = hardest)



**HPP recipient interviews:**  
“HPP is not as widely known as it should be despite being a valuable resource.”

**Figure 4.12: What barriers did you face when applying to HPP? (count)**

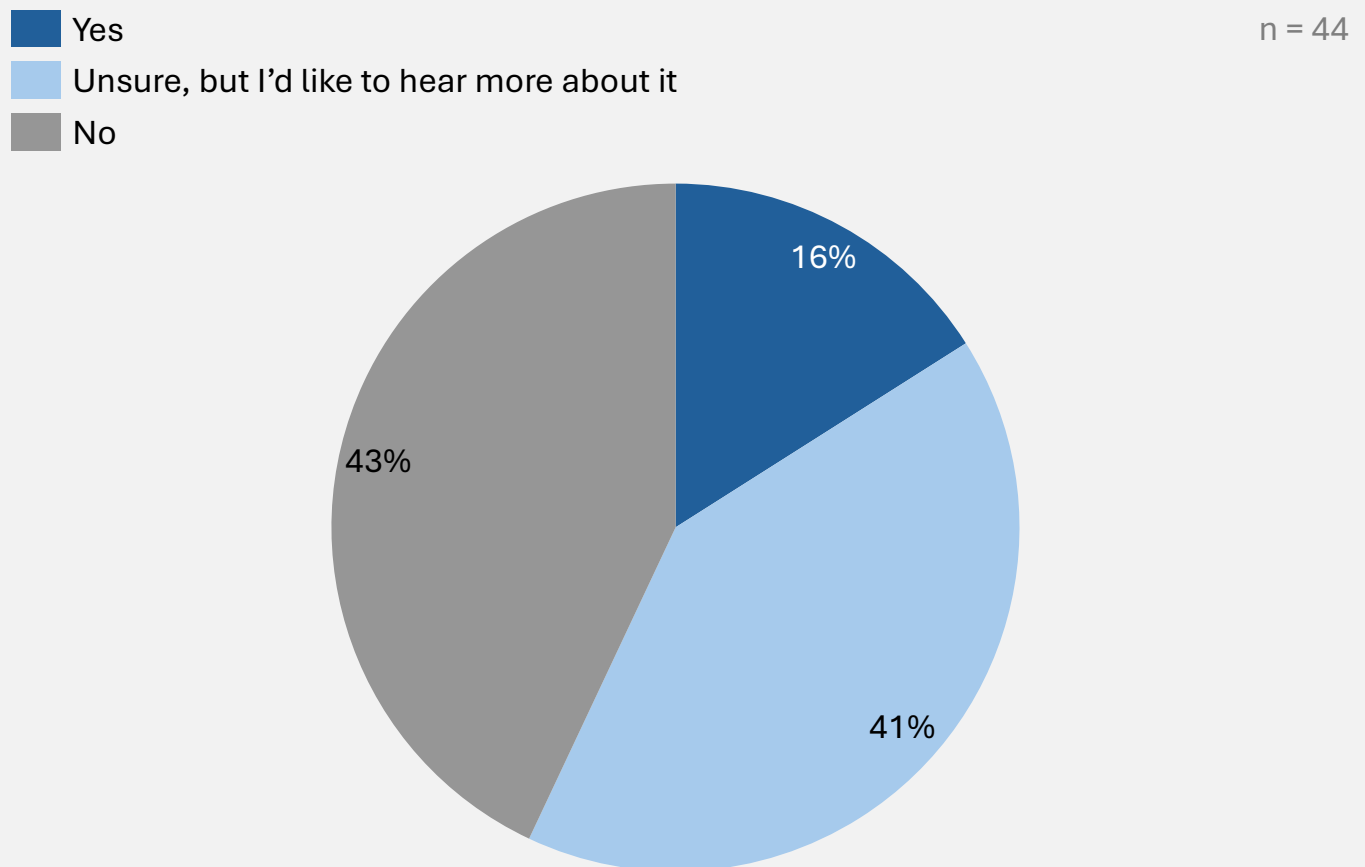


When asked about challenges in applying for HPP, most respondents found the process itself relatively easy. Instead, the most cited barrier was simply not knowing the program existed. This highlights a clear opportunity: greater outreach could bring HPP’s critical support to more households in need. Efforts to streamline application materials,

maintain plain language, and leverage partnerships for community outreach will be crucial to increasing access.

## 7 Some recipients are interested in getting more involved with HCA.

**Figure 4.13: Are you interested in volunteering with HCA or joining a committee?**  
(% total)



Survey responses also reveal modest but meaningful interest among HPP recipients in becoming more engaged with HCA beyond receiving assistance. While only 16% of respondents expressed definite interest in volunteering, serving on a committee, or otherwise participating in HCA's civic engagement activities, an additional 41% indicated that they were unsure but would like to learn more, suggesting potential for further engagement if opportunities are made more visible and accessible. These findings are encouraging, as they suggest that recipients not only value the support they received but may also be willing to give back to the HCA community if given structured and accessible pathways to do so. Expanding outreach about leadership and volunteer opportunities—and framing them as ways for past recipients to share their lived expertise—could help HCA strengthen its resident engagement and leadership development work.

## 4.4 Key Insights from Interviews with HPP Recipients






The voices of past HPP grant recipients paint a vivid picture of both the immediate relief and long-term stability that housing assistance provides. These individuals, ranging from long-time Arlington residents to those newly settled in the area, shared their experiences navigating housing challenges and the role that HPP played in their journey. Most interviewees live alone, though one resides with family, emphasizing how the program serves a diverse array of individuals in need. Their stories reflect themes of resilience, gratitude, and the ongoing need for support in securing stable housing.

The insights gathered from these interviews underscore the profound impact of HPP on Arlington residents, highlighting both its strengths and opportunities for growth. As a rapid-response program, HPP excels in providing timely financial assistance and fostering stability for individuals at risk of homelessness. However, small refinements in communication, awareness-building, and post-grant support could enhance the overall experience for recipients. The figure below highlights the main topics our interviews covered, and the following page provides the key insights and themes associated with each topic.

**Figure 4.14: Summary of Interview Topics for Past HPP Grant Recipients**



Figure 4.15: Themes and Insights from Interviews with Past HPP Grant Recipients

 <p><b>HPP Outreach and Awareness</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Direct service providers:</b> Council on Aging, Arlington Housing Authority, Arlington Youth Counseling Center, local nonprofits</li> <li>• <b>Community engagement events:</b> HCA tabling events in Arlington</li> <li>• <b>Independent online research</b></li> <li>• <b>Word-of-mouth</b></li> </ul>
 <p><b>Impact on Housing Stability</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Prevented eviction:</b> Helped tenants remain in their homes despite financial hardships.</li> <li>• <b>Facilitated transitions:</b> Provided crucial aid for moving into subsidized housing or safer environments.</li> <li>• <b>Promoted independence:</b> Enabled individuals to move out of shared housing into their own space.</li> <li>• <b>Stabilized families:</b> Allowed recipients to secure safer housing for their children.</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Financial and Mental Wellbeing</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Significant stress relief:</b> Eased mental + emotional burden of housing insecurity.</li> <li>• <b>Improved financial flexibility:</b> Allowed recipients to allocate funds to other necessities.</li> <li>• <b>Enabled career growth:</b> Provided stability to pursue meaningful employment rather than just survival jobs.</li> <li>• <b>Enhanced safety and security:</b> Provided support escaping unsafe living conditions.</li> </ul>
 <p><b>HPP Process and HCA Staff Support</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Timeliness &amp; Responsiveness:</b> Faster processing times and clearer communication than comparable programs.</li> <li>• <b>Personalized Assistance:</b> Staff, particularly Renea, were praised for their hands-on approach and commitment to advocacy.</li> <li>• <b>Simplified Process:</b> Less cumbersome and intimidating than other housing aid applications.</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Potential Opportunities for Improvement</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Increased awareness of financial literacy services:</b> Many recipients were unaware of additional support HCA offers.</li> <li>• <b>Post-grant support:</b> Desire for additional mediation services or guidance for tenants navigating ongoing housing issues.</li> <li>• <b>Transparency in funding limits:</b> One interviewee mentioned they were unaware of the maximum grant amount when applying.</li> </ul>

## 4.5 Key Insights from Interviews with Current/Past HCA Staff, Partners, and HPP Committee Members





Conducting semi-structured interviews with former Housing Corporation of Arlington (HCA) staff, HCA partners, and HPP Committee Review Members illuminated several key insights about the strengths of the Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP) and potential areas for improvement. These interviews offer a window into the real-world experiences of those who interact with the program, providing valuable context for understanding both its impact and the challenges it faces.

The themes pulled from these interviews highlight the essential role that HPP plays in maintaining housing stability in Arlington, despite the challenges related to funding, process inefficiencies, and escalating housing costs. The program's ongoing success will depend on its ability to balance the community's growing needs with the available resources. The figure below highlights the main topics our interviews covered, and the following page provides key insights and themes associated with each topic.

**Figure 4.16: Summary of Interview Topics for Current/Past HCA Staff, Partners, and HPP Committee Members**



**Figure 4.17: Themes and Insights from Current/Past HCA Staff, Partners, and HPP Committee Members**

 <p><b>HPP Impact and Strengths</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>HPP serves as a crucial safety net</b> for vulnerable residents</li> <li>• <b>Staff and program praised</b> for their role in stabilizing housing for residents in community.</li> <li>• <b>Assistance</b> with moving costs and security deposits is <b>highly valued</b>.</li> <li>• <b>Rental aid, while limited, is essential</b> in preventing eviction and providing temporary relief.</li> <li>• <b>Strong community support</b> highlights the program’s value.</li> <li>• <b>Valued program improvements</b> include the introduction of the <b>online application and increased funding</b> per recipient.</li> </ul>
 <p><b>HPP Application and Referral Process</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Social workers at the Council on Aging and Arlington Housing Authority</b> play a key role in referring and assisting applicants.</li> <li>• <b>HPP runs on a monthly review cycle</b>.</li> <li>• <b>Delays in processing and difficulty obtaining income/bank info</b> hinder urgent cases.</li> </ul>
 <p><b>HPP Barriers and Limitations</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Rising housing costs increasing financial strain</b> on residents.</li> <li>• Short-term aid does not always <b>fully address applicants' broader financial challenges</b>.</li> <li>• <b>Funding</b> constraints limit program reach.</li> <li>• Ongoing adaptation is needed to meet the <b>rising demand for assistance</b>.</li> <li>• The <b>pandemic has worsened housing instability</b>, increasing the need for flexible and expanded support.</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Opportunities for Improvement</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Streamlining the application</b> process to improve efficiency.</li> <li>• <b>Addressing the growing demand for financial aid</b> remains a critical challenge.</li> <li>• <b>Increased financial assistance</b> would improve long-term housing stability, particularly for market-rate renters.</li> </ul>

# 5 Discussion and Recommendations

## 5.1 Discussion

Building on the converging evidence from the literature review, survey, and interviews, our mixed-methods assessment confirms that HPP is achieving its core objective—keeping Arlington residents safely housed—while delivering broader benefits to household well-being. 73% of surveyed recipients remain in stable, long-term housing since receiving their HPP grant, and 70% have avoided any subsequent eviction notice. Self-reported ratings of housing instability, stress, and financial anxiety all improved sharply after assistance and stayed markedly better over time, and these gains held across race, gender, and income groups. Importantly, outcomes were strongest for households that received larger awards (i.e.,  $\geq \$2,000$ ), underscoring the value of calibrating grant size to the scale of need. Qualitative interviews echoed the quantitative story: recipients described the grant as a “godsend” that allowed them to breathe, redirect money toward children’s needs, and pursue better employment rather than “working a job just to survive.” While the application process is accessible and well-run, HCA could consider some changes or improvements to the program, including greater attendance tracking and enforcement of the financial course requirement and increased outreach and awareness about the program. Furthermore, HPP recipients are pool of HCA community members that are interested in opportunities to get more involved with HCA leadership and civic engagement opportunities, with more than half of survey respondents expressing definite or potential interest in volunteering or serving on HCA committees, signaling an opportunity to cultivate resident voices in HCA governance. Finally, the findings reinforce broader themes for HCA’s advocacy work—the importance of wrap-around services and HPP as a gateway to them, the power of partnerships in homelessness prevention, and the need to demystify existing programs through dedicated community outreach.

## 5.2 Recommendations

Building on the positive outcomes identified through the literature review, surveys, and interviews, this section outlines several recommendations to strengthen the Housing Corporation of Arlington’s Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP). While the program has clearly contributed to housing stability and emotional relief for many recipients, opportunities remain to enhance its reach, consistency, and long-term sustainability. The following recommendations aim to deepen the program’s impact, ensure equitable outcomes, and explore future pathways for more comprehensive support and community integration.

## Recommendation 1

- **Evaluate the resources and wraparound services** that could be supplement HPP awards so that the impacts of the grants are equally positive no matter the amount awarded.

## Recommendation 2

- **Increase focus on attendance tracking for the budgeting and financial literacy course** that's required to receive HPP funds and explore new ways of enforcing that requirement.

## Recommendation 3

- **Continue to raise awareness about HPP** through new outreach, as it currently is a “hidden gem” in Arlington that community members may struggle to find when they need it.

## Recommendation 4

- **Investigate new ways to deflect re-applicants and mitigate the need for frequent, recurring support**, including earlier interventions like financial education or potential to redirect clients to other programs or resources.

## Bigger Picture Goal

- **As a part of the Town of Arlington's ongoing master plan update, advocate for the inclusion of a goal** for the Town to continue supporting HPP and for greater coordination with HCA and other local agencies.

## 6 Conclusion

Our findings underscore HPP's vital role in homelessness prevention, helping Arlington residents stabilize their housing and increase their financial stability. The literature highlights the effectiveness of community-based homelessness prevention programs in improving mental health, preventing homelessness, and strengthening financial resilience. Consistent with these findings, our survey data show that a majority of HPP recipients surveyed report sustained improvements in their housing situation, mental wellbeing, and financial anxiety following assistance. Interviews with HCA staff, partner organizations, and grant recipients further reinforce the program's positive impact and strong community support. We heard from many recipients that deeply appreciate the support they received from HCA staff and who credit them with getting them through periods of instability. Their stories reflect how meaningful the program is—not just as financial aid, but as a source of community and hope during difficult times.

At the same time, we identified several areas where the program can improve. Challenges included formalizing attendance tracking and enforcement for the program's required financial education course. There is also a need to increase awareness of the program across communities and to offer more follow-up services to past participants. Some recipients even expressed interest in staying involved with HCA through leadership or community roles. These findings guided our final recommendations that we have presented to our partners at HCA to help them take the next step in their organization's mission. We are committed to helping HCA strengthen its resources, expand their impact and continue supporting Arlington's most vulnerable residents in the most effective and long-lasting way.

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# 8 Appendix

## Appendix A: Interview Guides

### Interview Guide for Past HCA Staff

**Goal:** To understand the perspectives of Housing Corporation of Arlington (HCA) partners regarding the Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP), including observations about what's working, where there are challenges, and potential ways to improve the program. Additionally, we aim to solicit suggestions for how to conduct survey outreach to past HPP recipients.

#### Introductions:

- Thank the interviewee for their time and participation.
- Introduce the interview team and provide background on the project and its purpose.
- Review consent information, including confidentiality and voluntary participation.
- Answer any questions or concerns before beginning the interview.
- Remind participant that they can skip any questions they don't want to answer.

#### Interview Questions:

- **Background Information:**
  - Can you share a little about history with HCA? What was your role and how long did you work there?
  - How did your role at HCA interact with HPP grantmaking?
- **Homelessness Prevention Program History:**
  - During your time with HCA, how did the program evolve or change? What changes were made, when did they take effect, and what was the reasoning behind them?
- **Homelessness Prevention Program Assessment and Ideas:**
  - What about the program did you think worked well?
  - What were the greatest challenges to achieving the goal(s) of the program?
  - Are there aspects of the program that you think could be improved? (e.g., application process, eligibility criteria, support services, grant amount)
- **Closing:**
  - Is there anything else you'd like to share about your with HPP or HCA in general?

#### End of Interview

Thank the interviewee again for their time and insights.

## Appendix A: Interview Guides

### Interview Guide for HCA Staff

**Goal:** To understand the perspectives of Housing Corporation of Arlington (HCA) staff regarding the Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP), including program history, observations around what's working, where there are challenges, and potential ways to improve the program. (1 hour)

#### Introductions:

- Thank the interviewee for their time and participation.
- Introduce myself and provide background on the project and its purpose.
- Review consent information, including confidentiality and voluntary participation.
- Answer any questions or concerns before beginning the interview.
- Remind participant that they can skip any questions they don't want to answer.

#### Interview Questions:

- **Background Information:**
  - Can you share a little about your role at HCA? How long have you worked at HCA and in your current role?
  - How does your role at HCA interact with HPP grantmaking?
- **Homeless Prevention Program Process:**
  - How do applicants find out about HPP? What kind of outreach do you do?
  - Could you walk me through the HPP application and decision-making process?
  - How much funding is available each year for HPP grantmaking?
- **Homeless Prevention Program History:**
  - During your time with HCA, how has the program evolved or changed? What changes have been made, when did they take effect, and what was the reasoning behind them?
  - What tradeoffs have you observed in considering re-applicants for HPP grant funds as opposed to offering HPP grants only once?
- **Homeless Prevention Program Assessment and Ideas:**
  - What about the program would you highlight as working well?
  - What have been the greatest challenges to achieving the goal(s) of the program?
  - Are there aspects of the program that you think could be improved? (e.g., application process, eligibility criteria, support services, grant amount)

**Closing:** Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience with the HPP program or HCA in general?

#### End of Interview

Thank the interviewee again for their time and insights.

## Appendix A: Interview Guides

### Interview Guide for HCA Partners

**Goal:** To understand the perspectives of Housing Corporation of Arlington (HCA) partners regarding the Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP), including observations about what's working, where there are challenges, and potential ways to improve the program. Additionally, we aim to solicit suggestions for how to conduct survey outreach to past HPP recipients.

#### Introductions:

- Thank the interviewee for their time and participation.
- Introduce the interview team and provide background on the project and its purpose.
- Review consent information, including confidentiality and voluntary participation.
- Answer any questions or concerns before beginning the interview.
- Remind participant that they can skip any questions they don't want to answer.

#### Interview Questions:

- **Background Information:**
  - Can you share a little about your organization and your role?
  - How do you and your organization interact with HPP?
- **Homelessness Prevention Program Referral Process:**
  - How does your organization refer clients to HPP?
  - How do you think about who to refer to HPP for support?
- **Homelessness Prevention Program Assessment and Ideas:**
  - What is your clients' assessment of HPP?
  - What about the program would you highlight as working well?
  - What have been the greatest challenges with HPP when it comes to helping stabilize housing situations for low-income residents in crisis?
  - Are there aspects of the program that you think could be improved? (e.g., application process, eligibility criteria, support services, grant amount)
- **Closing:**
  - Is there anything else you'd like to share about you or your organization's experience with HPP?
  - Do you have any tips for us regarding how to conduct survey outreach to past HPP recipients?
  - [Arlington Housing Authority (AHA) only] Would you be willing to share an e-mail on our behalf to your networks, letting them know about this research project and the upcoming survey?

#### End of Interview

Thank the interviewee again for their time and insights.

## Appendix A: Interview Guides

### Interview Guide for Past HPP Grant Recipients

**Goal:** To understand the experiences of prior recipients of eviction prevention cash assistance from the Housing Corporation of Arlington's (HCA) Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP). This interview will explore the impact of the assistance on recipients' housing stability, financial well-being, and mental health while also gathering feedback on how HCA can improve the program.

#### Introductions:

- Thank the interviewee for their time and participation.
- Introduce yourself and provide background on the project and its purpose.
- Review consent information, including confidentiality and voluntary participation.
- Answer any questions or concerns before beginning the interview.
- Remind participant that they can skip any questions they don't want to answer.

#### Interview Questions:

##### ▪ **Background Information:**

- Can you share a little about yourself? How long have you lived in Arlington or the Greater Boston area?
- Can you briefly describe your household (e.g., number of family members)?
- How did you first hear about the HPP program?

##### ▪ **Homelessness Prevention Program Impact:**

- How has the assistance from HCA impacted your housing situation since receiving the grant?
- How did receiving the grant affect other areas of your life, such as your financial situation, employment, or mental well-being?
- Do you feel that the program adequately met your needs at the time? Why or why not?

##### ▪ **Program Improvement and Future Engagement:**

- Are there any aspects of the program that you think could be improved? (e.g., application process, eligibility criteria, support services, grant amount)

##### ▪ **Closing:**

- Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience with the HPP program or HCA in general?

#### End of Interview

Thank the interviewee again for their time and insights.

## Appendix B: Interview Consent Forms

### Interview Consent Form for Former HCA Staff

You are invited to participate in an interview for an Impact Assessment Project of the Housing Corporation of Arlington's (HCA) Homelessness Prevention Program conducted by a student-led team at Tufts University in collaboration with HCA.

#### Purpose of the Project

This project aims to understand the history and impact of HCA's Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP) by gathering insights from former staff.

#### Interview Details

- **Format:** Virtual interview via Zoom
- **Duration:** Approximately 45 minutes
- **Content:** Open-ended questions about your experience with HCA and HPP
- **Recording:** With your consent, the interview may be recorded (audio/video) and securely stored on a Tufts Box folder.

#### Confidentiality

- All recordings and notes will be stored securely and only accessible to the Tufts students conducting the interview.
- No identifying information will be shared publicly without your approval. If we include any identifiable information in our final report, we will send it to you for review before publication.

#### Voluntary Participation

Your participation is completely voluntary. You may decline to participate or withdraw at any time without any consequences.

#### Statement of Consent

I have read and understand this information. I agree to participate in this interview.

Do you agree to having your interview recorded? (Check one)

Yes

No

Printed First and Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix B: Interview Consent Forms

### Interview Consent Form for Current HCA Staff

You are invited to participate in an interview for an Impact Assessment Project of the Housing Corporation of Arlington's (HCA) Homelessness Prevention Program conducted by a student-led team at Tufts University in collaboration with HCA.

### Purpose of the Project

This project aims to understand the history and impact of HCA's Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP) by gathering insights from current HCA staff.

### Interview Details

- **Format:** Virtual interview via Zoom
- **Duration:** Approximately 45 minutes
- **Content:** Open-ended questions about your experience with HCA and HPP
- **Recording:** With your consent, the interview may be recorded (audio/video) and securely stored on a Tufts Box folder.

### Confidentiality

- All recordings and notes will be stored securely and only accessible to the Tufts students conducting the interview.
- No identifying information will be shared publicly without your approval. If we include any identifiable information in our final report, we will send it to you for review before publication.

### Voluntary Participation

Your participation is completely voluntary. You may decline to participate or withdraw at any time without any consequences.

### Statement of Consent

I have read and understand this information. I agree to participate in this interview.

Do you agree to having your interview recorded? (Check one)

Yes

No

Printed First and Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix B: Interview Consent Forms

### Interview Consent Form for HCA Partners

You are invited to participate in an interview for an Impact Assessment Project of the Housing Corporation of Arlington's (HCA) Homelessness Prevention Program conducted by a student-led team at Tufts University in collaboration with HCA.

### Purpose of the Project

This project aims to understand the history and impact of HCA's Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP) by gathering insights from HCA Partner Organizations.

### Interview Details

- **Format:** Virtual interview via Zoom
- **Duration:** Approximately 45 minutes
- **Content:** Open-ended questions about your experience with HCA and HPP
- **Recording:** With your consent, the interview may be recorded (audio/video) and securely stored on a Tufts Box folder.

### Confidentiality

- All recordings and notes will be stored securely and only accessible to the Tufts students conducting the interview.
- No identifying information will be shared publicly without your approval. If we include any identifiable information in our final report, we will send it to you for review before publication.

### Voluntary Participation

Your participation is completely voluntary. You may decline to participate or withdraw at any time without any consequences.

### Statement of Consent

I have read and understand this information. I agree to participate in this interview.

Do you agree to having your interview recorded? (Check one)

Yes

No

Printed First and Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix B: Interview Consent Forms

### Interview Consent Form for Past HPP Grant Recipients

You are invited to participate in an interview for an Impact Assessment Project of the Housing Corporation of Arlington's (HCA) Homelessness Prevention Program conducted by a student-led team at Tufts University in collaboration with HCA.

#### What is this project about?

We want to learn about the experiences of people who received grant assistance from HCA's Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP). Your feedback will help us understand how the program has affected your housing, finances, and well-being. It will also help HCA improve the program.

#### What will happen in the interview?

- The interview will take about **45 minutes**.
- You can meet with us by **phone, video call, or in-person** at the HCA office.
- We will go over this form and answer any questions you have.
- We will ask about your experience in the program. You do not have to answer any questions you don't want to.
- The interviewer(s) will take notes, and if you agree, the interview may be recorded (audio/video) and securely stored on a Tufts Box folder.
- No identifying or personal information you provide during this interview will be used in our final report.

#### Will my information be kept private?

Yes. Your answers will be stored in a **secure, password-protected folder** that only the Tufts' student-led team can access. If we record your interview, the recording will be **deleted from our devices after uploading it** to the secure folder. Your information will not be shared with anyone outside the Tufts team.

#### Will I get paid for my time?

Yes. You will receive a **\$25 Stop & Shop gift card** after completing the interview.

#### Do I have to do this interview?

No. **This interview is completely voluntary.** You do not have to participate, and you can stop at any time. Your decision will not affect your relationship with Tufts University or HCA.

#### Statement of Consent

I have read this form and understand the purpose of this project. I know I can ask questions at any time. I understand that I can stop participating at any point.

#### I consent to participate in this interview.

Do you agree to having your interview recorded? (Check one)

- Yes  
 No

Printed First and Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix C: Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP) Recipient Survey

### Start of Block: Survey Introduction

The Housing Corporation of Arlington (HCA) has asked a team from Tufts University within the Department of Urban and Environmental Policy (UEP) to help us learn about your experience with the Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP). This survey will help us learn how the program has affected your housing, finances, and well-being. Your feedback will show us what's working and how we can improve it for others.

The survey takes about **10 minutes** and is **confidential**. Complete the survey for a chance to **win one of five \$30 Stop & Shop gift cards!** To be entered, you must complete this survey and provide your contact information below. Entry into the raffle is completely optional. **Thank you for your participation!**

**Survey Raffle Entry:** If you'd like to be entered into the gift card raffle, then please provide your preferred contact information below. This could be a phone number or an e-mail address.

Preferred Contact Information (i.e., phone number or email)

### End of Block: Survey Introduction

### Start of Block: Section 1 – Background

**Q1** When did you receive your Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP) grant award? Please **select one** of the options below. If you have received multiple HPP grants, then please select the year you were awarded your most recent grant.

- 2024
- 2023
- 2022
- 2021
- 2020
- Before 2020

**Q2** How did you use the funds awarded through HPP? Please **select one** of the options below. If you have received multiple HPP grants, then please speak to your most recent grant.

- Security Deposit or First/last month's rent
- Back rent
- Moving expenses
- Other (please describe below)

**Q3** How large was the grant you received through HPP? Please **input the amount** in dollars below—an estimate is okay. If you have received multiple HPP grants, provide the amount of your most recent grant.

### End of Block: Section 1 – Background

### Start of Block: Section 2 – HPP Impact

**Q4** Since receiving your HPP grant, have you consistently lived in stable, long-term housing? Please **select one** of the options below. If you have received multiple HPP grants, then please speak to your experience after receiving your most recent grant.

- Yes
- No
- Not Sure

*\*Display this question only:*

*If Q4 = No*

*And Q4 = Not sure*

**\*Q5** How long did your housing remain stable after receiving a grant from HPP? Please **input the number** of months below. Only whole numbers will be accepted, and an estimate is okay. If you have received multiple HPP grants, then please speak to your experience after receiving your most recent grant.

**Q6** To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: “I am satisfied with my current housing situation.” Please **select one** of the options below.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

**Q7** How did you feel about your housing situation at the following points in time: For each row below, please **select one** of the options from the columns. If you have received multiple HPP grants, then please speak to your experience with your most recent grant.

	Very Unstable	Fairly Unstable	Somewhat Unstable	Fairly Stable	Very Stable and Secure	Don't Know or Don't Remember
Before your grant award	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Immediately after award	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Today	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Q8** Please rate your level of stress regarding your housing situation at the following points in time: For each row below, please **select one** of the options from the columns. If you have received multiple HPP grants, then please speak to your experience with your most recent grant.

	No Stress	Some Stress	Moderate Stress	High Stress	Extreme Stress	Don't Know or Don't Remember
Before receiving my grant award, I felt..	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	No Stress	Some Stress	Moderate Stress	High Stress	Extreme Stress	Don't Know or Don't Remember
Immediately after receiving my award, I felt...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Today, I feel...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Q9** Have you received an eviction notice since receiving your HPP grant award? Please **select one** of the options below. If you have received multiple HPP grants, then please speak to your experience after receiving your most recent grant.

- Yes
- No
- Don't Know or Don't Remember

**Q10** How often did you worry about paying your rent at the following points in time: For each row below, please **select one** of the options from the columns. If you have received multiple HPP grants, then please speak to your experience with your most recent grant.

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	Don't Know or Don't Remember
Before receiving my grant award, I worried...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Immediately after receiving my award, I worried...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Today, I worry...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Q11** Please rate your overall level of financial anxiety at the following points in time: For each row below, please **select one** of the options from the columns. If you have received multiple HPP grants, then please speak to your experience with your most recent grant.

	No Anxiety	Some Anxiety	Moderate Anxiety	Extreme Anxiety	Don't Know or Don't Remember
Before receiving my grant award, I felt..	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Immediately after receiving my award, I felt...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Today, I feel...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

*\*Display this question only:  
If Q4 = Yes*

**\*Q12** In addition to stabilizing your housing situation, did receiving an HPP grant help you with any of the following? Please select **all that apply**. If you have received multiple HPP grants, then please speak to your experience with your most recent grant.

- Building savings
- Paying off debt
- Budgeting and financial management
- Saving or paying for education/job training
- Other (please describe below)

**Q13** Would you have applied for another grant from HPP if that were an option? Please **select one** of the options below.

- Yes
- No

**End of Block: Section 2 – HPP Impact**

**Start of Block: Section 3 – HPP Process**

**Q14** How easy or hard was each part of the application process? For each row below, please **select one** of the options from the columns. If you have received multiple HPP grants, then please speak to your experience with your most recent application.

	Very Difficult	Somewhat Difficult	Neither Easy nor Difficult	Somewhat Easy	Very Easy	Don't Know or Don't Remember
Filling out the application form was...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Very Difficult	Somewhat Difficult	Neither Easy nor Difficult	Somewhat Easy	Very Easy	Don't Know or Don't Remember
Providing income verification documents was...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Providing proof of residency was...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Coordination with my landlord was...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Q15** What barriers did you face when applying for HPP assistance? Please select **all that apply**. If you have received multiple HPP grants, then please speak to your experience with your most recent application

- Learning about the program
- Difficulty navigating an online application
- Language barriers
- Difficulty providing required documentation
- Difficulty understanding the program requirements and eligibility
- Working with HCA staff
- Other (please describe below)

**Q16** Is there anything else you'd like to share with us about your experience with HPP? Please **describe below** (type as much as you want).

**End of Block: Section 3 – HPP Process**

**Start of Block: Section 4 – HCA Programming and Involvement**

**Q17** How familiar are you with the programs that HCA offers outside of HPP grants? Please **select one** of the options below.

- Not familiar at all
- Slightly familiar
- Moderately familiar
- Very familiar
- Extremely familiar

*\*Display this question only:*

*If Q17 = Slightly familiar*

*And Q17 = Moderately familiar*

*And Q17 = Very familiar*

*And Q17 = Extremely familiar*

**\*Q18** What HCA programs are you aware of? Please **select all** HCA programs you knew before today..

- HCA Tenant Council
- Financial Literacy Classes
- Social Services Support (i.e., help signing up for programs like Social Security, SNAP, counseling, etc.)
- Creating additional affordable housing
- Walk for Affordable Housing
- HCA Annual Meeting
- I was not aware of any of these programs before today

**Q19** In the future, if HCA offered additional services, such as financial or computer literacy training courses, would you be interested in participating? Please **select one** of the options below.

- Yes
- Maybe
- No

*\*Display this question only:*

*If Q19= Yes*

*And Q19 = Maybe*

**\*Q20** If you are interested in additional programming from HCA, what types of programs would you want to see? Please **describe below** (type as much as you want).

**Q21** Community members, including program participants like you, help to influence HCA's work! Are you interested in volunteering with HCA or joining a committee? Please **select one** of the options below.

- Yes
- No
- Unsure, but I'd like to hear more about it

*\*Display this question only:*

*If Q21= Yes*

*And Q21 = Unsure, but I'd like to hear more about it*

**\*Q22** If you selected "yes" or "unsure" please **share your preferred contact information** (i.e., an e-mail address or phone number) below:

**End of Block: Section 4 – HCA Programming and Involvement**

**Start of Block: Section 5 – Demographics**

Why is this section important? The following section consists of **OPTIONAL** questions. However, sharing this information will help us understand who the HPP program is reaching and how HCA can improve it. By collecting demographic data, HCA can make the program better and ensure it supports the people who need it most. Your answers will help HCA serve communities better in the future.

**Q23** What is your age range? Please **select one** of the options below.

- Younger than 18
- 18-35
- 36-55
- 55+

**Q24** What is your household size? Please **select one** of the options below.

- 1 person
- 2 persons
- 3 persons
- 4 persons
- 5 persons
- 6+ persons

**Q25** What is your estimated MONTHLY household income? Please **input the amount** in dollars below—an estimate is okay.

**Q26** What is your estimated MONTHLY rent? Please **input the amount** in dollars below—an estimate is okay.

**Q27** Do any persons in your household have a disability? Please **select one** of the options below.

- Yes
- No
- Prefer Not to Answer

**Q28** What is your race/ethnicity? Please **select one** of the options below.

- Asian/Pacific Islander
- Black/African American
- Hispanic/Latinx
- Native American or Alaskan Native
- White/Caucasian
- Multiracial or Biracial
- Other
- Prefer Not to Answer

**Q29** What is your gender? Please **select one** of the options below.

- Male
- Female
- Non-binary
- Prefer Not to Answer

**Q30** Do you identify with the LGBTQIA+ community? Please **select one** of the options below.

- Yes
- No
- Prefer Not to Answer

**End of Block: Section 5 – Demographics**

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**Start of Block: Section 6 – Interest in Interviewing**

**Q31** Are you interested in sharing more about your experience with HPP? *The Tufts team working with HCA is looking for 6 participants to interview. Each participant will receive a \$25 Stop & Shop gift card for their time. Spots are limited and will close once all 6 are filled. If you're interested, please provide your preferred contact information below. We'll reach out with more details.*

First and last name:

Preferred contact information (i.e., your phone number or e-mail address):

**End of Block: Section 6 – Interest in Interviewing**

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## Appendix D: Survey Outreach Materials

### Outreach Email (to HPP recipients)

The HCA wants your help!

The Housing Corporation of Arlington (HCA) is teaming up with the Tufts University GSAS Urban and Environmental Policy and Planning Department to conduct a survey of past participants in the Homelessness Prevention Program. (HPP) This survey should only take 10 minutes to complete. **Survey takers will have the chance to win one of 5 Stop and Shop gift cards!**

**Participation is entirely voluntary and anonymous. Please see the link for the survey below**

### Outreach Flyer (available at the HCA office)



**WE WANT YOUR FEEDBACK!**

**Take our survey for a chance to win a \$30 Stop & Shop Giftcard!**

**Can I participate?**  
If you got a grant from HCA's Homelessness Prevention Program to help with housing costs like moving, rent, or a security deposit, you can participate!

**Why should I?**  
Your valuable feedback will help improve the program.

**How long will it take?**  
Only 10-15 minutes!

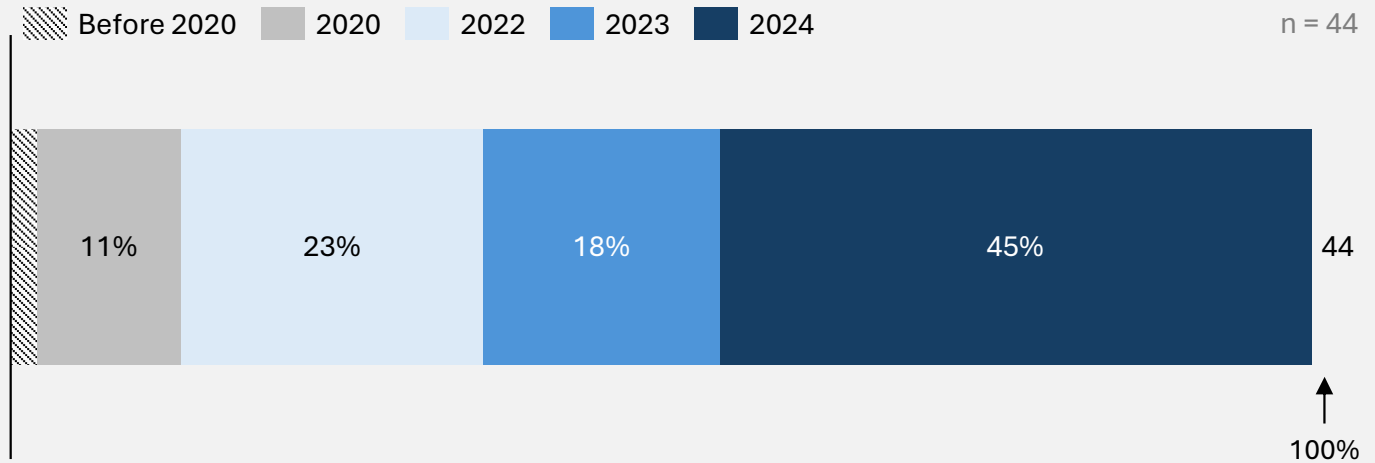
**How do I take the survey?**  
Scan the QR Code Below



## Appendix E: HPP Recipient Survey Demographics

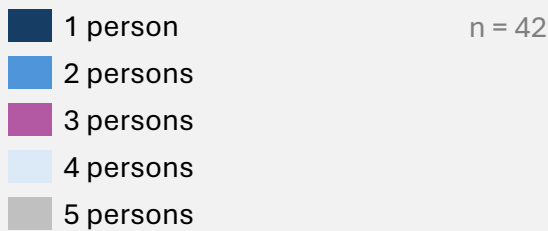
With nearly half of the survey responses originating from 2024 recipients, the survey data could be a little skewed toward more positive outcomes due to a recency bias.

### Survey respondents by HPP award year (% total)

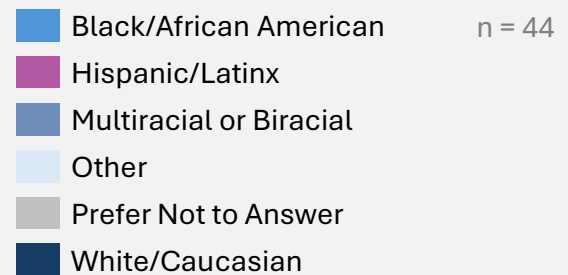


Most survey respondents were either single person households, female, or white—but different age groups were well represented.

### Survey participants by household size (% total)

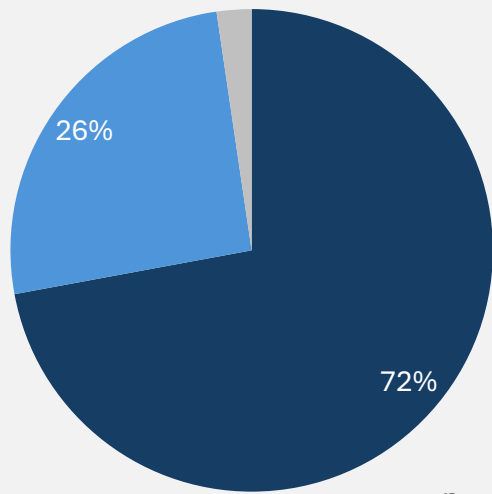
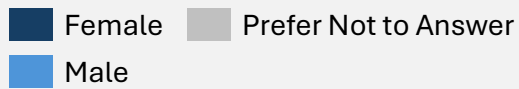


### Survey participants by race/ethnicity (% total)



### Survey participants by gender

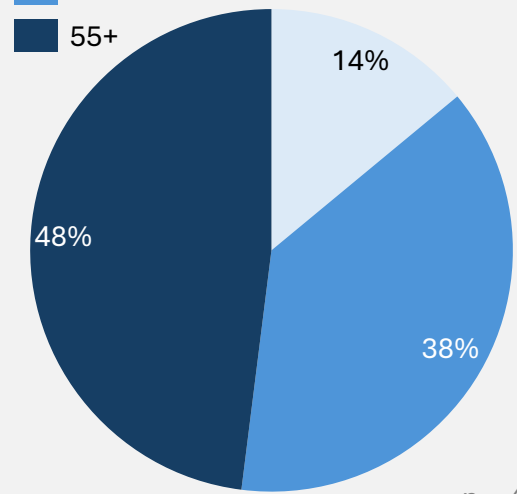
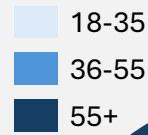
(% total)



n = 44

### Survey respondents by age range

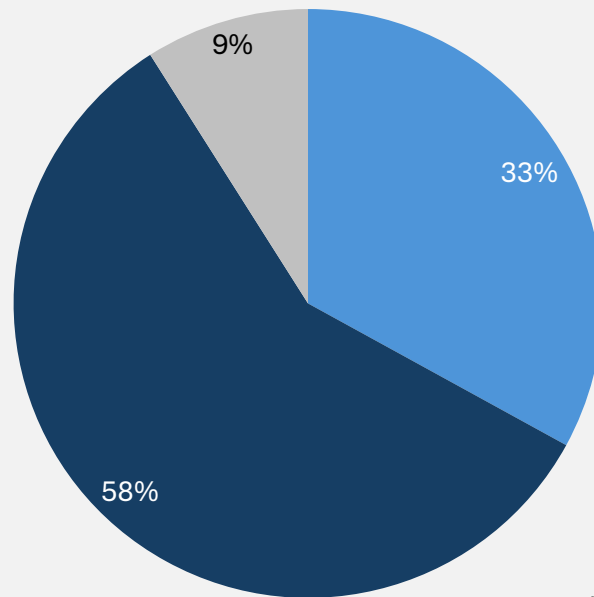
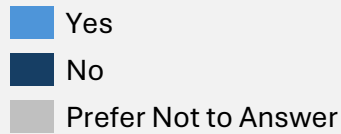
(% total)



n = 42

... And a significant share of recipients reported a person living with a disability in their household

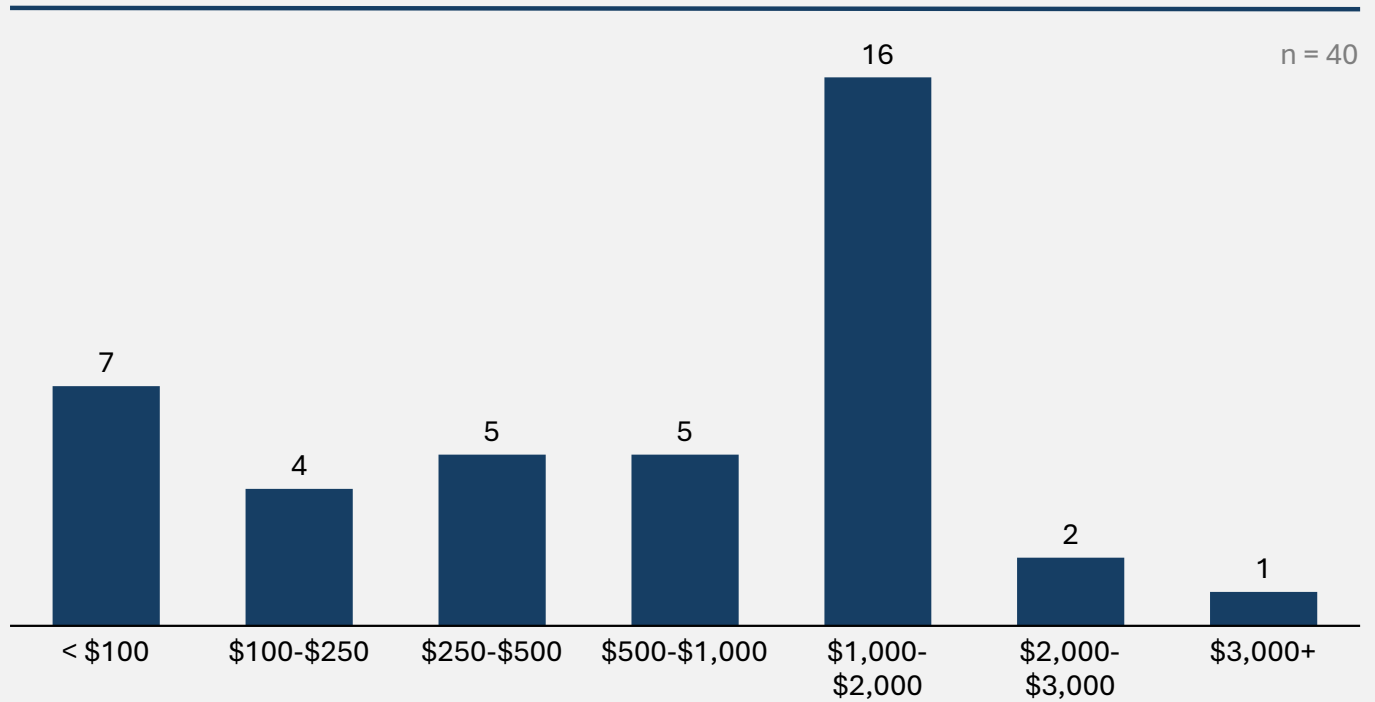
### Recipients with a disabled household member (% total)



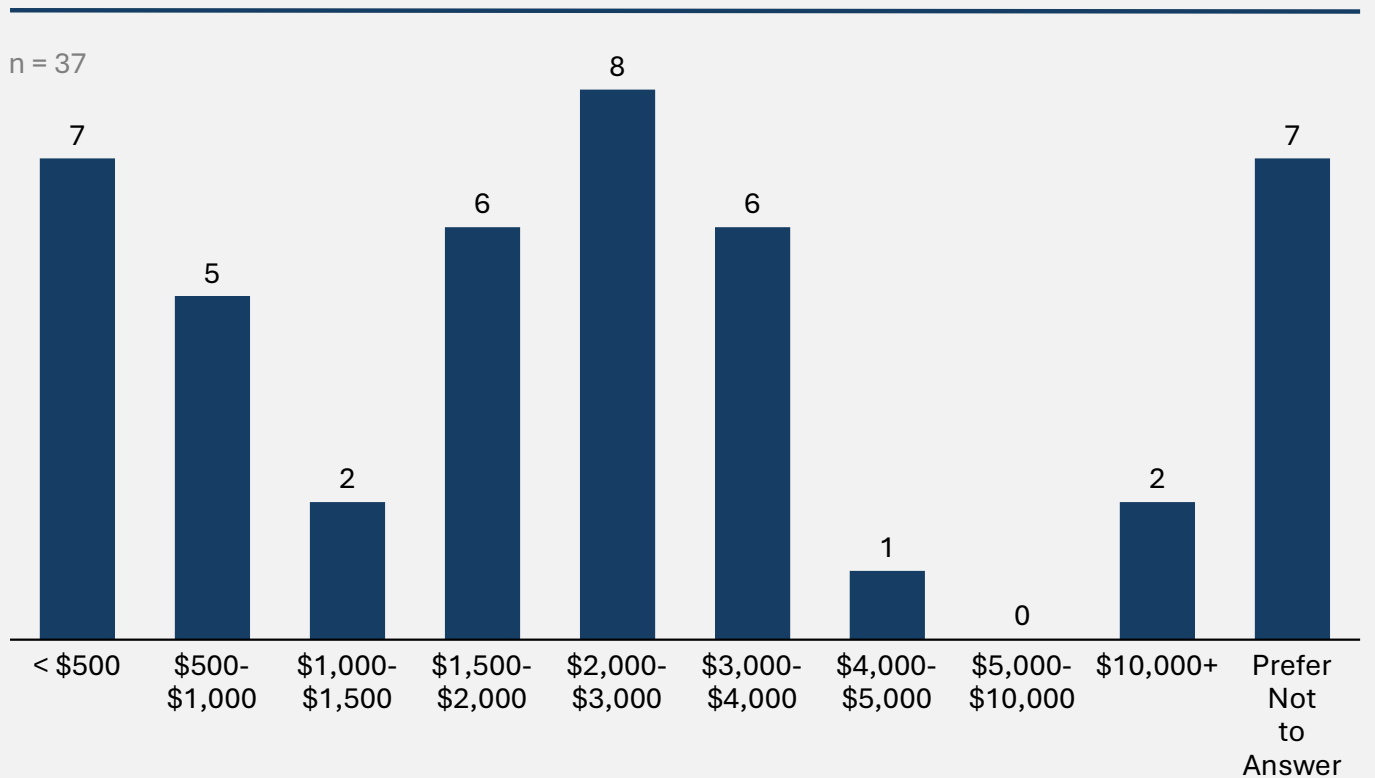
n = 44

Most survey respondents paid between \$1-2k in monthly rent, but there was a broad spectrum of incomes reported

### Survey participants by monthly rent (count)

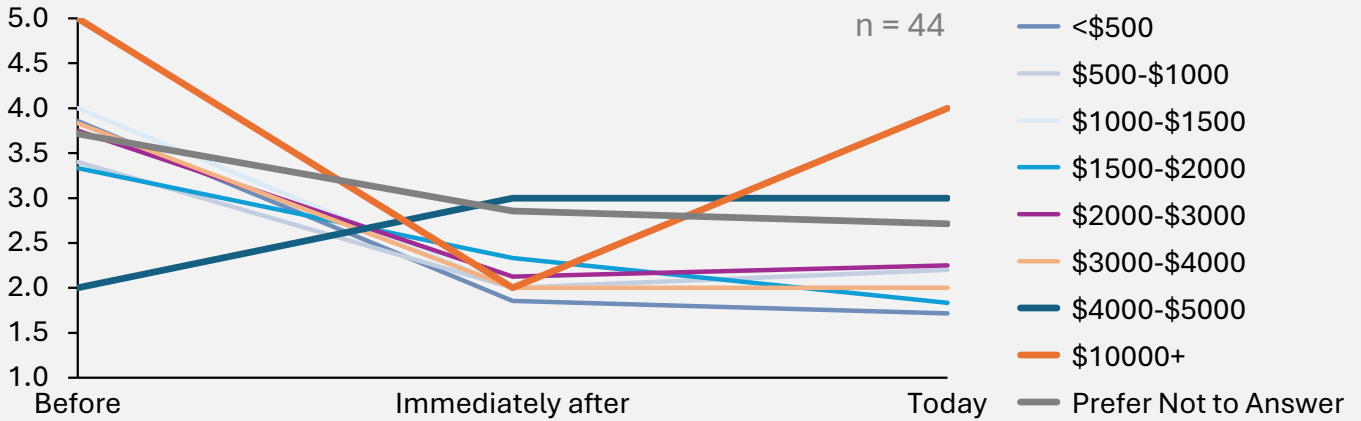


### Survey participants by monthly household income (count)

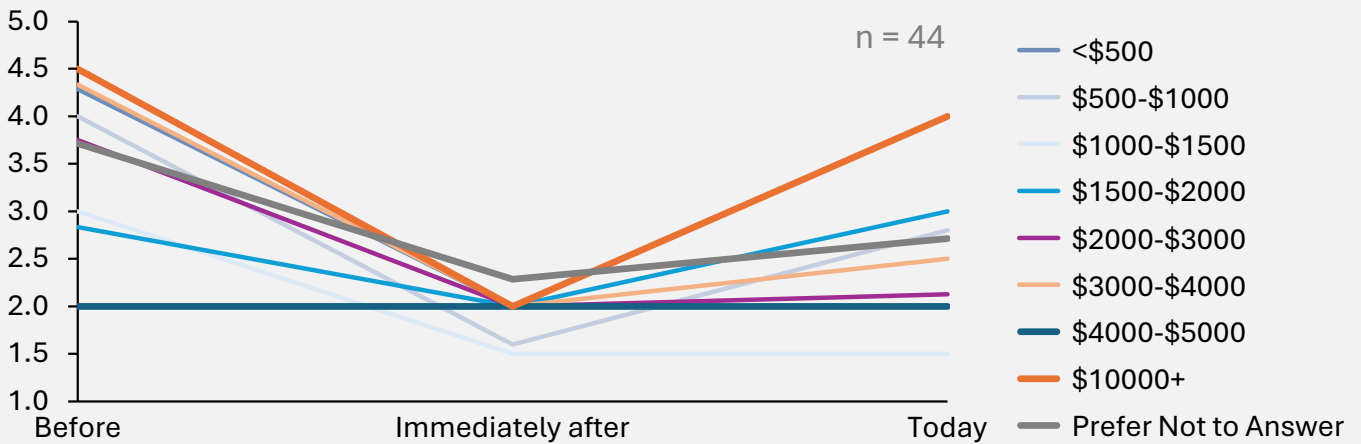


We did not observe any significant patterns based on the recipient's income...

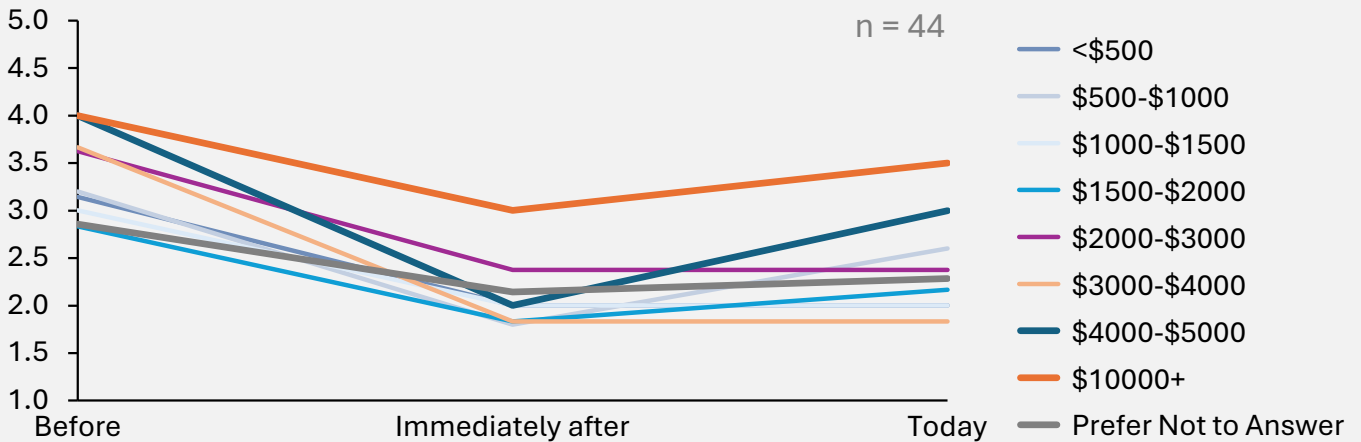
**Housing instability** by income level, before and after HPP (1 = best, 5 = worst)



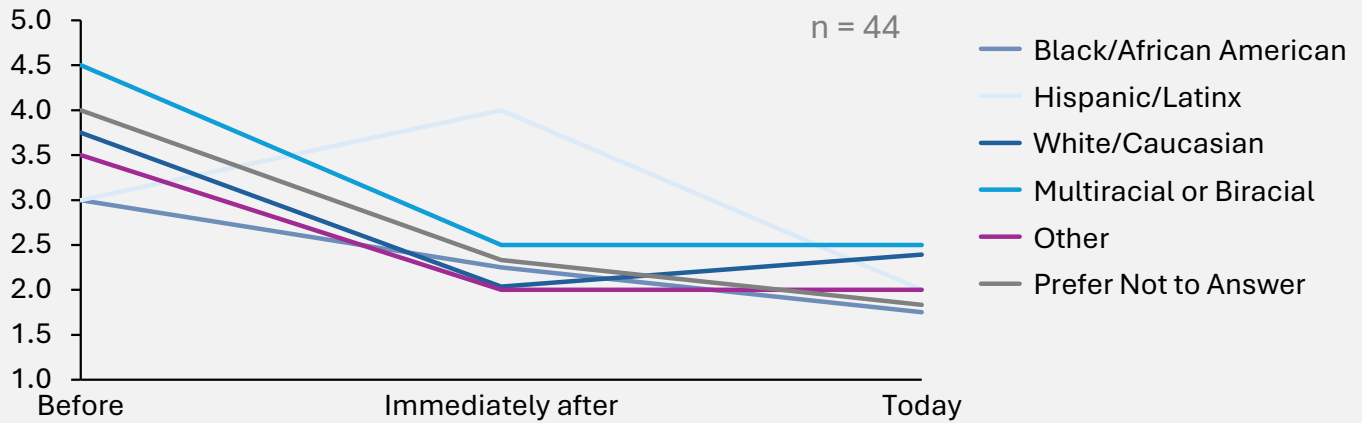
**Stress level** by income level, before and after HPP (1 = best, 5 = worst)



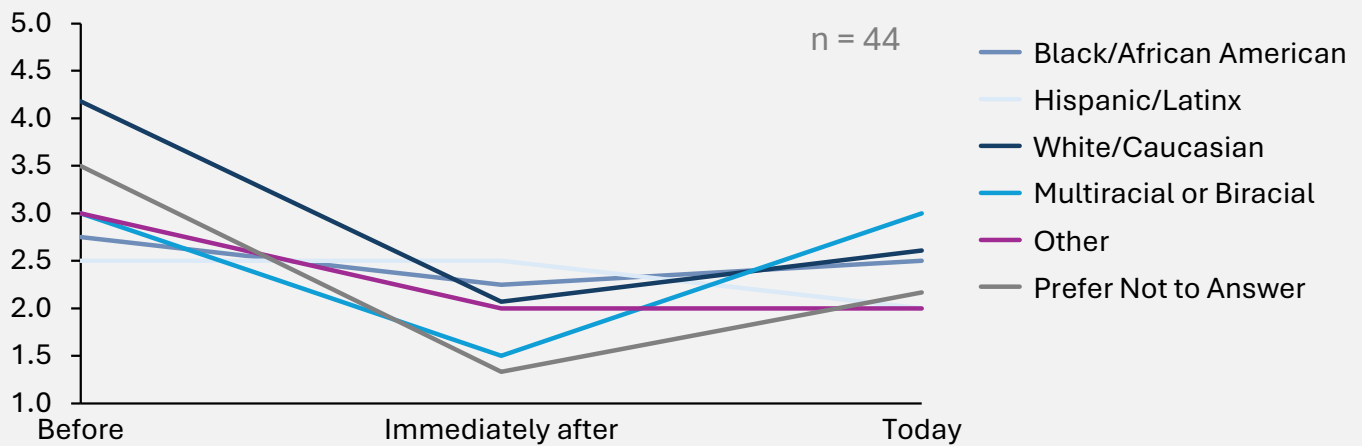
**Financial anxiety** by income level, before and after HPP (1 = best, 5 = worst)



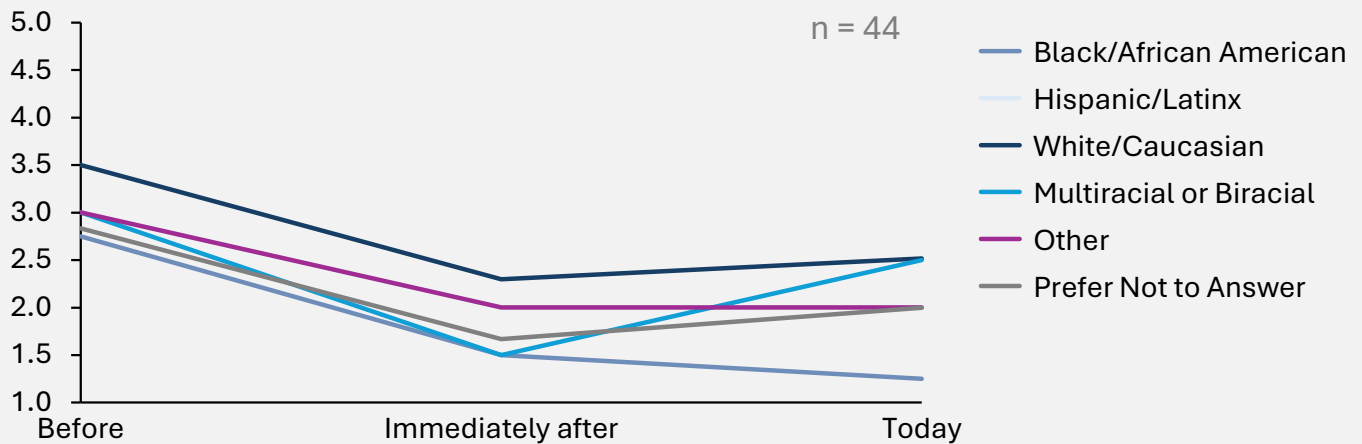
**Housing instability** by income level, before and after HPP (1 = best, 5 = worst)



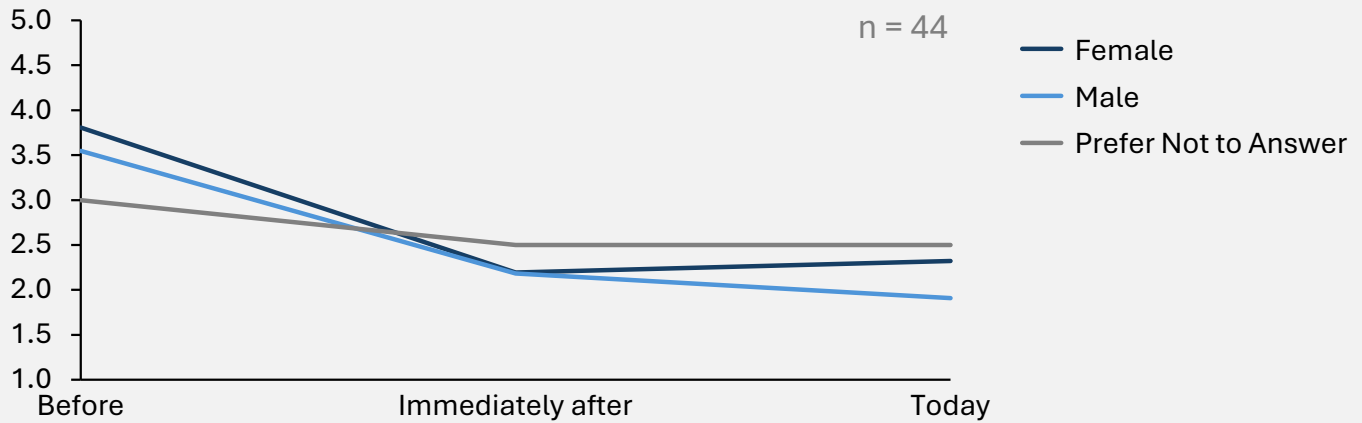
**Stress level** by income level, before and after HPP (1 = best, 5 = worst)



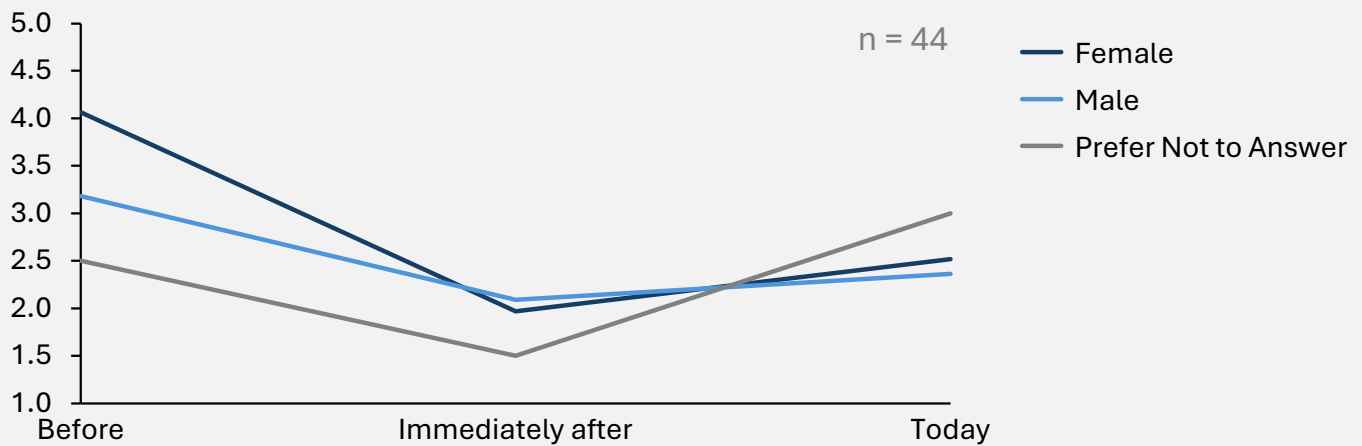
**Financial anxiety** by income level, before and after HPP (1 = best, 5 = worst)



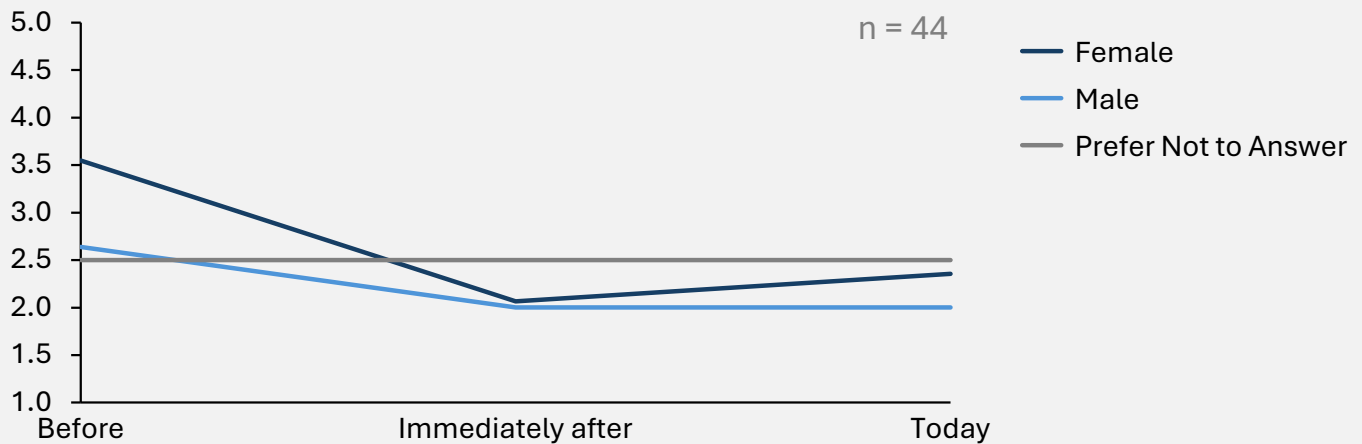
**Housing instability** by income level, before and after HPP (1 = best, 5 = worst)



**Stress level** by income level, before and after HPP (1 = best, 5 = worst)



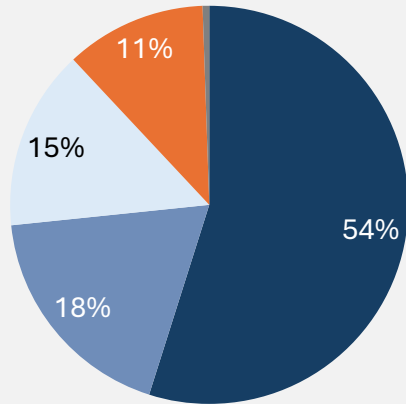
**Financial anxiety** by income level, before and after HPP (1 = best, 5 = worst)



## Appendix F: Contextual Data on HPP

### How HPP grants were used 2001-2020

- Back Rent
- Security Deposit
- Rent
- Moving Costs
- Other



### Historical facts about HPP recipients 2001-2020

**\$1,482** average award

**2.1** average household size

**44.5%** are households with children

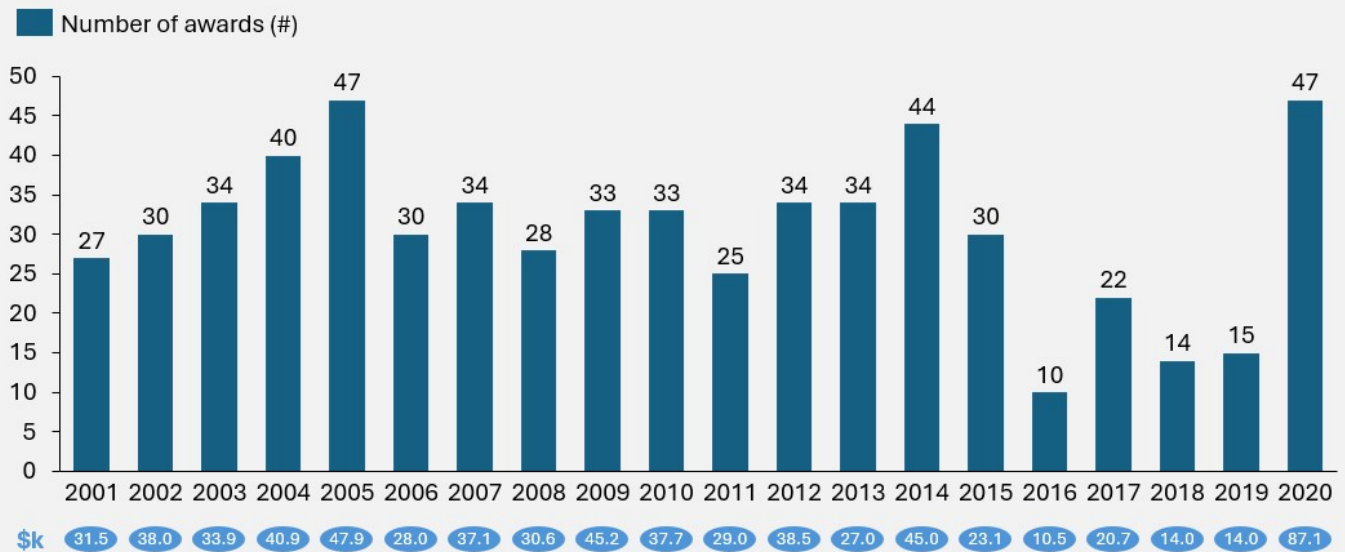
**28.5%** are households with disabled person(s)

### Key facts about recent applicants 2021-2025

**\$1,076** average monthly household income

**34.6%** have received an eviction notice

### HPP grantmaking, 2001-2020



All data on this page was provided by the Housing Corporation of Arlington (HCA) from their database of past HPP recipients and applicant information