

Vermont Housing Needs Assessment: Households with special needs and unique challenges

Several types of Vermont households may require service-enriched housing due to their unique needs. These include people with a disability, frail elders¹, people exiting the corrections system, victims of domestic violence and people living with HIV/AIDS--groups of Vermonters who may have unique needs for supportive housing conditions. Several other types of Vermont households are also currently facing complex housing challenges including residents of some mobile home parks and migrant and farm workers.

Disability Rates in Vermont

Disability	% of population age 18-64 with disability	% of population age 65+ with disability
Any disability	11.8%	33.1%
Ambulatory	4.8%	19.0%
Hearing	2.7%	15.7%
Vision	1.7%	5.3%
Cognitive	5.6%	7.9%
Self-care	1.8%	6.9%
Independent living	3.9%	12.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau: American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 2013-2017 (Table S1810)

Vermonters with a disability

*The Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice State of Vermont 2017 Update*² found that disability remains the most frequently alleged basis for housing discrimination in Vermont. Approximately 22% of adult Vermonters report having a disability.³ The principal disability among adults is an ambulatory or mobility disability, with women (12%) experiencing a higher rate than men (10%).⁴ An estimated 33% of seniors aged 65+ and 12% of younger Vermonters have at least one disability. Vermont has slightly higher rates of disability among younger people and slightly lower rates among older people than the U.S. as a whole. Nationally, 9% of adults age 18-64 and 35% age 65 or older, have a disability.⁵

Sixty-five percent of Vermonters with a disability have household incomes of less than \$25,000.⁶ This indicates the importance of public support for creating physical accessibility features and other services to adequately house this sizable portion of the lower income population. An audit found that 70% of newly constructed multi-family housing units in Vermont had minor compliance issues and 10% had significant ADA compliance issues.⁷

Frail elders

An estimated 20,000 Vermonters over the age of 75 have a disability according to Census Bureau estimates.³ With the number of households headed by someone at least 75 years old likely to increase by approximately 5% between 2020 and 2025⁸, the availability of home-based services needed by this population becomes even more paramount.

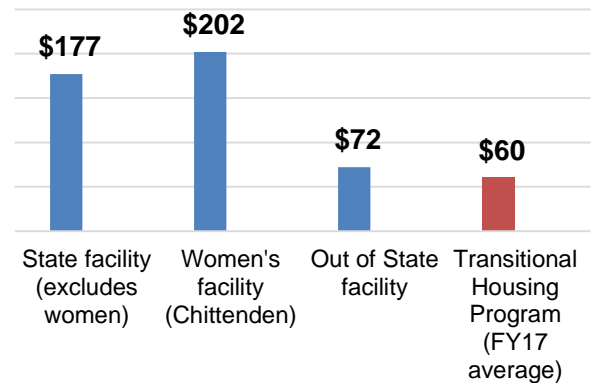
Services and facilities for frail elders and Vermonters with disabilities	
Family caregivers	74,900
Personal care and home health aides	5,626
Assisted living and residential care facilities	133
Nursing facilities	40

Source: AARP, Seven Days⁹

People exiting the corrections system

Vermont lacks sufficient housing for people leaving the corrections system.¹⁰ This results in people staying in prison longer than their minimum sentence. In 2017, the Vermont Department of Corrections (DOC) served 1,125 offenders with transitional housing assistance.¹¹ According to DOC, the count of people past their minimum sentence, but still in the corrections system due to lack of housing on January 29, 2020, was 131 inmates. DOC has estimated that the cost of transitional housing is significantly lower than continuing to house someone in prison longer than their minimum sentence.¹²

Average daily cost of housing alternatives for offenders exiting prison, 2017



Source: VT Dept. of Corrections, Transitional Housing.

Domestic & Sexual Violence Survivors

8,760 people encountering violence and abuse in 2019 were helped by a coalition of member organizations whose services include finding emergency and long-term housing.¹³ Of these, 1,376 were children and youth. Domestic violence survivors need housing that unlike homeless shelters, is not publicly identifiable and has enhanced security along with therapeutic services. The Vermont Network consists of fifteen member organizations, including Hopeworks, Safeline, Steps to End Domestic Violence, Women's Freedom Center and Pride Center of Vermont: Safespace Program.

Vermonters with HIV/AIDS

Through investments by the Vermont Agency of Human Services in affordable housing programs, 23 people with HIV/AIDS found housing through the federally-funded HUD program Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS (HOPWA) in 2018.¹⁴

Mobile Home Park Residents

Due largely to the lower cost of buying or renting a mobile home, this home type houses a sizeable portion of Vermont's lower income households. About a third of the state's mobile homes are located in 238 of Vermont's registered mobile home parks. A 2019 in-depth study¹⁵ of 52 mobile home parks in Vermont identified the following critical concerns:

- 300-400 mobile homes are at risk due to poor-quality, substandard units, half of which are located in approximately 10 parks. Because the study's sample is likely representative of the universe, the total number of homes in all Vermont mobile home parks with quality concerns is likely to be closer to 1,050-1,400.
- Four mobile home parks are located in 100-year floodplains, one is located in a 500-year floodplain and one is located in dam inundation area. These parks are in Orange, Windham & Addison counties.
- Orange, Franklin & Windsor counties contain parks in poor financial health.
- Five parks hit on a trio of low value, built prior to 1976 and risk of abandonment/unmarketability. These are in Orange, Addison, Windham and Windsor counties.
- One in ten parks has 15% or more vacant or uninhabitable lots.
- The counties with the greatest market risk are Franklin, Rutland, and Windsor.

Migrant and Farm Workers

It is difficult to precisely determine the number of migrant and farm workers working in Vermont. In 2015, the organization "Milk with Dignity" estimated that there were 1,200-1,500 migrant workers on Vermont's dairy farms¹⁶. That estimate found that 30% of those surveyed reported overcrowded housing and that a combined 35% indicated housing in need of major repairs or replacement.

1. HUD defines the frail elderly as an individual who has been determined to be deficient in three or more of the Activities of Daily Living: eating, bathing, dressing, grooming, home management, from hud.gov.
2. [Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development](#), “Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice”, 2017
3. U.S. Census Bureau: American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 2013-2017 (Table S1810)
4. [Vermont Department of Health](#), “The Health of Vermonters Living with Disabilities”, 2018
5. U.S. Census Bureau: American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 2013-2017 (Table S1810)
6. [Vermont Department of Health](#), “The Health of Vermonters Living with Disabilities”, 2018
7. [Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development](#), “Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice”, 2017
8. Claritas
9. [AARP](#), “Across the States 2018: Profile of Long-Term Services and Supports in Vermont”; [Seven Days](#): Vermont Eldercare Navigator, 2019
10. [Vermont Agency of Human Services](#), “Report to the Vermont Legislature, Act 85 Sec. 335.1: Plan to provide secure transitional housing for inmates reentering the community”, 2017
11. [Vermont Department of Health](#), Vermont Department of Corrections Transitional Housing, 2018
12. [Vermont Agency of Human Services](#), “Report to the Vermont Legislature, Act 85 Sec. 335.1: Plan to provide secure transitional housing for inmates reentering the community”, 2017
13. [Vermont Network](#), 2019 Data Snapshot
14. [Vermont Agency of Commerce & Community Development](#), 2018 Vermont Housing Budget and Investment Report
15. [Vermont Housing & Conservation Board](#) and John Ryan, Development Cycles, “Sustainability Assessment of Affordable Mobile Home Parks in Vermont”, 2019
16. [Migrant Justice](#), “Farmworkers Document Abuse & Propose Solution: Milk with Dignity”, 2015