

Justice 4 Housing



FOUNDED: 2019

CURRENT ORGANIZATION BUDGET: \$1,037,719

CONTACT: Leslie Credle, Founder and Executive Director

PHONE: 857.300.3009

EMAIL: lcredle@justice4housing.org

WEB: www.justice4housing.org

Justice 4 Housing (J4H) is a grassroots nonprofit committed to ending housing discrimination and homelessness for individuals impacted by incarceration. Existing Public Housing Authority policies unduly limit access to housing assistance among justice-involved individuals (JIIs) and their families.

These policies have a disparate impact on people of color who, despite making up only 17% of the state population, represent 50% of the incarcerated population. Policies restricting housing access are harmful, discriminatory, and based on an archaic view of the criminal justice system.

Denying access to housing makes it more likely that families will experience homelessness, unemployment, and ultimately criminal justice involvement, perpetuating a grim cycle of poverty. People who are stably housed are 61% less likely to recidivate, making communities safer and families healthier.

Investment Opportunity

Justice 4 Housing seeks a \$2M investment over the next two years to support program development and increase organizational capacity through hiring program staff who can support justice-involved individuals in program and case management services. Additionally, Justice 4 Housing seeks investment to provide sufficient equipment to meet technology needs.

Two-Year Goals

- Less than 3%-5% recidivism rate for program participants over the next 5 years
- 60% of SHARP participants will become homeowners within 3 years
- 85% of program participants in households with children in foster care will be reunited with their children within one year of reaching out for services
- Pass Legislation S878 H1362, "An Act to Secure Housing for Returning Citizens"

Ways to Invest

FINANCIAL

- \$670,000 funds additional case management and program management staff
- \$30,000 funds technology needs for staff including computers and a printer
- \$325,000 funds down payment assistance for 50 people/families
- \$80,000 funds for office lease

IN-KIND

- Nonprofit financial management support to improve existing systems
- Pro bono legal services to support justice-involved individuals facing denials of subsidized housing, public housing, and housing vouchers
- Board members
- Storage space for furniture donations

Leadership & Governance

Justice 4 Housing is led by a diverse seven-member Board of Directors who are directly affected or have loved ones who are directly affected by incarceration, housing instability, or discrimination. Their expertise includes legal services, accounting, reentry, and homeownership.

J4H was founded by Leslie Credle, Northeastern alumna and a survivor of incarceration.

JUSTICE 4 HOUSING'S MODEL



“

The work of J4H demonstrates that criminalized people are dehumanized, devalued, and traumatized by the bureaucracy and punitively of state systems. From the courtroom to the prison cell to re-entry to community, someone's incarceration actively prevents them from accessing basic needs, such as housing. J4H is teaching us that we cannot stand by that, and we need to work together to eliminate housing barriers for everyone.

”

JANHAVI MADABUSHI,
Executive Director,
Massachusetts Bail Fund

J4H is the first and only organization in Massachusetts that provides subsidy housing vouchers to formerly incarcerated people (FIP).

J4H utilizes a Housing First model and takes a multifaceted and comprehensive approach to reentry by addressing the needs of FIP and providing economic stability through **policy, advocacy, and service**.

J4H envisions a world without family separation, prisons, or wealth disparity. J4H's work relies on a three-pronged approach.

Policy

The Far From Home Report, co-authored by J4H and Harvard University's Tenant Advocacy Project, envisions a pathway to subsidized and public housing for JIIs across Massachusetts through twelve policy recommendations. J4H uses this report to educate local housing authorities and city agencies to fight for housing rights for JIIs.

Advocacy

The Hands On Defense (HOD) Model supports JIIs experiencing housing instability through direct intervention and disruption of discriminatory housing practices. HOD provides legal advocacy to JIIs who are experiencing housing discrimination by assisting in appealing housing denials, overturning evictions, and obtaining reasonable accommodations.

On a larger scale, HOD utilizes a network of Peer Leaders, who are successful J4H alumni, to educate their peers, as well as community partners, in the use of the HOD Model. Through outreach and advocacy, HOD is successfully educating the community on the rights of FIP and the decriminalization of housing. Since its inception, the HOD program has secured/preserved housing for over 50 formerly FIP and their families.

“

From homeless to hopeless, and my battle with substance abuse. Prayers to the almighty Jesus Christ for sending a true organization such as J4H to not only assist me but also guide me through this, and now who knows what rewards are in store for myself and my daughter.

”

J.S.,
J4H SHARP Participant

Key Investors

- BOREALIS FOUNDATION
- THE BOSTON FOUNDATION
- COMMONWEALTH OF MA
- MASSACHUSETTS COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT
- SCHUSTERMAN FOUNDATION

Partners

- BOSTON AND CAMBRIDGE HOUSING AUTHORITY
- CITY OF BOSTON OFFICE OF FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT
- CITY OF BOSTON OFFICE OF RETURNING CITIZENS
- JEWISH VOCATIONAL SERVICES
- PARTAKERS
- WHITTIER STREET HEALTH CARE CENTER

Service

The Stable Housing and Reintegration Program (SHARP) provides safe, stable housing and reentry services for people returning to their communities after incarceration. Having a safe place to heal from the trauma of incarceration is critical to a successful reentry and the rebuilding of one’s life.

SHARP supports J4H’s goals of family reunification and homeownership by providing stable housing to JIIs (a requirement to regain custody of children in the foster care system due to parental incarceration) and providing a pathway to homeownership. Through partnerships with Housing Authorities, including the Boston Housing Authority, SHARP participants receive housing vouchers, and a myriad of wrap-around services through community partnerships, and Justice 4 Housing provides case management, and stabilization services.

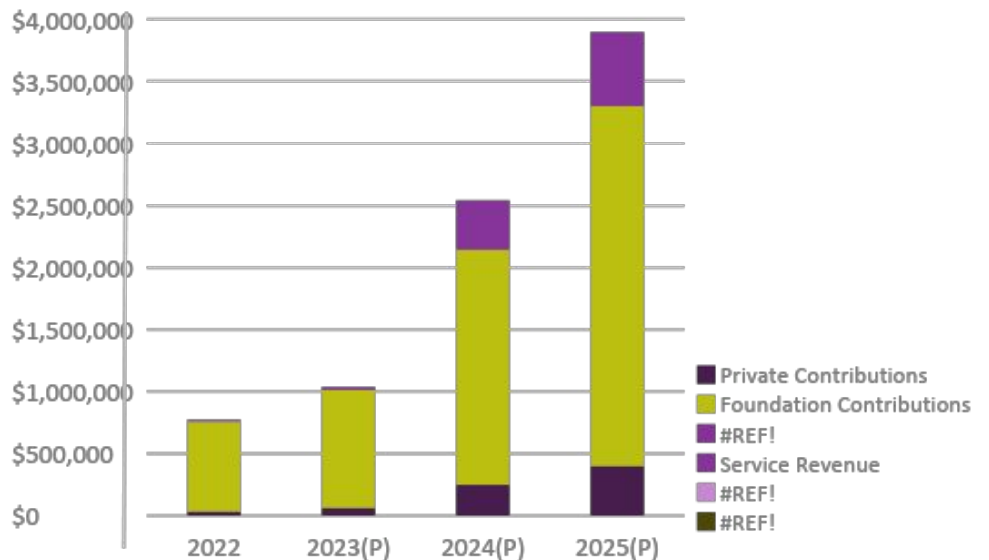
Over the past two years, SHARP has housed over 75 JIIs and maintained a recidivism rate of 0%. The SHARP program has also been 80% successful in reuniting participants with their children in the foster care system.

In the long term, SHARP not only fosters healthier and safer communities, it also creates homeownership opportunities for BIPOC FIP returning to their neighborhoods. Through a partnership with BHA, SHARP participants can apply their housing voucher subsidy to their mortgage payment and become homeowners. 50% of J4H’s clients will utilize this option and secure a path to generational wealth.

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

J4H anticipates receiving state funding this year and federal funding in 2024 and 2025. J4H has received funding from state and federal funding, individual donors, and foundations.

Revenue by Source



Success Story: Kim

One third of children in foster care are in the system due to parental incarceration. For family reunification, the Department of Children and Family Services (DCF) requires parents to have stable housing. When Kim first contacted J4H, she had lost hope and she was frustrated as her daughter kept running away from foster care because she wanted to be with her mom. Kim was homeless and she was unable to stay employed or save enough money to obtain stable housing. Once J4H accepted Kim into the SHARP program, she received a subsidy voucher and within three months, Kim was reunited with her daughter. Once Kim had stable housing, she was able to gain meaningful, steady employment through one of J4H's community partners. You can view Kim's story on Justice 4 Housing's YouTube page.



PROGRAM PERFORMANCE AND ORGANIZATIONAL HEALTH

Below is a summary of the key measures that J4H will track to demonstrate progress, create internal accountability, incorporate lessons learned, and adjust strategy as necessary.

	FY 2023	FY 2024 (P)	FY 2025 (P)
PROGRAM PERFORMANCE			
Number of People Served	310	550	890
Clients who Remain Housed	80%	85%	90%
ORGANIZATIONAL HEALTH/CAPACITY-BUILDING			
Number of staff	7	11	15
Number of board members	7	9	11
Justice Involved Education Partnerships	8	11	15
Total Revenue	\$1,037,719	\$2,542,000	\$3,900,000

SOCIAL IMPACT

Far From Home Report:

- Reduced the look back periods from 7 years and 10 years respectively for misdemeanor and felony convictions to 3 years and 5 years
- Last year HUD, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity, Demetria McCain, spoke at the report unveiling; now HUD is interested in making J4H a national model for the country

Hands on Defense

- Using the HOD Model: J4H has a 98% success rate in reversing housing assistance denials and evictions
- Rental assistance program provided \$34,300 to 15 constituents in rental assistance support

Stable Housing and Reintegration:

- Created a Q & A page for the BHA website
- 92% of clients had engaged with primary health care since enrollment
- After placed in housing, 85% were employed
- Noticeable improvements were reported by those with children in the completion of homework (78%), grades (63%), and overall physical health (55%)

INDICATOR	2023	2025
Vouchers received	310	890
Families reunited	80%	90%
Homes purchased	10	40