



EVERYBODY MATTERS

A photograph of a man and a woman outdoors, both wearing face masks. The man, on the left, is Black and wearing a light blue surgical mask and a brown button-down shirt. The woman, on the right, is white with blonde hair and wearing a yellow mask with a white daisy pattern and a matching yellow top. They are standing in front of green foliage and a wooden fence. A large, semi-transparent orange circle is overlaid on the bottom left of the image, containing the text 'together through the distance'.

together through the distance

Collective images of SMOC programs during COVID-19

SMOC and COVID-19: A Timeline and Memos to the Agency

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4, 2020, 4:15 P.M.

TO: SMOC
FROM: Jim Cuddy
SUBJECT: COVID-19 Planning Process

Hi Everyone,

I wanted to write a brief memo about the agency's approach to the COVID-19 threat. We have started a planning process. The initial phase of that planning process is prevention. The focus of prevention is on our employees, the recipients of our services and our environment. One of our particular challenges is that we have more than 125 (here I am being conservative) environments. They include office buildings, child care sites, shelters, congregate programs and housing continuums. All are characterized by a high level of activity.

We have begun the process of establishing and implementing new protocols and procedures. The entire 100+ management team is involved and engaged. This morning, we held our first major agency-wide planning session with our management staff. After the general session, we broke down into smaller working groups that are focused on our environment. Later this morning, Dr. Sam Wong, the City of Framingham's Health Director, joined us to answer questions and participate in our planning process. The target date for implementing some of our strategies is at the beginning of next week. I will brief you by email on them.

I leave you with two things. First is that we have a great team that I have full confidence in. Second, I fervently hope that our task sets do not progress from prevention to mitigation.

FRIDAY, MARCH 6, 2020, 4:39 P.M.

TO: SMOC
FROM: Jim Cuddy
SUBJECT: Week's End: The Lingering After Effects of Hurricane Katrina, the Imminent Arrival of COVID-19, A Heartfelt Thank You and an Update on Lost Souls

Excerpt: We are in the midst of preparing for the virus. I know it sounds like a cliché, but it's our responsibility to hope for the best and prepare for the worst. It's too early to tell what's going to happen, but we're fully engaged in prevention. We have so many different environments. I admit to being more than a little anxious.

MONDAY, MARCH 16, 2020, 10:15 A.M.

TO: SMOC
FROM: Jim Cuddy
SUBJECT: Update on Temporary Closing Schedule

Excerpt: As we continue to closely follow the recommendations of the CDC, the state and federal governments, and the MA Departments of Health, we have decided to implement building closures for all non-24-hour facilities in 2 phases.

We are working on the communication and messaging that will be shared with the public. You will continue to get updates as we have them.

Please note that program operations have not ceased. We will be providing our services in a remote capacity during these 2 weeks. Our 24-hour facilities and feeding programs will remain in operation. If you work at a 24-hour facility, management teams will be reviewing response plans with you.

Thank you and stay safe.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 2020. 3:56 P.M.

TO: SMOC
FROM: Jim Cuddy
SUBJECT: Update

We are gradually reopening, although many of us continue to work remotely on a part-time or full-time basis.

We met the challenges of the past five months by learning how to work remotely, by retaining our compassion and never forgetting what our mission is. We will prepare for the future, including a future that brings a second wave to Massachusetts as many of our scientists fear. We will do that by preparing for those scenarios while hoping they never come about.

Our 24-Hour Programs



"In May, we had 5 residents and 1 staff test positive for COVID. We had to do a lot of moving around for the residents and staff to be safe. Everyone pitched in, whether it was coming to shelter to feed the fish, pick up the mail, check in with each client, bring groceries and supplies for their children, or pick up hours at other shelters. I believe all of my staff have gone above and beyond during this pandemic and they continue to amaze me!"

-Rebekka H

(The shirts they are wearing say "I am an essential worker so basically I am a big deal!")



Clinton House



“With masks & distance, we can stay safe and achieve anything.”

-Jonah B

“Working with our clients has been even more meaningful during these trying times and has helped me to stay motivated”

-Peggy D

Gordon Street House



"The first couple of months were very scary and daunting. The information and guidance on COVID were changing constantly and we were all trying to put protocols and safety plans into place. We did not initially have the PPE we needed. As a director, I felt a huge responsibility to provide a safe environment for the staff, all the families and myself. We could not stop our world because COVID joined it. I will be forever grateful to my staff, the cooperation of the residents, and the support from my supervisor Leslie. Without them and my strong faith, I don't think I could have walked through the doors of Medway House every morning."

-Heidi S

Medway House





"Covid makes you look at things a little differently. You don't take everything for granted."

-Greg W

"I kept my focus on my work...and exploring my deep love of food:)"

-Nilda S

"We took advantage of the strong team we have here, leaning on one another for support, keeping each other laughing, and knocking down any obstacles in our way."

-Kimberley H



Pathways



"I had a resident's grandfather pass away and it was really hard telling the client she couldn't take an overnight and go stay with her family during this difficult time. I did offer her to take a TESI (shelter interrupt) but she didn't have a place to stay for few day or weeks while all the arrangements were taking place.. This happened right at the beginning and we couldn't risk her bringing the virus to other families. It's been about 2 months now and it stills bother me. In the 20 years of working for the agency by far this is the most sad and difficult thing I had to do."

-Glenda J



Pearl Street House



"With all that has been going on in the world, the best support at work is staff support. If anyone is having a bad day and feeling down, another staff will lift you up with encouragement and a listening ear. We all need a boost now and then to get through this and that's what we do for each other: support, kindness and a listening ear when needed"

-Janice D

Willis House



“Watching people who literally have nothing, smile every day and help one another and thank us for the care we provide...that is very motivating. We had more than 140 homeless individuals staying with us every night when the pandemic began. Within weeks we had dozens of clients test positive and seven of our staff. Everyone was scared...we had all been exposed and PPE was hard to come by. We were able to lean on one another and support each other.

I found masks down in RI and drove to get them so all staff and clients were protected, another staff member brought in gloves she had at home. We all called and texted one another to check in and lend an empathetic ear. And our director supported every one of us.”

-Nahani M

25 Queen St



"We came, we conquered, we kicked butt!"

- Gwen T

Roland's House



“Having Shadows open all day due to Covid 19 was at first a challenge. We needed staffing and the residents were less than enthusiastic. Over time we all became closer. Staff and residents had more time to get to know one another. I am so grateful for the staff. They stepped up and have met the challenges.”

-Jacquelyn P

Shadows



"Quarantining can be isolating, but the conversations I have with my clients on a daily basis really help make the time pass swimmingly"

-Mackenzie D

Lowell Transitional Living Center



“What keeps us motivated - the determination, courage and strength of those we serve.”

-Alison G

“You are making recovery history”

-Michelle F

Rhodes House



"I found a purpose in life helping others. This gets me through hard times. I am forever grateful for being given this opportunity."

-James M

"Knowing that I am helping other people keeps me motivated."

-Paul P

Sage House



“This work has very few daily rewards so it is profound for me when I am reminded of the huge impact we have on others as some clients who have left the program, whether graduated or not, reach out to me to remind of something small I might’ve said or done with them which has impacted them as they continue to fight for alignment, love, and enlightenment against this nondiscriminatory disease. It is what keeps me going.”

-Sonya C

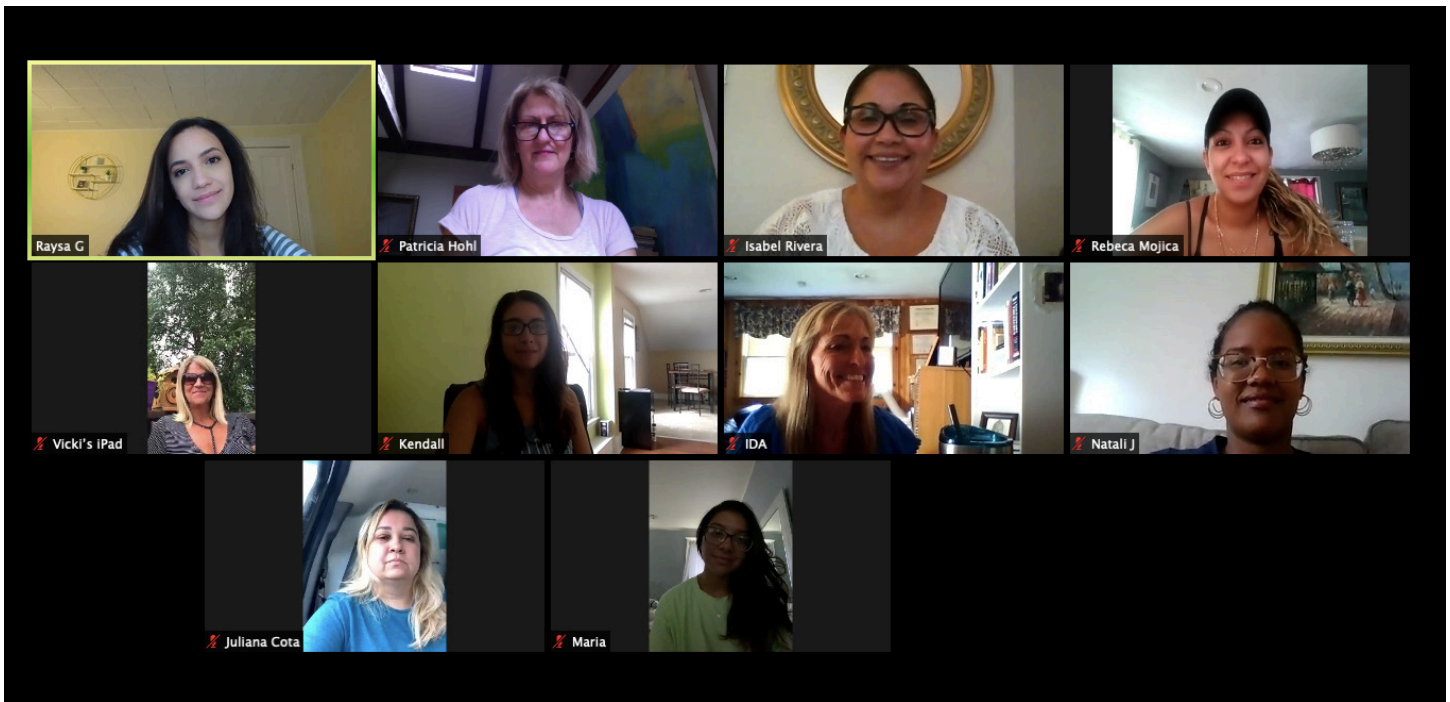
Serenity House



“How did we get through this tough time? The staff never complained or were concerned about their own health. We just knew that we were needed. We took the advice and council from administration, cleaned regularly, did shelter in place, wore masks, took temperatures, washed hands frequently, did testing for entire shelter. Staff brought in games and books to keep the guests busy. We became a closer team after this experience!!”

-Reneae H

Turning Point



“Being able to continue to provide services to clients is a blessing despite this pandemic. I am grateful for that. I am glad to know that we are still making a difference to our clients. I am grateful to see how our clients have overcome so many obstacles and are working everyday to better themselves.”

-Natali J

“I am very grateful to work with the clients as with the technology we can continue providing quality services. It is critical to work with the clients during this difficult time. Be there as a support, someone that listens, doesn't judge, validates their feelings and go the extra mile to meet the clients' needs.”

-Isabel R

Voices Against Violence



“Things that keep me going include seeing our residents continue to grow in their recovery and working with such caring and thoughtful people. I had a birthday in July. Some of my favorite gifts include the customized masks I’ve received from my co-workers-- including one with my name in rhinestones and another made with pictures of my cat’s face.”

- Linda G

COE House



"The staff at Open Pantry's Teen Parent Program work so well together as a team. They trust each other and always have each other to lean on. It is a challenging job, but they do their jobs with the utmost professionalism and dedication. There is no beginning or end to their workday, and they never complain.

They treat each resident with respect and dignity. They go above and beyond their job descriptions. Despite their fears, they came to work every day during the state shut down. I am extremely proud of my staff, they are the glue that holds the program together."

- Nicole L

Teen Parent Program

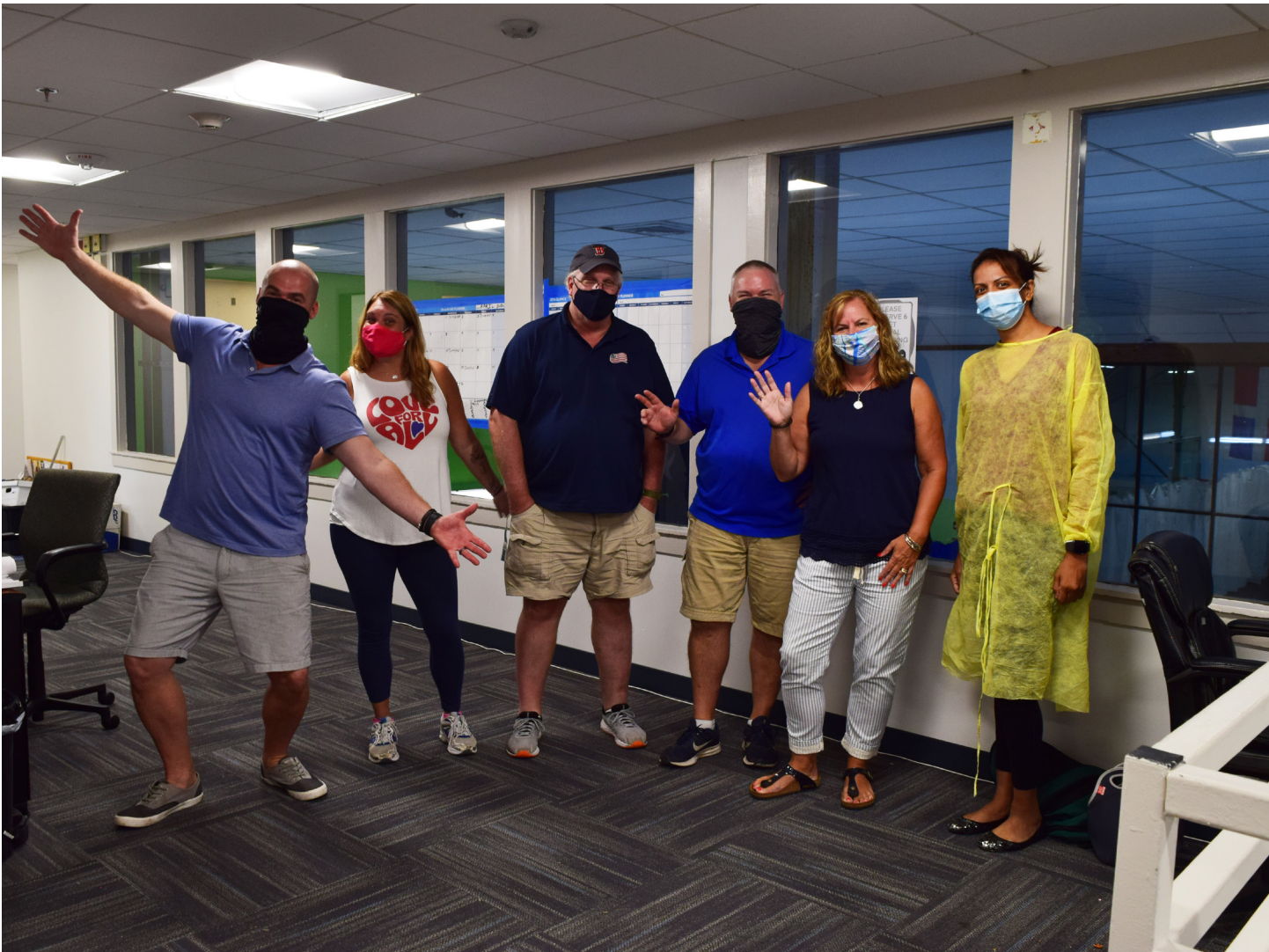
Our Service Programs



“Everyday I’m engaged in a miracle I don’t even recognize. On a daily basis, we deal with addiction, alcoholism, mental health issues, DV, homelessness, and much more... if our clients wake up tomorrow it’s a tiny miracle! We don’t win all the battles but when we do, we celebrate them.”

-Lisa M

Common Ground Resource Center





"We work with families in need. Families who are new to our country, parents who might be going through very difficult times, or families who are temporarily facing losing their jobs, health insurance, and income. We work with children who would otherwise not receive regular meals, become school ready, or receive the focus of attention of so many skilled staff members as we have at SMOC. This program is not just a job. It is a passion of helping others. We certainly don't work here for the money. We work here because we make a difference."

-Carolyn M

Head Start/Child Care



"Working with this population is not always the easiest at times, when you add other factors like Covid on top of it, it makes it even harder. The world doesn't stop and we need to keep pushing. There are still people who need help and being in this field means that we don't stop either. Even if it's the smallest movement forward and may not seem like much it makes a huge impact in the lives of our clients."

-Sammy R

Greater Worcester Housing Connection



“People who are in recovery today have less support available to them. Being able to be a consistent, reliable source of support and encouragement, as well as a channel to access additional resources needed to achieve lasting recovery, is what keeps me motivated during this time.”

-Kevin S

BHCP



“Laughter heals all wounds and that is the first thing that we all have in common.”

-Nicole P



Framingham Recovery Support Center





"I love my job because I know that I am helping people every day with the work I do. It's been scary working through the pandemic but I truly believe that I am making a difference in people's lives. I feel great satisfaction at the end of each workday."

-Yolanda S

Open Pantry Community Services



“I have an incredible team; they work hard and are dedicated. They consistently step up to help wherever needed and the community needed them. They have delivered meals to families and individuals twice a week for five months; it allowed us to stay connected in the community but also as a team. “

-Maria L

Meal Delivery Program



“During the early months of the pandemic my client was struggling with his addiction and unfortunately died. His sister was devastated and asked if she could talk to someone. I contacted her and through the use of Zoom she became my client.

She has used our telehealth therapy sessions to grieve, to express her sadness and to honor his life and passing in a time where the pandemic does not allow for the typical funeral.

Although we are separated by the computer screen, I am able to pick up on her energy, her body language and to give her the emotional support that is needed to move through the grieving process. Many times she has stated that it feels as if we are sitting side by side and she feels the positive energy in the room.”

-Dixie L

SBH Clinical Team



"The last few months have brought on a rollercoaster of emotions. But knowing I was able to fully serve our WIC Participants and keep my family safe at the same time brought a sense of peace in a world of chaos. I think our Participants helped me just as much as I helped them. The phone appointments and the friendly chats were much more than nutrition counseling, they were filled with conversations, mutual support and a bridge to the outside world."

-Ann T

WIC Team



"FES had to adjust working with clients remotely. Not having access to our documents and office supplies and support was definitely challenging. Yet we were able to adjust, learn new skills, be more organized and help guide our clients in a way that we never thought we would be able to. We have become stronger and more resilient during these difficult times."

-Lo-Ammi R

Family Emergency Services



"Fuel Assistance at SMOC has adjusted to the working conditions due to the Covid 19 situation. I really appreciate that SMOC has created a schedule for us to work from home and also be in the office on a very limited basis for our safety. It works. We are accessible to our clients just as we were when we were in the office. We are connected via email and phones. We are making it work during this difficult period. We are here to help our clients with their needs and even though we don't see them in person anymore we are still very connected and committed to providing the service we always have."

-Jill M

Fuel Assistance



“It’s an incredibly demanding job but gratifying to assist people with something as fundamental as housing, especially with the rapid changes and insecurities caused by the pandemic. The program is able to work thanks to dedicated teamwork between our inspections team, billing specialist, move coordinator, quality control specialist and the program reps.”

-Grace O

Rental Assistance Program

SMOC Housing



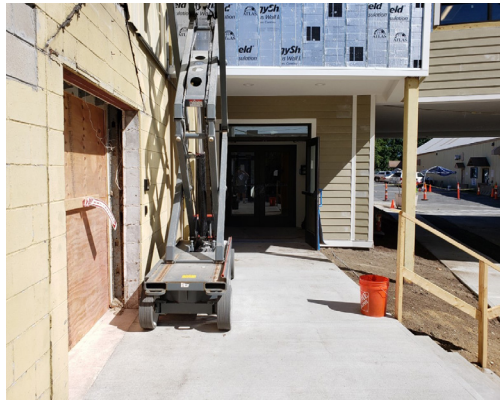




"2020 took a 365 turn on my life! Working during this pandemic was more challenging at the beginning. Now I feel like I have adjusted my life around "the new normal." During these difficult times I have been able to help out a lot of my tenants with different resources such as rental arrears, SNAP, unemployment, etc. I continue to protect myself while working or in general and hope one day this is all over and we all go back to our old normal lives."

-Azucena O

SMOC Housing



“The FCCC project is an important milestone in SMOC’s ongoing commitment to providing opportunity in our community. We are so excited to have built a welcoming place that will house diverse programming for all.”

-Matt L

Framingham Community and Cultural Center Renovation

Our Support Teams



“Do the best you can until you know better. Then, when you know better, do better.”

-Maya Angelou, via Katie T

Human Resources



“The biggest motivating factor that I have seen is an understanding, by everyone on the team, that we are the last/only line of defense. Many things fall on us and if we fail, people might get hurt. We’re here to help, not hurt, and everyone understands that.”

And a funny story: receiving an emergency maintenance request with the message: “My Son Stuffed An Entire Roll Of Toilet Paper In The Toilet. Need Someone To Come Over And Unstuff/Unclog Toilet.”

-David D

Maintenance



“For me, I feel how much we have kept in touch as a team through this has really helped me stay hopeful and focused. I look forward to speaking with Rohey and Max every week. I always get a good laugh or an unexpected smile.”

-Kassandra K

“Talent wins games, but teamwork and intelligence win championships”

- Michael Jordan, via Max A

Planning and Compliance



"It's a joy working with organizations and individuals in our community who have stepped up to support SMOC's critically important work during COVID. We are proud to support the programs and staff members who have persevered throughout the pandemic!"

-Esther P

Resource Development



"The team has really risen to face the challenges of COVID and has proven that even in times of difficulty we can pull through to get the job done. While much of what A&F works on involves computer and data systems, we have not been interrupted all that much by COVID and not being in the office. I'm thankful to my team for performing so well remotely."

-Mike H

Admin and Finance



Our Muralist

Art, Equality, Justice, and Peace







A D D E N D U M

A D D E N D U M

O U R 2 4 - H O U R P R O G R A M S

Clinton House

Clinton House Family Shelter in Framingham has eight rooms for homeless families. It was the very first property SMOC purchased back in 1996.

Gordon Street House

Gordon Street Family Shelter is a congregate emergency shelter for 12 homeless families located in Framingham.

Medway House

Medway House Family Shelter provides congregate emergency shelter for twelve families. Medway House is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year and continues to receive loyal support from the Medway community.

Pathways

Pathways Family Shelter in Framingham has thirteen rooms for homeless families.

Pearl Street House

Pearl Street Family Shelter is a congregate shelter in Framingham that serves twelve homeless families.

Willis House

Willis House is a congregate family shelter in Hudson that houses 14 homeless families.

25 Queen St

25 Queen Street is a 40-bed emergency shelter (which consistently operates above capacity) for single unaccompanied adults with an additional 25 SRO units for single adult men. It is co-located with the GWHC's triage & assessment center to ensure clients are linked to housing and supportive services.

Roland's House

Roland's House is a temporary emergency shelter in Marlborough for 18 single adult men in recovery from substance use.

Shadows

The Shadows/Meadows program, located in Ashland, serves homeless single women. Shadows is a 15-bed emergency shelter and Meadows offers 10 transitional beds.

Lowell Transitional Living Center

LTLC is a 90-bed emergency shelter serving homeless single men and women. The program also includes 12 SRO units, a soup kitchen, and case management and referrals to supportive services for clients.

A D D E N D U M

O U R 2 4 - H O U R P R O G R A M S

Rhodes House

Rhodes House is a residential recovery program located in Millbury for up to 27 women struggling with substance use.

Sage House

Sage House is a residential treatment program located in Framingham. It houses single male adults with children and couples with children who are dealing with chronic substance use problems.

Serenity House

Serenity House is a residential program in Framingham that provides treatment and case management services for up to 35 women, including up to four slots for pregnant and post-partum women.

Turning Point

Turning Point is an 18-bed emergency shelter in Framingham that serves single/unaccompanied adult males.

Voices Against Violence

VAV provides free and confidential services including a 24-hour hotline, crisis intervention, confidential short term emergency shelter, counseling and support groups, information and referrals, and medical, legal and criminal justice advocacy to victims and survivors of sexual and domestic violence in the MetroWest area.

COE House

COE House is a 16-bed co-occurring enhanced residential recovery program in Framingham for women.

Teen Parent Program

The Teen Parent Program (TPP), a program of Open Pantry Community Services, is a residential program in Springfield for teenage parents and their children who are pregnant and/or parenting and in need of a safe place to live.

A D D E N D U M

O U R S E R V I C E P R O G R A M S

Common Ground Resource Center

Common Ground is the hub of SMOC's housing and shelter services for single adults in Metrowest, providing a single point of entry into all SMOC's emergency, transitional and sober housing.

SMOC Head Start

SMOC Head Start is a federal program designed to support low-income families by providing free preschool during the school year. SMOC Head Start prepares children for Kindergarten with a focus on school readiness. The program provides a variety of trainings, resources, and opportunities for participation for parents.

SMOC Child Care

SMOC Child Care provides quality, full-day/ full-year; center-based and family child care, early education and care services to children ages infant through the 5th grade. Tuition rates are affordable and there are subsidies and vouchers available for low-income families, and subsidized slots available for homeless families and families involved with the Department of Social Services.

Greater Worcester Housing Connection

The Greater Worcester Housing Connection Triage & Assessment Center in Worcester helps connect homeless and low-income clients to housing and supportive services, such as primary and behavioral health care, employment training and job search, and access to benefits.

BHCP

Behavioral Health Partners of MetroWest provides care coordination to the most vulnerable and medically complex MassHealth members. Working with the Accountable Care Organizations and primary care practices, BHCP ensures that during this pandemic, clients have access to the medication, food, and healthcare they need.

Framingham Recovery Support Center

The Framingham Recovery Support Center is a 'recovery-oriented sanctuary' anchored in the heart of downtown Framingham, where peer-to-peer recovery support services rely on a volunteer/ member base to deliver services that are responsive to the recovery community needs assessment.

Open Pantry Community Services

OPCS is a multiservice agency in Springfield featuring a food pantry, soup kitchen, case management and referrals, a teen parent program, and more.

Meal Delivery Program

SMOC created a meal delivery program during COVID-19 to provide ready-made meals to food insecure families and individuals in the Framingham area, funded by grants and donations given specifically for COVID-19 relief.

A D D E N D U M

O U R S E R V I C E P R O G R A M S

SBH Clinical Team

SMOC Behavioral Healthcare (SBH) is the platform for all of SMOC's mental health and substance use services and includes two outpatient clinics with a menu of outpatient and in-home services for individual and families, group offerings, a mix of residential recovery programs, specialized services for targeted populations and a new Recovery Support Center in Framingham.

WIC Team

WIC is a nutrition program with the goal of keeping pregnant and breastfeeding women, new moms, and kids under age 5 healthy. During the pandemic, WIC has shifted its service delivery model to continue serving clients remotely.

Family Emergency Services

The FES Division includes Scattered Sites and Congregate shelters, the Housing Search team, and the HCEC Team, providing a full cycle of housing support and services. FES assists families at risk of homelessness by offering homelessness prevention programs and shelter diversion. FES provides case managements and housing search assistance to homeless families in our scattered sites or congregate shelters, to ensure that upon exiting shelter, our families find safe and stable housing. As families exit our shelters, we provide Stabilization services, to ensure that all families have the support they will need during the first 12 months after experiencing homelessness.

Fuel Assistance

Fuel Assistance is a program designed to assist households with heating expenses between November and April. Those that qualify may also be eligible for energy conservation services, appliance replacement, and heating system replacement and repair.

Rental Assistance Program

The Rental Assistance Program (RAP) handles over 2,000 Section 8 and MRVP vouchers for tenants all around Middlesex County. The program reps are tasked with regularly screening their household income, determining rents, processing moves to new units and a variety of other changes that may affect their households.

A D D E N D U M

S M O C H O U S I N G

SMOC Housing

SMOC Housing provides subsidized and non-subsidized transitional and permanent housing opportunities for individuals and families including emergency programs, housing first programs, service-enriched housing, and permanent affordable housing across SMOC's footprint.

Framingham Community and Cultural Center Renovation

The Framingham Community & Cultural Center (FCCC), located on Roxanna Street in Framingham, is a new SMOC program in development that will serve the youth, families and parents of South Framingham and surrounding communities with cultural and enrichment programs. Facility renovations are underway that will reshape the buildings to meet the community's needs.

A D D E N D U M

O U R S U P P O R T T E A M S

Human Resources

The department manages employee recruiting, hiring and training, and processes payroll and benefits. With the new HR hotline, the department has been very customer service oriented to allow all staff to have a direct pipeline into solving their issues.

Maintenance

The department ensures the functionality, safety and efficiency of SMOC's buildings, grounds and extensive real estate portfolio, including operations and maintenance. It provides on-call after-hour services to SMOC properties to address safety and building issues. Maintenance also provides yard care to SMOC properties as well as snow removal in the winter season.

Planning and Compliance

The department oversees functions related to community assets and needs assessments, strategic planning, program development, client data management, outcomes reporting and evaluation, data systems training, general compliance matters and quality assurance policies and procedures. They work with all programs and maintain relationships with private, state and federal funding and oversight agencies.

Resource Development

Resource Development supports SMOC's mission through private, corporate and foundation funding and events in support of SMOC programs. The department also expands local support through education and forming organizational partnerships to better serve the community.

Admin and Finance

SMOC's Finance department handles all budgeting and financial reporting for the agency, including audits, accounts payable and expense processing.



