



Erik Sievers, MSW/MBA Executive Director

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Hiawatha Bluffs Living and Bluffview Board and Lodge: Regional Housing Programs

Both Programs: 24 hour/ staff, 7 days a week, up to 30 rate 2 beds

- Assist individuals with serious mental health conditions with or without substance abuse needs, who are experiencing barriers to securing stable community living.
- Provide tenancy supports to assist an individual with finding their own home, landlord negotiation, securing furniture and household supplies, understanding and maintaining tenant responsibilities, conflict negotiation, and budgeting and financial education.
- Provide supportive services to assist with basic living and social skills, household management, monitoring of overall well-being, and problem solving.
- Provide employment support to assist with maintaining or increasing employment, increasing earnings, understanding and utilizing appropriate benefits and services, improving physical or mental health, moving toward self-sufficiency, and achieving personal goals.
- Provide health supervision services to assist in the preparation and administration of medications
- Available for individuals who are residents of Winona, Wabasha, Goodhue, Fillmore, Houston, Steele, Dodge, Waseca, Mower and Olmsted Counties
- Rely on a variety of grant funding that has become more competitive each year.
- Goal is to help people become as self-sufficient as possible.

3 other Board and Lodge Settings: One since 1980's; up to 23 rate 2 beds

- All three additional settings have up to 23 individuals in each of the settings receiving the above supports and services beyond bed and meals.

In addition to housing, programs provide:

- Telehealth
- Adult Rehabilitative Mental Health Skills (ARMHS)
- Case Management , Medication Management, Peer Specialist
- Transportation Service
- Crisis Intervention



**Houston County
Public Health &
Human Services**

304 S. Marshall St., Room 104

Caledonia, Minnesota 55921

Phone: (507) 725-5811

Fax: (507) 556-3990

www.co.houston.mn.us

Representative Joe Schomacker, Co-Chair
Representative Mohamud Noor, Co-Chair
Human Services Finance & Policy Committee
Minnesota State House of Representatives
March 14, 2025

Dear Co-Chair, Schomacker, Co-Chair Noor and Committee Members:

On behalf of Houston County Public Health & Human Services, I am sending this letter to share the importance of investing in Housing with Supports for adults with mental health needs in Southeastern Minnesota. **We ask the Committee and the Legislature support funding to help these housing programs be sustainable by supporting House File 1358.**

Houston County has enjoyed a collaborative relationship with Hiawatha Valley Mental Health Center (HVMHC) for many years. Service and housing options for people with mental health needs are very limited in a small rural border county like Houston County. Therefore, the economic viability of the programs HVMHC provides for us is of critical importance.

Many people with mental health and substance use conditions lose access to housing because of poverty and disruption of personal relationships related to their disability, and between 20 and 33% of homeless people have serious mental illnesses. The housing programs offered by Hiawatha Valley Mental Health Center, based in Winona, provide a regional solution to many. Benefits of current programming for those who live in these settings include:

- Enhanced support and care
- Specialized programs for complex conditions
- Building independence and life skills
- Creating a Community of Support
- Access to continuous healthcare and treatment
- Stabilizing environment reduces hospitalization

Please help us move this recommended investment forward – this is foundational to solving our behavioral health and housing crisis. If you would like additional information, please feel free to reach out to me.

Sincerely,

John Puleasa, Director
Houston County Public Health & Human Services



**WABASHA COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

Wabasha County Services Building
411 Hiawatha Drive E.
Wabasha, MN 55981-1573
Telephone: 651-565-3351
Toll Free: 888-315-8815
FAX: 651-565-3084
EOE/ADA/AA

Representative Joe Schomacker, Co-Chair
Representative Mohamud Noor, Co-Chair
Human Services Finance & Policy Committee
Minnesota State House of Representatives

March 14, 2025

Dear Co-Chair, Schomacker, Co-Chair Noor, and Committee Members:

On behalf of Wabasha County Social Services, I am sending this letter to share the importance of investing in Housing with Supports for adults with mental health needs in Southeastern Minnesota. **We ask the Committee and the Legislature support funding to help these housing programs be sustainable by supporting House File 1358.**

Many people with mental health and substance use conditions lose access to housing because of poverty and disruption of personal relationships related to their disability, and between 20 and 33% of homeless people have serious mental illnesses. The housing programs offered by Hiawatha Valley Mental Health Center, based in Winona, provide a regional solution to many. Benefits of current programming for those who live in these settings include:

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Wabasha is a small, rural county with very limited resources to serve those suffering from mental health and substance use conditions while also facing homelessness. Our social workers rely on these programs as they are a lifesaving stepping stone out of homelessness for these individuals. This helps ensure safety and keeps these individuals connected to their support networks within our community, allowing them to focus on their individual recovery.

Please help us move this recommended investment forward - this is foundational to solving our housing behavioral health crisis.

Sincerely,

John Dahlstrom, Social Services Director



**Administration
Department**
County Administrator
Maureen L. Holte

Providing Effective Efficient Government

202 West Third Street

Winona, Minnesota 55987

Phone (507) 457-6353

Fax (507) 454-9366

March 14, 2025

Representative Joe Schomacker, Co-Chair
Representative Mohamud Noor, Co-Chair
Human Services Finance & Policy Committee
Minnesota State House of Representatives

Dear Co-Chair, Schomacker, Co-Chair Noor and Committee Members:

On behalf of Winona County Health and Human Services, I am sending this letter to share the importance of investing in Housing with Supports for adults with mental health needs in Southeastern Minnesota. **We ask the Committee and the Legislature to support funding to help these housing programs be sustainable by supporting House File 1358.**

Hiawatha Valley Mental Health Center (HVMHC) provides person-centered services to adults with lived experience and excels at meeting the needs of the whole person. HVMHC housing settings provide a home for individuals that may have otherwise been unhomed, living in unstable and/or unsafe situations or facing eviction due to their needs not being well supported. HVMHC provides the opportunity to access trained mental health staff 24/7, advocacy support for renters' responsibility and renters' rights, assistance with food nutrition and preparation, etc. The support provided by HVMHC enhances the opportunity for members of our community to achieve success and strives toward increased independence in this aspect of life when the person is ready to reach those next milestones-at their pace, with the support of HVMHC if needed and desired.

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County Board of Commissioners

First District
Christine M. Meyer

Second District
Dwayne A. Voegeli

Third District
Joshua D. Elsing

Fourth District
Gregory D. Olson

Fifth District
Marcia L. Ward

- Creating a Community of Support
- Access to continuous healthcare and treatment
- Stabilizing the environment reduces hospitalization

Please help us move this recommended investment forward - this is foundational to solving our housing behavioral health crisis.

Sincerely,

Signed by:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Maureen L. Holte". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

AFE1CD51280345D...

Maureen L. Holte
County Administrator
hlh