

# Minnesota Homeless Service Providers Receive Supplies to Prevent and Control COVID-19

## Funding for homeless service providers' COVID-19 response

In 2023, funding from the American Rescue Plan Act gave MDH approximately **\$500,000 to directly support providers for COVID-related activities by July 2024.**

## Homeless service providers identified priorities

Through three focus groups in 2023, 16 providers shared their funding priorities with MDH. **Funding priorities included hazard pay, direct payment to clients, vaccinations, offsite isolation, and planning/capacity building.** Shelter providers indicated that they wanted the funding to go towards activities and expenses that were **sustainable, equitably distributed, and useful beyond COVID.**

## Supplies support planning and capacity building

Service providers and MDH prioritized **planning and capacity building that supports future response to infectious disease outbreaks in sustainable, flexible, and equitable ways.** In support of these goals, providers were invited to order durable supplies to support COVID-19 response in their facilities. MDH purchased and shipped items directly to providers to minimize burden on providers.

## Available items

- **HEPA air purifier** – To use in common areas to help reduce airborne infectious particles.
- **Dorm-style refrigerator** – To support in-room dining, medication storage, and other needs of individuals in isolation.
- **Portable air conditioner** – To provide a comfortable space for individuals in isolation.
- **iPad** – To support virtual programming, telehealth visits, communication with MDH, and COVID-19 reporting.
- **Power banks** – To charge tablets or mobile phones while individuals are in isolation.

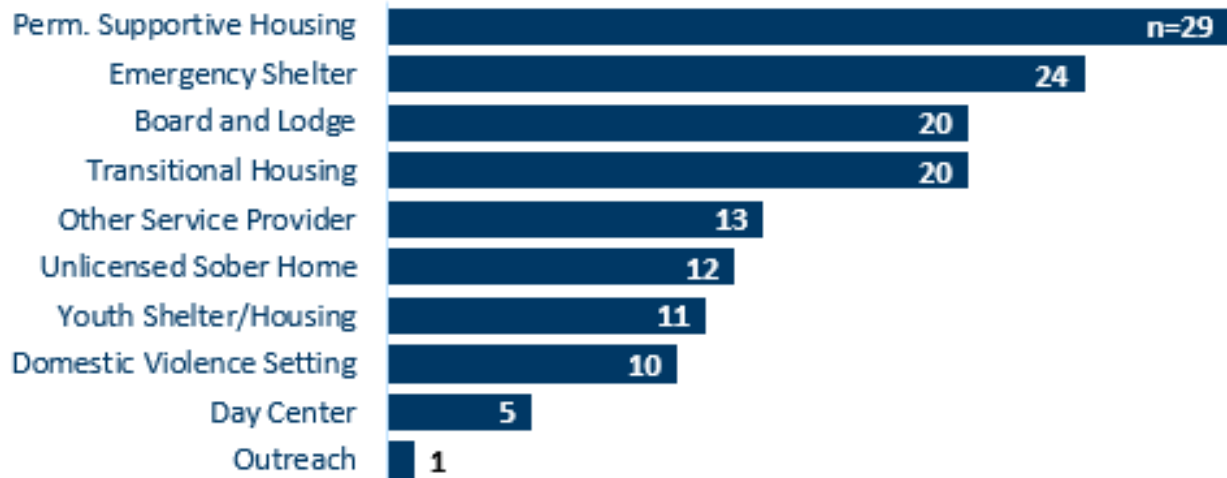
**A total of 1,799 items were distributed to 145 homeless service providers across 32 Minnesota counties.**

## Over 100 homeless service providers requested supplies

MDH received 110 order forms representing **145 providers.** Smaller, permanent supportive and emergency shelters were the most common sites to request supplies.

MDH developed a rubric based on a providers' average daily population to determine the number of each item a provider could request.

## Types of homeless service providers participating in the project



97% of survey respondents said it was “easy” or “very easy” to order supplies.

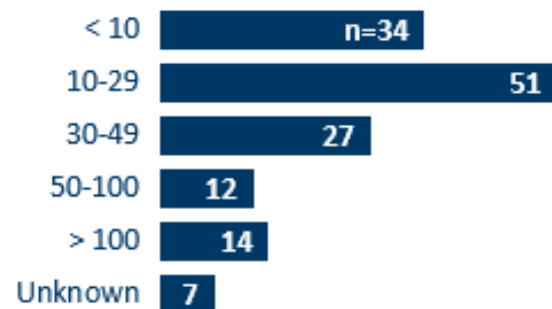
### Providers shared that the items enable clients to maintain social distance

Two small, transitional housing shelters reported that the **air purifiers improved conditions for residents**, especially those with allergies, and **created a safer, more comfortable environment for new arrivals**. Another shelter used the iPads to help **residents continue treatment remotely** when sick and **placed fridges on each floor** to support quarantine measures.

*“This program is such a blessing...Thank you for being so thoughtful and collaborative in reallocating these funds to durable, useful products our guests can utilize immediately.”*

*- Emergency shelter provider*

### Average daily population of participants



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