

## **Metro supportive housing services fund: Background**

In May 2020, voters across greater Portland approved Measure 26-210 to fund services that help end homelessness and expand emergency options like shelter. Voters supported the creation and funding of this program because individual and community well-being are at stake, and both are important to the success of the greater Portland region.

In the past, each county addressed homelessness in their own way, with a variety of funding sources. Metro now coordinates with all three counties to expand services, increase effectiveness and address local needs. Metro distributes funds to the counties based on the amount of revenue expected to be raised in each. The program improves access to services for communities of color, people with disabilities, people with low incomes and others most affected by homelessness.

The program is built on the philosophy that housing is a human right. It uses best practices such as housing first, because everyone can better address life's challenges, maintain wellness and thrive when they have housing. The program funds more culturally specific services to decrease experiences of racism and help people of color get the support they need.

### **The program is built to help people stay housed**

People struggle to get and keep housing for many reasons: racism, health challenges, job loss, wages that don't keep up with the cost of living and other systemic factors. The services available through this program help people make positive changes in their lives and make our communities safer and more equitable. These include:

- Emergency services such as outreach and shelter
- Placement into housing and help paying rent (short and long term)
- Advocacy and case management
- Services in the areas of mental health, physical health, language and cultural needs, education, employment, addiction and recovery, tenant rights and others.

## **Program principles emphasize humanity, innovation, transparency and outcomes**

The ballot measure voters passed included principles that inform the supportive housing services program:

- Strive toward stable housing for all
- Lead with racial equity and work toward racial justice
- Fund proven solutions
- Leverage existing capacity and resources
- Center the expertise of communities of color and people who have experienced homelessness
- Learn from local experience and connect efforts across the region
- Innovate: evolve systems to improve
- Demonstrate outcomes and impact with stable housing solutions
- Ensure transparent oversight and accountability

