

Salvation Army housing programs give homeless a clean slate

By Abbie Perry

Annually, the Salvation Army extends its mission of “doing the most good” to approximately [25 million Americans](#). In Omaha, Nebraska, the Salvation Army’s presence is no different.

When it comes to the Salvation Army’s housing programs, the goal is to bring in the homeless, help them find stability and get them to where they can live by themselves, says Theresa Vaughn, community and renaissance housing director.

The Salvation Army has two types of housing programs to help the homeless get back on their feet: transitional and permanent supportive.

Renaissance Housing, the transitional housing program, is based out of the Salvation Army’s Heritage Place building.

Vaughn says, currently The Salvation Army provides the only six-month transitional housing program in Omaha.

Renaissance Housing consists of 33 units and are either studio, two-bedroom or three-bedroom apartments. Both individuals and families can apply for the program.

By signing a six-month lease with the Salvation Army’s transitional housing program, clients can rebuild their rental history and have a better chance of finding a place to stay after leaving the program.

Throughout their time in the program, the Salvation Army provides as much general assistance to clients as possible, Vaughn says. They receive assistance with case management, Social Security and healthcare.

“Whatever they need, we do all of it,” Vaughn says. “We kind of make it so when they transition out, they’ll be able to maintain independent living.”

If clients transition out and follow through with guidelines set up by the program, the Salvation Army will also provide aftercare for as long as they need, Vaughn says.

The Salvation Army will provide resources as long as necessary to help the homeless. In fact, its permanent supportive housing allows people to live there as long as they need, Vaughn says.

The Salvation Army offers three permanent supportive housing programs:

- HOME
- HOME 2 Stay
- You’re HOME



All three programs are run the same way, but have different names because each is funded through a different grant. Currently, 45 units are available in the HOME programs.

Permanent housing is just one example of how the Salvation Army does whatever it takes to take care of its own. Vaughn says it's important that everyone is taken care of throughout the process.

"We guarantee the landlord that if you're going to rent from us, you're going to get your money every month and on time," Vaughn says. "If the client destructs the property, we're going to fix it. We're going to leave the apartment like we found it."

Even if someone struggles with mental illness or addiction, the Salvation Army wants to make sure that everyone has a chance to find support and a second chance, Vaughn says.

Both transitional and permanent supportive housing programs have specific requirements for applicants to qualify.

In order to apply, clients must complete a Coordinated Entry Assessment. This assessment determines risk and prioritization when providing assistance to the homeless.

In addition, applicants must be chronically homeless and have a disability. After qualifying, they are put on a list until a vacancy opens up in the housing programs.

"We want to take them from being homeless to having a place," Vaughn says, "while also trying to move into long term housing."