



HEART of Taos
P.O. Box 613 Taos, NM 87571
(575) 776-4245

June 10, 2021

HEART of Taos - 500 Word Narrative

HEART of Taos' (HEART) mission is to provide services and support to women and their children facing homelessness who are pursuing their life goals. Our services include: Emergency and transitional housing, Access to housing resources, Case management, Counseling referrals, Life skills training, Education referrals, Job readiness, Health and wellness referrals.

HEART respectfully requests general operating support to continue its mission.

HEART is addressing the community's need to access affordable housing and support services. HEART is providing the immediate need of emergency housing through the hotel shelter program and then connecting each household to the Service Navigator to work on long-term stability through weekly case management meetings.

When someone is unsheltered; lacking safe and stable housing is the most pressing issue they face. The need for affordable rental options is dire, some problems include the lack of willing landlords to take housing vouchers and general lack of affordable housing options (in the market or in the low-income housing developments in Town/County.) The lack of supportive housing for people with mental and behavioral health issues, substance use, and past criminal records impacts the long-term stability with housing and employment for many community members.

In 2019, 140 individuals experienced homelessness on one night in Taos County, just 45 of whom were in shelters. While data from 2021 is pending release, it is expected that this number has increased. Over 140 people have contacted the hotel shelter program since October seeking shelter.

Seeing the need for quality, safe, and affordable housing first-hand, backed by evidence-based research, HEART felt compelled to not only provide the immediate need of emergency housing but to also expand its Bylaws to include affordable housing development to truly be part of the solution of the homelessness crisis. The amendment will be voted on June 9, 2021.

Due to COVID-19, HEART House transitioned to a hotel shelter program in October 2020. HEART collaborated with DreamTree Project (Fiscal Sponsor) to access CARES Act Funding and added an additional 12 emergency hotel rooms to the hotel shelter program beginning 12/31/2020 known as Taos CARES Housing Crisis program. Including the four (4) HEART hotel rooms, HEART is overseeing 16 households in the hotel program. HEART is the service provider overseeing the operations of the hotel shelter program.

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HEART plans to continue the hotel shelter program to provide emergency shelter and support to women and families. HEART plans to continue overseeing the Taos CARES Crisis Housing program at least until December 2021 or as long as there is available funding. Since October 2020 to May 2021, HEART's hotel program has provided 27 individuals (13 women, 5 men, and 9 children) emergency housing and support services. Since December 31, 2021 to May 2021, HEART has provided 68 individuals (33 women, 23 men, and 12 children) emergency housing and support services through the Taos CARES program.

For 2021, HEART expects to provide an estimated total of 50 households (approximately 100 individuals) with emergency housing and support services through the hotel shelter program.

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