



HOUSING & HOPE

A monthly email series on housing & homelessness.

Noel House Triples Placements During Peak COVID-19 Closures

The COVID-19 pandemic has generated unprecedented change worldwide, and effects of the crisis have significantly impacted the housing sector in the United States. Housing stability programs have been severely limited due to decreases in services across the sector. In particular, development and construction of new properties [has slowed](#), worker and volunteer participation in essential service delivery [has decreased](#), and difficulty securing property inspections and in-person tours of units have posed [increased setbacks](#).

A [43% decrease](#) in move-ins between February and March has been classified by [Housing Connector](#) (a local organization connecting private property owners in King County to those most in need of housing) as a direct result of the COVID-19 crisis on the provision of social services in King County. Despite these setbacks in the height of initial COVID shut downs, case managers at Catholic Community Services' (CCS) Noel House program were working rigorously to ensure housing options for their residents. Though the reduction in services affected CCS/CHS clients by leading to increased time to secure proper documentation, lack of in-person tours of new units, and agency closures slowing the entire process, Noel House case managers more than tripled their monthly average for housing placements during the height of COVID-related delays in the beginning of the year.

Noel House, a CCS program located in Seattle's Belltown neighborhood, offers an enhanced shelter and permanent supportive housing options for women experiencing homelessness. Guests of the shelter work with a case manager to address health issues, build relationships and support systems, as well as create and pursue personal goals, all with the objective of securing permanent housing. The COVID-19 crisis represents one of the biggest environmental obstacles seen at Noel House so far, as many women have been unable to move from the shelter into permanent housing due to shutdowns across the sector. Staff have therefore been working diligently to continue to help their clients to secure permanent housing. While the case managers usually average 30-35 referrals per year, nineteen women moved into permanent housing between January and April alone!

Each of these women arrived at Noel House with a different story. Some were referred through drug court or prison, others were escaping domestic violence, a few arrived from out-

of-state, many were living with untreated mental health issues, and several had also been experiencing homelessness for over 20 years. Case managers work with each client to understand their past, current needs, and needs for the future in order to find the most effective housing option for each individual. While the majority of clients received housing vouchers for private housing, others have been placed in permanent supportive housing, transitional housing, treatment, and adult homes. Daphne and Crissanta both moved into private housing, and recently wrote to Noel House to thank the staff for their assistance.

This is Daphne's second time working with Noel House. She moved into supportive housing with the YWCA after her first stay, and moved again later to live with her partner. After her partner fell ill and was transferred into an adult home, Daphne was again unable to secure stable housing. She returned to Noel House and received a Section 8 voucher for permanent, private housing. Daphne's letter recently arrived at Noel House.



CATHOLIC COMMUNITY SERVICES
CATHOLIC HOUSING SERVICES
OF WESTERN WASHINGTON

A New Beginning

As a homeless person with no income, Noel House set me on path towards housing.

First, I needed some income. I applied for SSI and was approved. That was my first goal completed.

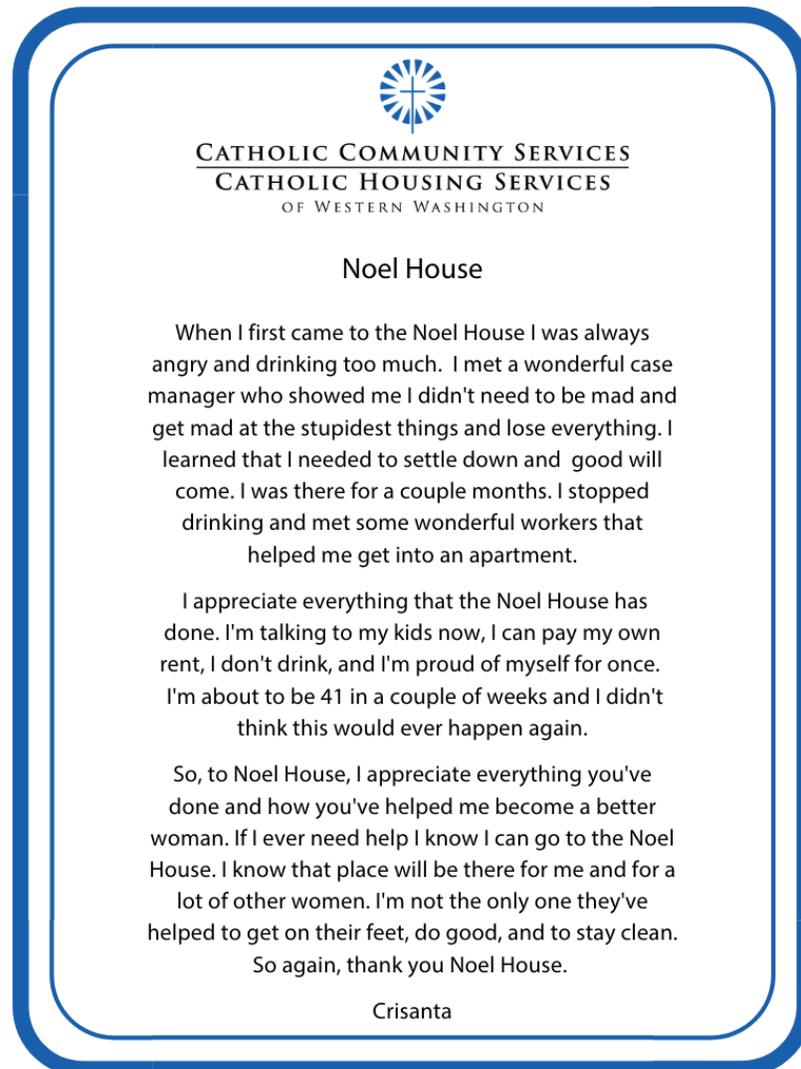
The next goal was to find housing. At first, I filled out applications for transitional housing. Unfortunately, this didn't pan out. I decided to set a specific goal to find senior housing for low income residents like myself.

During the month of December, my case manager helped me fill out an application for a King County housing voucher. In two weeks, I was approved. In the meantime, my case manager had found a retirement community in Kent. I'd checked it out online and I fell in love with it. After I received my voucher, she took me to the apartment complex to fill out paperwork and a tour of the property. With the resources arranged by my case manager, I moved into my new home on January 3rd.

I like to take this opportunity to thank the staff and management of Noel House for providing shelter and the resources to assist me in meeting my goals. A special thanks to my case manager for her hard work and diligence. If you put the effort out towards your dreams, she will go a mile for you.

Daphne

Crissanta was referred to Noel House through Operation Nightwatch after living in a single residency unit. She arrived struggling with anger and addiction. She left, sober, and moved into private housing in Burien. Crissanta's journey to sobriety and housing is best told in her own words:



We are thrilled to see these women begin a new chapter in their lives, especially during a time when COVID-19 has caused increased challenges to accessing social services. The support, persistence and dedication of the Noel House case managers is remarkable, and helps to encourage bravery of our clients in the face of this pandemic's uncertainties.

We would also like to extend our gratitude to our readers, volunteers, and donors for your support and passion in providing quality, stable housing for our Western Washington neighbors. Your commitment to making "home" a reality for everyone is a blessing for each person in our care. Thank you!

If you would like more information on any of CCS/CHS' 115+ housing programs, or would like to learn more about CCS/CHS' philosophy for supportive housing, please feel free to contact the Fund Development department directly at development@ccsww.org.

If you have received this email from a different source and would like to sign up for the monthly series to receive emails directly, please do so [here](#).