

# Dakota Woodlands

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## Program Overview

Dakota Woodlands is the only family shelter in Dakota County providing temporary shelter, safety, and comprehensive supportive services to families experiencing homelessness.

**Mission:** Dakota Woodlands' mission is to empower displaced families on their journey to independence by providing stable shelter, trauma-informed case management, life skills education, and connections to permanent housing and community resources. We envision a community where every family has access to the support needed to thrive in sustainable housing.

**Contract(s):** Dakota County has 2 contracts with **Dakota Woodlands** for the following service(s):

Service	Service Description	Funding Source(s)	Contract Term Date
Emergency Shelter Services	Provide emergency shelter services at Dakota Woodlands for families with minor children experiencing homelessness in Dakota County.	34% funded by County Levy; and 66% funded by Local Affordable Housing Aid (LAHA) – MN Department of Revenue.	1/1/2026-12/31/2027
Cost Neutral Shelter Services	Shelter services at Dakota Woodlands include: the provision of emergency shelter, food, and support services for adults with disabling conditions who are experiencing homelessness; coordination with County staff for referrals, services, and housing search; and entering all households into the Client Track data management system.	100% funded by Department of Human Services (DHS) Cost Neutral Shelter Services Grant	7/1/2024-6/30/2026

## Strategic Alignment

**Dakota Woodlands** work supports and aligns with the following County Board strategies:

**Thriving people:** Dakota County creates access to opportunities, cares for vulnerable people, and fosters community safety, health and well-being.

## Oversight

**Emergency Shelter Services:** Quarterly reports are required summarizing the following: number of unduplicated families in shelter, basic demographics of families (age, race, gender), number of families exiting to permanent housing, number of families connected to community resources, and 90% of families are not exited to homelessness. Invoices are submitted, at a minimum, quarterly and include specific budget categories and any support documentation.

**Cost Neutral Shelter Services:** Quarterly reports are required summarizing the following: number of unduplicated adults in shelter, basic demographics of families (age, race, gender), entry date for each adult, exit date for each adult, length of time in shelter, number of adults exiting to permanent housing, number of adults connected to mental health services, success stories of shelter residents. Invoices are submitted, at a minimum, quarterly and include specific budget categories and any support documentation.

## Outcome Measures

### Households Exiting to Permanent Housing

36 households exited to permanent housing in 2025. This outcome demonstrates the effectiveness of county-funded shelter, housing navigation, and case management services in moving families from homelessness to stability.

### Residents Connected to Appropriate Resources

100% of residents were connected to appropriate resources. This reflects coordinated case management linking families to housing supports, employment resources, mental health services, financial literacy programming, childcare, and community-based services.

### Additional Impact Metrics Demonstrating County Investment

The following measures illustrate the scale and quality of services provided:

225 unduplicated individuals served (85 adults and 140 children)

71 families served during 2025

20,718 total nights of safe shelter provided

2,015 case management sessions delivered

193 program sessions provided in housing stability, financial literacy, career development, parenting wellness, and computer literacy

87,921 meals and snacks provided to families in shelter

4,029 basic need items distributed, including hygiene supplies, baby care items, and move-in baskets

92 childcare sessions provided, enabling parents to attend work, appointments, and programming

Average length of stay: 111 days, reflecting stabilization and housing navigation support

### Population Served

69% of individuals identified as BIPOC

51% of adults reported a history of domestic violence

55% of adults reported annual incomes of \$12,000 or less  
33% of adults reported a mental or physical disability

## Mandates

**Mandate Level** (Board Decision) – Program Name, Authority for Program (Statute, Resolution, etc.),  
Program Description:

**Emergency Shelter Services:** The Board of Commissioners is not mandated to provide or contract for these services.

**Cost Neutral Shelter Services:** Under the authority of Minn. Stat. 256I.05, subd. 11, a cost-neutral transfer from the Housing Support funds to Dakota County to provide emergency shelter beds for people with disabilities experiencing homelessness. Board Resolution 25-300; 6/24/2025.

## Financials

**Total Contracted Payments 2024-2025:** \$1,003,997

Services	Contract Budget 2026-2027
Housing Clinic Services (County Levy + LAHA)	\$915,000
Cost Neutral Shelter Services (DHS Grant)	\$760,112