

Case 1

Barriers: family composition for shelter, disabled parent, underemployed

This family presented to Community Well-Being (CWB) right before the Thanksgiving holiday in search of a motel voucher due to the severe weather.

This family was staying in their vehicle at a Safe Parking lot in Commerce City. This family includes Mom, Dad, a teenage boy, and 2 young girls. CWB called several shelters in Denver and they were denied due to age requirements of male children. The navigator worked on reconnecting them to a Denver case manager. CWB worked on obtaining ID's for the parents and referred the family to Adams County Human Services to apply for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). TANF eligibility is a requirement for family shelters in Adams County. Mom is underemployed and Dad is disabled but cares for the children while Mom is at work.

The navigator met with family 1x per week to call shelters and work on housing. CWB completed the housing assessment tool and other low income housing applications. The navigator provided advocacy and coaching during sessions. CWB provided warm weather gear and a gas card to ensure family was able to make housing appointments and get to work.

CWB consistently called housing providers to follow up on application status. Mom had previously applied for a low income unit and was up next on the list. CWB connected them to a rental and deposit assistance resource in Denver. This family moved into a unit 2/2023. This process took 2 months.

They are successfully exited from the CWB program.

Case 2

Barriers: Disabled Veteran, couch surfing, ineligible for VA housing or shelter program due to "doubled up" status

This individual presented to CWB offices during walk-ins. He was a veteran staying on a relative's couch. He was previously living in his truck prior to couch surfing. He was only taken in due to his diagnosis of cancer. When an individual is "doubled up" they do not qualify for housing services from the VA. CWB met consistently over the next several weeks and applied for 5 disabled housing units. Through continued communication with the client and housing complexes, he was at the top of the list for a low income unit in Denver. CWB reached out to the VA for rental/deposit assistance. He was denied. Due to this, he presented in the lobby at Civic Center having an emotional breakdown. He cried out asking what if his housing did not happen then he would have to go back to the streets, he didn't know what he would do with himself if that happened. He was physically shaking and visibly upset. The navigator explained we would continue to work with him and we would figure it out. The navigator was able to de-escalate the crisis and reassure this client he had our support.

A few days later the navigator was able to advocate a payment plan with the property manager in order for the client to lease up. He came back to CWB offices smiling and telling jokes, he was back to having hope.

This veteran was successfully housed on 4/2023 and checks in periodically.

Case 3

Barriers: criminal history, no family support, mental health, developmental disabilities, no income

This individual was presented to the homeless navigator by a team member who had already been working with him on housing. They explained this person was born and raised in Commerce City and hung out at Los Val Park during the day.

The navigator's immediate perception of this person was his kind eyes and smile. His camp was one of the cleanest the navigator had ever seen and he was sweeping the side walk upon first arrival to meet him. He discussed his plans to get housed and his goals.

Once he was matched with a housing voucher, CWB went to work on obtaining the documents that are required; ID, birth certificate, and social security card.

The navigator began the process of applying for units with the client. The client was finally approved for a unit. CWB referred him to Respite Housing through Almost Home. Respite housing provides temporary motel stay while clients are waiting to move into permanent housing, a move in date is required in order to be accepted into program. He was able to stay in a motel which allowed him to stabilize before the big transition.

This client successfully moved into housing 2/2023. CWB first met this client in May 2022, this process took 10 months.

This client continuously reaches out for CWB support and mental health services. It is very common that once folks are housed, they lose their street community and feel isolated which can exacerbate mental health symptoms. CWB continues to support him in connecting to mental health services and life skills to maintain housing.

Case 4

Barriers: mental health, unresolved trauma, no family support, displaced for 20 years, no income

This individual was born and raised in Commerce City and is well known to business owners in Derby. Business owners have known our client since being a child and have shared with CWB that they would come in the store with their parents to shop. They have shared that our client is a real nice person and it makes them sad to see them in this state. They provide food and work to our client when they can.

This client previously denied a housing opportunity due to feeling unworthy and that others deserved it more.

Not too long after, our client was then matched to a housing opportunity in Adams County. Through some motivational interviewing, the client accepted this opportunity. The navigator began working on obtaining the required documents.

This client is known to move around a lot, so CWB ordered them a phone to stay in touch. The next meeting needed for the housing opportunity was the housing briefing. This meeting is when the client is briefed on the rules and eligibility of the housing voucher. Through community collaboration, the housing specialist from the housing provider agreed to come out to Commerce City to meet the client to complete the paperwork.

Our client was no longer able to stay where CWB knew them to be and was informed from another unhoused resident where we could find them. CWB went searching and located them by the railroad tracks. With the housing specialist in tow, outreach pulled along the tracks and completed the briefing paperwork in the car during a rain storm.

CWB has been currently working on obtaining disability verification for over 8 weeks. This verification is needed to move forward with the housing opportunity. On the 2nd attempt to obtain a walk in mental health appointment in Denver. The navigator accompanied the client to alleviate their anxiety. During the mental health screening, the paperwork included a “trauma” questionnaire. This client does not read or write, so the navigator assisted with the paperwork and had to ask the questions out loud. One question in particular asks about sexual assault. Our client reluctantly shared they had endured being raped. Their mental health has spiraled since this assessment. They did not show up for the follow up appointment. The navigator went to their camp to check on them. The self-proclaimed camp leader was yelling at our client. This leader of the camp stated our client had not come out of their tent for 3 days. Our client was unwilling to come out of their tent to speak to the navigator, they later shared they were too depressed and ashamed. The assessment triggered our client and had created a step back in the housing process and timeline.

They have since been removed from the tracks and CWB is trying to relocate them. Their phone has been stolen. We are only a few steps away from obtaining the housing voucher and continue to advocate to keep this opportunity while CWB works through the barriers.

First met client 6/2021 and ongoing