



CCSM Issues Development Subcommittee Final Board Approved 01-06-2023

BRAP Voucher Program

The Issue:

Currently the BRAP (Bridging Rental Assistance Program) voucher amount paid to landlords is insufficient to meet the current Maine fair rental market value. Vouchers often expire before they can be used due to lack of rentals that fall within the voucher amount.

DHHS follows the federal limits when giving vouchers, but they are not held to the federal guidelines for this program. We would like to see the BRAP limits increased to come into line with the current market rates. This would allow recipients to access available housing. The housing first model stands firm on the belief that housing is the foundation to a person's recovery!

We have seen the January 2023 rate increases (published on Maine Housing.org website) and we are encouraged that we are moving in the right direction.

Recommendations:

1. Build in a 25-35% increase above the federally projected market rate. This flexibility should be allowed in areas that do not match the current housing market values in various counties/cities/towns.
2. Permanently increase the time limit to search for viable housing that meets BRAP criteria.

Expected Outcome:

Everyone who is eligible for a BRAP voucher should be able to find adequate housing to meet their needs. The Housing First model stands firm on the belief that housing is the foundation to a person's recovery!

This issue statement was brought forward by the Farmington Local Council.