

Senior Support Services

Annual Report -- Year 2024

History

Senior Support Services is Denver's only nonprofit dedicated exclusively to serving hungry and homeless older adults. With 50 years of experience, we specialize in empowering seniors to lead more independent and fulfilling lives. Our comprehensive services include hot meals, clothing, transportation, and assistance with securing government benefits and affordable housing. We provide one-stop shopping for those with the greatest social and economic needs.

Pre-COVID-19, up to 250 clients per day were free to shelter and socialize at our 4,000-square-foot center. With the arrival of the pandemic, we struggled to find a way to continue to serve our clients but also keep them and our staff healthy and safe. As clients were literally rubbing elbows, we made the difficult decision in March 2020 to no longer allow congregating inside our facility. Instead, clients lined up outside and were able to get services and case management through open windows.

To the relief of all, we were able to open and allow congregating in our facility in June of 2021. Our trademark services were once again available inside. Face-to-face interactions improved client/case manager relations, trust-building and outcomes. Though some still wear them, the mask requirement in homeless shelters was lifted in August 2022.

Mission

Our mission is to make each day better and safer for Denver's low-income and homeless seniors by providing the resources and support they need to lead more self-sufficient and fulfilling lives.

Programs

We operate the only day center catering to the needs of the hungry and homeless seniors of the Denver area. Clients get meals, emergency food and clothing, individualized case management, medical care, housing, government benefits, socialization, and activities. We provided:

- Three meals served each weekday for up to 150 seniors
- Hygiene items and clothing bank
- Access to medical care, health screenings, counseling and health insurance
- Individualized case management and advocacy including:
 - Obtaining and retaining government benefits
 - Obtaining and retaining affordable housing
 - Paying rent and utilities on behalf of clients
 - Mediating tenant-landlord disputes
 - Preventing homelessness through financial management counseling
 - Connecting clients to healthcare providers and health-related services
 - Leading Care Coordination in complex client situations.

2024 Accomplishments

Overall

Provided access to a full range of services for **1,600** seniors¹ who benefitted from **6,820** case management sessions.

Nutrition

Served **34,750** individual meals²

Other Basic Needs

Distributed **600** new boxer briefs³, **580** hats, gloves and glasses⁴, **2,170** clothing items⁵, **2,280** pairs of socks, **13,500** hygiene items, and **\$5,250** in ARC dollars⁶

Distributed U.S. Mail and packages to **380** clients on **4,815** occasions⁷

Made direct payments for birth certificates, prescriptions, interpreters, utility payments, court records, cell phones, gas, car repairs, bus/airline tickets, FEMA debt, funeral costs, furniture, HOA fees, application fees, moves, background checks, etc, for **105** seniors.

Housing

Obtained or retained shelter or housing on **3,008** occasions⁸

Paid out **\$107,000** in direct rent payments to landlords on behalf of **119** seniors⁹

Provided Starter Kits¹⁰ or furniture for **42** households

Moved the belongings and furniture of **8** seniors

Provided long-term, onsite storage for **93** homeless seniors

Government Benefits

Obtained or retained government benefits (or financial stability) on **2,985** occasions¹¹

Legal

Obtained legal aid for **304** seniors¹²

Transportation

Distributed, free of charge, **2,370 daily, three-hour** bus tickets

Distributed, free of charge, **1,920** free monthly bus passes

Health

Connected seniors with primary/specialty healthcare, health insurance, dental, optical, mental health or substance use referrals, prescriptions, or emergency medical care on **2,075** occasions¹³

Licensed Professional Counselors provided **907** individual mental health or substance use counseling sessions for **207** seniors.

Demographics of Our Clients

(Clients are at least 60 years old)

Physical Condition and Health

85% -- mental health challenges

75% -- alcohol or drug use challenges

75% -- physically frail or disabled

24% -- Veterans

Housing

69% -- homeless

82% -- homeless or at risk of homelessness

87% -- live alone or are homeless alone

Gender

72% -- men

27% -- women

1% -- transgender

Ethnicity

42% -- African-American

28% -- White (non-Latino)

19% -- Latino

8% -- American Indian

3% -- Asian

Income Level

82% -- living below the federal poverty level¹⁴

\$917 per month is the average income of each client

¹ These are unduplicated individuals.

² Meals were served to **850** unduplicated clients.

³ **153** clients benefitted.

⁴ **231** clients benefitted.

⁵ **264** clients benefitted.

⁶ The ARC-\$ benefitted **129** clients who redeemed them at ARC stores.

⁷ Many of our clients, especially those who are homeless, use our address as their only mailing address.

⁸ Here our efforts were critical to the obtaining or retaining of housing thanks to a direct rent payment, tenant-landlord mediation, or persistent advocacy on behalf of the client. **621** unduplicated clients benefitted. Each session lasted an average of **34** minutes.

⁹ The average rent payment was **\$900**.

¹⁰ Each Starter Kit includes bowls, plates, cups, glasses, cooking utensils, cutlery, pots and pans, linens, etc

¹¹ It can take an enormous amount of staff time and persistence to obtain government benefits sometimes because the initial application is denied requiring the filing of one or more appeals. Monthly government payments including Aid to the Needy & Disabled, Old Age Pension, Supplemental Security Income, Social Security, Veterans' benefits, food stamps, and one-time payments including LEAP or rent & utility rebates are all included here. **646** unduplicated clients benefitted. The average length of each session was **35** minutes.

¹² This includes investigating open warrants, background check related issues, and working with Colorado Legal Services regarding tenant eviction, replacement ID's, name change issues, etc.

¹³ **605** unduplicated clients benefitted.

¹⁴ The federal Poverty Guidelines are used to determine the federal poverty level here. The 2024 Federal Poverty Guidelines for a one-person household is **\$1,255** per month.