

## Frequently Asked Questions: Housing First Oak Springs

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### What is Housing First Oak Springs?

Modeled on other successful Housing First programs across the country, the Housing First Oak Springs community will be the first of its kind in Travis County. Located at 3000 Oak Springs Drive, the apartment community will include 50 fully furnished efficiency apartments, a clinic, a community room, a garden, and onsite services to support individual recovery and housing stability. Services include:

- Onsite staffing 24 hours a day
- Mental health care, primary health care and substance use treatment services
- Supported employment services
- Community room with a kitchen, computers and library

Construction starts in January 2018. Housing First Oak Springs is expected to open in September 2019.

### What is Housing First?

Housing First is an evidence-based health intervention that offers permanent supportive housing (affordable housing with ongoing support services) to address the needs of individuals experiencing homelessness, who also live with mental illness, substance use disorder and/or other chronic conditions. Through this model, individuals move immediately, with few preconditions, from the streets or shelters into housing. Once housed, individuals receive rehabilitation services and recovery supports to help them regain their health and well-being. Housing First is a proven solution that has been used successfully across the United States. A home is the foundation for recovery from homelessness, mental illness and substance use disorder.

### Who will have access to the services at Housing First Oak Springs?

The housing units will be for individuals experiencing chronic homelessness who also live with mental illness or substance use disorder. Half of the residents will be veterans. The onsite clinic will provide care to individuals living in the apartments as well as people in the nearby community and will offer both mental and primary health care as well as alcohol and substance use treatment. The clinic will provide scheduled and walk-in appointments.

Any community member will be able to access services at the clinic through the same intake and assessment process that Integral Care currently uses for all of its services. Integral Care collaborates with other housing providers to screen and prioritize individuals who need housing through a coordinated assessment process. We will use the coordinated assessment list to identify residents for these apartments.

## **Who will not qualify for housing at Housing First Oak Springs?**

To ensure the safety of our neighbors, registered sex offenders and individuals with a history of arson or methamphetamine production will not qualify for housing at the facility.

## **Do residents sign a lease?**

Yes. All residents will sign and must abide by the standard Texas Apartment Lease Agreement required by any rental property.

## **Why do we need this project?**

When you live on the streets, it's extremely difficult to recover from a mental illness or substance use disorder. Integral Care uses housing as a health intervention to help individuals regain health and independence. People living on the streets who have conditions such as a mental illness often use crisis and emergency services because they lack a regular source of care. This is expensive for the community. Providing housing and rehabilitation supports is more cost effective and offers the opportunity to create long term stability and better health. With a safe place to live and appropriate support services, people thrive and recovery begins, strengthening our whole community.

## **Who are the funding partners?**

Capital funding includes State of Texas grants, City of Austin housing bond funds, Low Income Housing Tax Credit financing and private philanthropic donations. Ongoing operations, services and rent funding comes from Veterans Affairs, State of Texas Health and Human Services Commission, City of Austin, Housing Authority City of Austin, private funders and foundations and health insurance reimbursements.

## **Who is the property owner and developer?**

Founded in 1967, Integral Care is the Local Mental Health Authority for Travis County. We help people build



health and well-being so everyone has the foundation to reach their full potential. Integral Care supports adults and children living with mental illness, substance use disorder and intellectual and developmental disabilities. Our services include a 24-hour helpline for anyone who needs immediate support, ongoing counseling to improve mental health, drug and alcohol treatment to help with recovery, and housing to regain health and independence. Integral Care helps provide a strong foundation for well-being. Learn more at [integralcare.org](https://integralcare.org).

### **For more information**

If you have questions or need additional information, please contact Sarah Wauters, Community Engagement Manager, at [Sarah.Wauters@integralcare.org](mailto:Sarah.Wauters@integralcare.org) or visit [HousingFirstATX.org](https://HousingFirstATX.org).