

Annual Report 2025

HAMDEN HOUSING AUTHORITY
51 WORTH AVE, HAMDEN, CT 06518

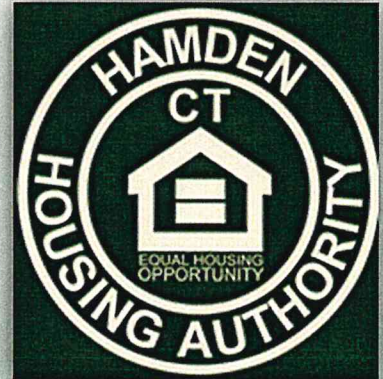
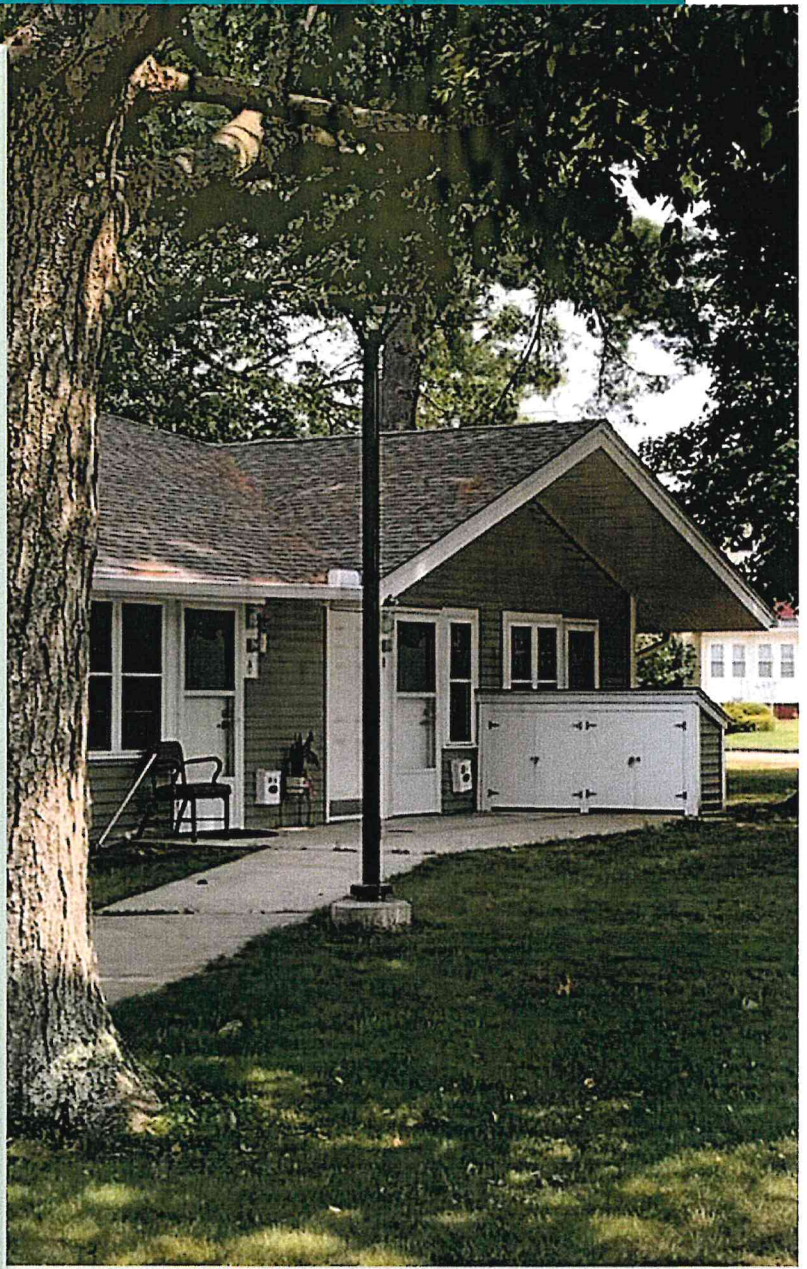


TABLE OF CONTENTS

OPENING REMARKS	2
MISSION STATEMENT	3
ADMINISTRATION & DEPARTMENTS	4
FINANCE REPORT	5
ANNUAL FINANCIAL AUDIT	5
CONGREGATE/ASSISTED LIVING/ELDERLY/DISABLED HOUSING	6-7
GRANTS/CRITICAL NEEDS FUNDING	8
SECTION 8 / RAP (RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM)	9-10
FACILITIES	11-12
RESIDENT SERVICES COORDINATOR / RESIDENT LIFE	13
NEW POLICIES	14
SAFETY COMMITTEE	14
EMPLOYEE TRAINING	14
WEBSITE	15
CLOSING REMARKS	16-17

Opening Remarks

In reviewing the accomplishments of 2025, I am proud to share a year marked by meaningful progress, thoughtful investment, and continued commitment to the residents we serve throughout Hamden. This year, the Hamden Housing Authority focused strategically on strengthening our communities through significant renovations made possible by grant funding. These investments allowed us to modernize apartments, improve building infrastructure, enhance safety features, and upgrade common areas ensuring that our residents live in housing that is safe, comfortable, and dignified.

Through careful planning and responsible stewardship of public funds, we were able to maximize every dollar awarded to us. Grant resources supported critical upgrades such as roofing, energy-efficient systems, accessibility enhancements, and community space revitalization. These improvements are more than construction projects they are long-term investments in stability, quality of life, and community pride.

Our progress this year would not have been possible without the exceptional dedication of our staff. Across every department, our team worked collaboratively and seamlessly to accomplish the many tasks required to move our organization forward. Their ability to support one another, communicate effectively, and remain focused on our shared mission allows us to successfully complete important projects while continuing to serve our residents with care and compassion. It is this spirit of teamwork and commitment that enables us to continually improve our communities and enhance the quality of life for the people we serve. I am deeply grateful for the passion, hard work, and dedication our staff bring each day, and I am incredibly proud of the remarkable team that makes our progress possible.

I also extend my sincere gratitude to our Board of Commissioners for their guidance, oversight, and steadfast support. Their leadership and vision help ensure that the Housing Authority remains fiscally responsible, forward-thinking, and responsive to the evolving needs of our community. It is with great pride that I reflect on the past year and share many of the accomplishments and milestones achieved by the Hamden Housing Authority.

Respectfully submitted,

Hazelann B. Cook

Hazelann B. Cook
Executive Director

Mission Statement

The Hamden Housing Authority's (HHA) mission is to provide safe, decent, affordable, and sanitary housing for persons of low-and moderate-income. The Housing Authority believes that all persons have the right to quality affordable housing.

HHA is committed to helping people in need without regard to any protected class status including, without limitation, any such status based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, creed, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, lawful source of income, disability, age, marital status, and/or familial status.

HHA shall endeavor at all times to protect its residents from discriminatory housing practices. In accordance with its Fair Housing Policy Statement, programs funded and administered by the Hamden Housing Authority shall comply with the provisions set forth in Section 46a-64c of the Connecticut General Statutes, as well as with all other applicable provisions both state and federal laws, and regulations that prohibit discriminatory housing practices.

Hamden Housing Authority

Established in 1969, the Hamden Housing Authority is governed by a five-member Board of Commissioners. The Authority owns and operates 190 units of elderly and disabled housing, 30 units of congregate living, and 4 units of affordable housing within the Town of Hamden.

In addition to its own housing portfolio, the Hamden Housing Authority administers the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program, which currently consists of 407 vouchers, including 160 portable vouchers utilized by participants relocating from other cities and towns.

The Hamden Housing Authority also serves as a subcontractor to J. D'Amelia & Associates for the administration of the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher and Rental Assistance Program (RAP) on behalf of the Connecticut Department of Housing. Through this partnership, HHA manages an additional 1,600 Housing Choice Vouchers and RAP program certificates, helping to expand access to safe and affordable housing opportunities for families throughout the region.

Administration & Departments

Governing Board of Commissioners:

Mary DeSarbo	Chairperson
John Cabral, Jr.	Vice-Chairperson
Robin LaFrance	Treasurer
Nichole Jefferson	Commissioner
Dr. Phillip Goldblatt	Commissioner

Executive Director:

Hazelann B. Cook

Departments:

Administrative Office	203-281-7774	hha@hamdenhousing.com
Finance Office	203-248-9036	finance@hamdenhousing.com
Section 8 Programs	203-281-7669x101	section8@hamdenhousing.com
Elderly/Disabled Housing	203-248-9036	hha@hamdenhousing.com
Congregate Housing	203-248-9376	congregate@hamdenhousing.com
Resident Services Coordinator	203-287-8977	hha@hamdenhousing.com
Maintenance	203-248-9036	maintenance@hamdenhousing.com

Finance Report

Housing Authority of the Town of Hamden Schedule of Major Expenditures 1/1/2025 – 12/31/2025

Apartment Rehabs: (floors, cabinets, heat pumps, paint)	\$ 93,252
Landscaping: (Pruning/Chipping/stumps)	4,270
Residents' Gifts & Events: (picnic, Xmas gifts, Sittercise, Sip & Paint)	11,796
Property Improvements: (Affordable fence, smoke shed, cement work, line striping)	12,225
Maintenance New Equipment: (lawnmower/snow blowers/weedwhackers)	13,991
Maintenance New Truck:	42,448
Building Improvements: (C-4 Fire alarm, panel/roof repairs)	6,303
Office Equipment: (Computers, laptops, and upgrades)	7,415
Community Rooms: (Laundry Room Coin Machines)	<u>7,832</u>
Total:	\$199,532

Annual Financial Audit

Our annual audit for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025, was completed by Geel Audit & Accounting in January 2025. The auditors issued an unmodified opinion and did not disclose any findings or matters of concern. The audit was submitted and accepted by the US Department of HUD and the State of Connecticut Department of Housing and Connecticut Housing Finance Authority. A copy of the audited financial statements is available at the HHA office upon request.

Congregate Assisted Living, Elderly/Disabled Housing

The Congregate facility underwent a major renovation in 2024-2025 made possible by a \$3.7 million SSHP Grant awarded to the Housing Authority in 2024. Construction began in January 2024 and will be completed in the spring of 2026. The project included new siding, upgraded insulation, replacement windows, installation of a generator, updated HVAC systems, and re-paving of the parking area. In addition, three apartments



were converted to ADA-compliant units and walk-in showers were installed to improve accessibility. The renovation also enhanced the common areas with new dining room tables and chairs, as well as updated lounge furniture for residents to enjoy. The Congregate facility looks stunning. The upgrades have exceeded what we hoped for, and the residents are

extremely pleased with the results.

Throughout 2025, our Congregate residents remained actively engaged in a variety of activities organized by the Congregate staff. Recognizing that social interaction plays an important role in overall wellbeing, the team continues to prioritize opportunities for residents to connect with one another. Sittercise, a seated exercise program, was introduced in 2025 and quickly became a resident favorite. This chair-based workout can help build and maintain strength, flexibility, and endurance. Sittercise has many health benefits but most importantly it can improve your balance which can help prevent a devastating fall. Additional activities at



Congregate included movie nights, pizza parties, coffee and ice cream socials, bingo, paint & sip as well as arts and crafts. Throughout 2025, the staff enjoyed celebrating various **National Food Days** with our residents. These fun events gave everyone an opportunity to gather, socialize, and enjoy a special treat together. Whether it's **National Pizza Day, Chocolate Chip Cookie Day, or Strawberry Shortcake Day**, we make every effort to participate and bring these small celebrations to our residents. These moments help create a warm and welcoming environment while giving residents something fun to look forward to. HHA hosted its annual **Summer Picnic** on June 11, 2025. Residents enjoyed an outdoor picnic under festive tents while listening to music from a DJ who played many of their favorite songs.

The event provided a wonderful opportunity for residents to socialize with one another and spend time connecting with HHA staff in a relaxed and enjoyable setting. To make the day even sweeter, HHA arranged for a local ice cream truck to visit the picnic, offering residents a variety of refreshing frozen treats. Throughout the summer months, the ice cream truck also visited all the villages several times, allowing residents to enjoy



a cool treat during the warm weather. Several times each month, our Congregate residents enjoyed **pet therapy (animal-assisted therapy)** visits. These sessions offered many benefits for seniors and individuals with disabilities. Interacting with therapy animals has been shown to help lower blood pressure and heart rate, reduce stress and anxiety, and encourage conversation and social interaction among residents. These visits provided comfort, joy, and companionship, helping to greatly enhance overall quality of life within our communities.

During the Christmas season, each resident received a beautiful throw blanket in either red or green, providing warmth and comfort to enjoy throughout the cold winter months. Residents also enjoyed participating in a festive **cookie decorating event**, which was both fun and delicious. Our annual **Christmas Carol Sing-Along** was held on December 4, 2025, bringing residents together in holiday spirits. Members of the Southern Connecticut State University Baseball Team visited each of our communities and delighted residents by performing several favorite Christmas songs, with many residents happily joining in the singing.



To further support resident health and wellbeing, HHA provided a monthly blood pressure clinic as well as a flu clinic in the fall of 2025. In April 2025, Utopia temporarily discontinued services due to a lack of enrollment. With renovations complete and units nearly fully occupied, we remain hopeful that participation will increase and allow Utopia to once again resume their services at Congregate.

Throughout 2025, Investigative Consultants conducted regular security patrols throughout our communities, including Hamden Village, Centerville Village, Mount Carmel, the Congregate Facility, and our Affordable Housing properties. Their ongoing presence has been instrumental in supporting a safe and secure living environment for our residents. We have received positive feedback from residents who report feeling safer and more comfortable in their homes, reinforcing the value of this important service within our communities.

Grants Critical Needs Funding

Congregate Living:

Renovations at the Congregate Facility were completed through SSHP grant awarded in 2023. Secondino & Sons began construction in January 2024, with the project reaching almost completion in the spring of 2026. This extensive renovation transformed the Congregate Facility from an aging building into a modern, state-of-the-art community. Through careful planning and execution, nearly every aspect of the property was upgraded. Exterior improvements included new siding, windows, roofing, and doors, while major system upgrades encompassed heating and air conditioning, as well as the addition of a backup generator. Interior enhancements were equally significant, featuring three ADA-compliant apartments, and the installation of walk-in showers to better meet the needs of residents. These improvements ensure that the facility is not only more comfortable and efficient, but also accessible and sustainable for years to come.



Centerville Village:

In 2025, HHA was awarded a Priority Needs Grant through the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (CHFA) in the amount of \$245,077 to replace roofs and install new gutter systems at Centerville Village. The AVT Construction company was selected to complete the project, which included new roof and gutter replacements for 40 units located at 51 Worth Avenue in Hamden. The work was completed in the fall of 2025. These improvements will support the future installation of solar panels in partnership with the Connecticut Green Bank and are part of HHA's ongoing efforts to reduce energy costs and improve sustainability across our communities. Looking ahead, Mount Carmel Village, the Congregate Facility, and Hamden Village are scheduled to be the next properties to benefit from solar panel installations.



Section 8 and RAP Rental Assistance Programs

HHA's Section 8 Department manages 305 vouchers in Hamden and, through its partnership with John D'Amelia & Associates, administers an additional 1,600 Housing Choice Vouchers and Rental Assistance Program (RAP) certificates on behalf of the Connecticut Department of Housing. Our mission to develop healthy, thriving communities begins with recognizing the important responsibility we hold in assisting families as they work to improve their lives through access to safe, stable, and affordable housing.

The Section 8 and RAP team works diligently to process annual recertifications, interim reexaminations, and tenant moves with accuracy and efficiency, ensuring program compliance while supporting residents during life transitions. In addition, HHA requires full annual Housing Quality Standards (HQS) inspections to ensure that all subsidized housing units are properly maintained and continue to meet federal and state housing standards.

In October 2025 the HHA conducted briefings at the Davenport Residence located at 125 Putnam Avenue, Hamden to determine eligibility for residents to receive a Tenant Protection Voucher (TPV). By qualifying and accepting a Voucher, tenants were able to pay only 30-percent of their income toward rent. The HHA was able to qualify 84 of the 99 residents identified as "at risk households" based on each resident's income and leased up all 84 residents effective November 1, 2025. This was a great opportunity for the residents at Davenport to receive rental assistance, ensuring the property remains affordable for years to come. The TPV Program has been a great addition to the Housing Authority's current portfolio, and we welcome the opportunity to assist the Davenport residents.

To ensure continued program accuracy and compliance, staff participated in professional training opportunities throughout the year. In August 2025, staff attended Rent Calculation Training for the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program, strengthening their knowledge of HUD regulations and tenant rent determinations. In October 2025, staff also participated in a statewide training session for the State of Connecticut's Section 8 Voucher and Rental Assistance Program (RAP) administered through the Department of Housing in partnership with J. D'Amelia & Associates. These training opportunities help ensure that HHA staff remain informed of program updates, regulatory changes, and best practices, allowing them to continue providing accurate and effective service to residents and program participants.

The Hamden Section 8 Program continues to be recognized by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) as a **High Performer** under the Section 8 Management Assessment Program (SEMAP), which is conducted annually. SEMAP evaluates housing authority performance through a series of indicators designed to measure program effectiveness and regulatory compliance. As part of this process, independent quality control inspections and file reviews are conducted by outside vendors to verify that tenant rent calculations, income verifications, and administrative procedures are completed accurately and in accordance with HUD regulations and the Housing Authority's Administrative Plan. Maintaining this High Performer designation reflects the professionalism, dedication, and attention to detail demonstrated by the HHA staff, as well as our continued commitment to providing quality service to residents, property owners, and the Hamden community.

The Staff regularly attends and completes – Fair Housing Training and Sexual Harassment Training, and in-house monthly staff meetings to stay current on updated HUD and Department of Housing regulations.

Through strong partnerships with property owners, community organizations, and residents, the program plays a vital role in expanding housing opportunities, promoting stability, and strengthening the overall well-being of the Hamden community.

Facilities Report

In 2025, the Hamden Housing Authority's Maintenance Department continued to be integral to the overall operations of our communities, overseeing all aspects of property upkeep. Their work extends far beyond routine maintenance, playing a critical role in ensuring the safety, comfort, and overall well-being of both residents and staff.

The department responds promptly to daily work orders, addresses emergency maintenance needs, and performs preventative maintenance to preserve the integrity and longevity of HHA's properties. Their commitment to timely and efficient service ensures that residents' concerns are addressed quickly, contributing to a high standard of living throughout our communities. In addition to routine operations, the Maintenance team supports a wide range of improvement initiatives, including unit turnovers, inspections, and seasonal preparations such as snow removal, spring clean-ups, and grounds maintenance. To enhance efficiency and support these efforts, new equipment was purchased in 2025, including snow blowers, a lawn mower, weed trimmers, and a new work truck.



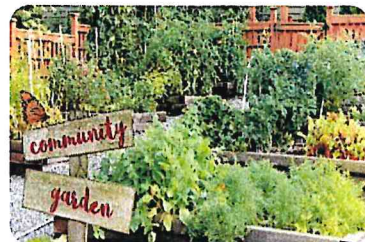
Further improvements were made to enhance resident convenience, including the installation of coin-operated machines in each community laundry room. Their attention to detail and dedication behind the scenes plays a critical role in maintaining safe, clean, and well-functioning housing environments for all residents.

In 2025, numerous improvements were made across our communities to enhance safety, functionality, and overall appearance. These upgrades included the installation of a new fence at the Affordable duplex properties on Morse Street in Hamden, as well as a newly constructed smoking shed at Mount Carmel Village on Woodruff Street. Additionally, parking lots at Centerville Village, Mount Carmel Village, and the Congregate Facility were professionally striped in October 2025, improving traffic flow, organization, and accessibility for residents and visitors. Throughout the year, the Maintenance Department also completed the rehabilitation of approximately 30 units across our developments. These renovations included the installation of new flooring, kitchen cabinets, countertops, toilets, sinks, lighting, and appliances, along with



sheetrock repairs and fresh paint. In several units, new heat pumps were installed to improve energy efficiency and resident comfort.

In 2025, the Maintenance Department continued to plant and maintain HHA's community vegetable gardens, a valued and well-loved amenity among residents. With three gardens, one in each community, residents had the opportunity to enjoy fresh, homegrown produce throughout the growing season. The gardens yielded a variety of vegetables, including eggplant, string beans, tomatoes, peppers, cabbage, and squash. Carefully cultivated and maintained by the Maintenance staff, these gardens provided not only fresh food but also a source of enjoyment and connection for residents. Once ready for harvest, residents were encouraged to pick and enjoy the vegetables.



In 2025, the Director of Facilities oversaw the extensive renovation of the Congregate Facility on Woodruff Street. His leadership included coordinating with contractors and inspectors to ensure that all work was completed in full compliance with building codes and regulations in Hamden, Connecticut.

In 2025, Wynd Technologies was engaged to develop and implement advanced smoke detection technology designed to integrate with enhanced Wi-Fi capabilities. These specialized detectors can identify not only traditional cigarette smoke but also vapor from e-cigarettes and marijuana use. This innovation represents a significant step forward in supporting HHA's commitment to maintaining smoke-free communities and promoting a healthier living environment for residents. Installation of these advanced smoke detection systems is anticipated to begin across select HHA properties in 2026, with plans to expand to additional communities as funding becomes available.

In summary, the Facilities Department played a vital role in 2025 supporting the overall health and growth of the organization, serving both our staff and residents. Their ongoing efforts ensure that our communities remain safe, secure, and operate efficiently creating environments where people can live and work with comfort and confidence.

Resident Services Coordinator / Resident Life

The Hamden Housing Authority played a vital role in supporting the well-being and independence of residents within HHA's elderly housing communities in 2025, according to the Resident Services Coordinator. Our focus remained on our weekly staff meetings and interactions with our Residents which help identify individuals who need help connecting with health care providers, transportation assistance, meal programs, housekeeping assistance, and other supportive resources. These services help residents maintain their independence while continuing to live safely and comfortably in their homes.

With our growing elderly population, HHA recognizes the importance of fostering a strong sense of community and building meaningful relationships through recreational and social activities. In 2025, several social events and activities were held throughout our communities, providing residents with opportunities to interact with neighbors, build friendships, and participate in enjoyable programs close to home. These initiatives play an important role in strengthening community bonds, enhancing overall well-being, and helping to reduce feelings of isolation among our residents. To further support these efforts, the Hamden Housing Authority was awarded \$9,905 through the Housing Authority Resident Program (HARP) Grant in 2025. This funding allowed HHA to expand resident programming, including Sittercise classes, Sip & Paint events, informational seminars in collaboration with the local library, and nutrition education through Meals on Wheels. In addition, two picnic benches were purchased for our communities to encourage outdoor gatherings and social interaction.

Executive Director Hazelann Cook has consistently emphasized the importance of ensuring that residents never feel overlooked and are always treated as a priority. Under her leadership, the organization remains deeply committed to promoting the well-being and dignity of every resident we serve.

Through her strong leadership, combined with the continued dedication of our team, the Hamden Housing Authority continues to grow and thrive while remaining focused on enhancing the quality of life for those we serve.

New Policies

In the spring of 2025, an amendment was made to all Hamden Housing Authority residential leases to reflect that, under the laws of the State of Connecticut, the prohibition of legally permitted firearms cannot be enforced by the Authority. Mrs. Cook met with residents to review this amendment, provide clarification, and ensure transparency. During these meetings, residents were given the opportunity to ask questions and share their concerns, fostering open communication and community engagement.

In May 2025, the Hamden Housing Authority implemented and adopted updates related to the Connecticut Family and Medical Leave Act. The Act remained largely unchanged. Most notable updates occurred within Connecticut's Paid Sick Leave and Paid Leave programs, rather than within the leave law itself.

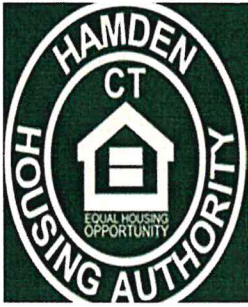
Safety Committee

Throughout 2025, the Safety Committee at the Hamden Housing Authority met on a quarterly basis to review, evaluate, and enhance safety measures across all communities. These meetings provided a structured forum to assess incidents, identify potential risks, and implement proactive strategies to ensure a safe and secure environment for both employees and residents. Particular attention was given to the unique needs of elderly and disabled residents, with ongoing efforts focused on emergency preparedness, building security, and accessibility improvements. Through collaboration and continuous monitoring, the Safety Committee remained committed to fostering a culture of safety and well-being throughout the Authority.

Employee Training

In March 2025 the staff attended a training for *Violence in the Workplace* as well as a *Sexual Harassment* online training seminar. In May of 2025, the entire staff attended our *Fair housing training workshop* which is designed to educate all housing providers and their employees on how to comply with fair housing requirements and best practices to avoid violations and their costly consequences.

HHA Website



Housing Authority of the Town of Hamden
51 Worth Avenue, Hamden CT 06518

Home Page

The Hamden Housing Authority's website, *hamdenhousing.com*, continues to serve as an essential resource for both residents and the broader community. Designed to provide easy access to information, the website offers a wide range of tools and resources for program participants, applicants, and residents throughout Hamden. From program details and eligibility requirements to downloadable forms, announcements, and community updates, the website functions as a comprehensive, user-friendly platform that supports informed decision-making and accessibility.

Administration & Departments

Properties

Congregate Assisted Living

Elderly/Disabled

Section 8

Links & Information

Resident News

Contact Us

Board Meeting Minutes and Annual Report

Equally important, the website has become a valuable tool for staff, allowing them to efficiently direct residents and participants to accurate, up-to-date information. With content reviewed and updated regularly, often daily, the Authority ensures that all links, documents, and program details remain current and reliable.

In today's digital age, where more individuals rely on online access for information and services, the website has proven to be an effective "one-stop shop," enhancing communication, and expanding access to vital resources for the Hamden community.

Closing Remarks

In 2025, HHA experienced strong momentum in advancing improvements across our communities. A major highlight was the transformation of our Congregate Facility, made possible through a \$3.7 million (SSHP) grant. This extensive rehabilitation has not only enhanced the physical appearance of the facility but has also significantly improved the quality of life for those who live and work there, introducing modern amenities that promote comfort, accessibility, and safety.

Additional improvements were made at Centerville Village through a Priority Needs Grant from the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (CHFA) in the amount of \$245,077. This funding supported the replacement of all roofs and the installation of new gutter systems. These upgrades position the property for the future installation of solar panels in partnership with the Connecticut Green Bank and reflect HHA's continued commitment to sustainability and reducing long-term energy costs.

HHA was also awarded \$9,905 through the Housing Authority Resident Program (HARP), which has expanded resident programming and enhanced community engagement. These funds supported a variety of activities that residents enjoy and benefit from, including Sittercise classes, Sip & Paint events, and nutrition educational programs. In addition, the grant allowed for the purchase of new picnic benches, creating inviting outdoor spaces where residents can gather, relax, and connect with one another.

At the Hamden Housing Authority, we understand that it truly takes a village to succeed. Our accomplishments would not be possible without the collective efforts of our dedicated staff, and supportive Board of Commissioners. I am deeply grateful to our staff for their unwavering dedication and care. Day in and day out, they go above and beyond to support our residents and program participants while creating a welcoming, safe, and respectful environment. Their kindness, patience, and commitment truly make a difference in the lives of those we serve. I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to the Governing Board of Commissioners for their steadfast support and leadership. Their continued guidance and commitment to upholding the mission statement of the Hamden Housing Authority have been essential to our ongoing success. It is a privilege to work alongside such a dedicated and accomplished group of individuals.

Looking forward, we are dedicated to seeking new funding sources, making further improvements, and fostering partnerships that benefit our community's residents. By working together, we aim to create not only housing but also greater opportunities, stability, and a brighter future for the Hamden Communities.

I'm happy to announce that in 2025, the Hamden Housing Authority once again fulfilled our Mission Statement by offering safe, decent, and affordable housing to families with low and moderate incomes.

Respectfully submitted,

Hazelann B. Cook

Hazelann B. Cook
Executive Director