

From: [Jarrod Strickland](#)
To: [Zach Summerlin](#)
Subject: NAMI Florida Letter of Support
Date: Thursday, July 13, 2023 10:55:41 AM
Attachments: [We sent you safe versions of your files.msg](#)
[State Supportive Housing Plan 7.13.23.pdf](#)

Mimecast Attachment Protection has deemed this file to be safe, but always exercise caution when opening files.

Good morning Zach,

Attached is NAMI Florida's Letter of Support for the Statewide Permanent Supportive Housing Workgroup.

Please let me know if you need anything further.

My best,

Jarrod Strickland

Executive Director | [NAMI Florida](#)
(850) 316-8966





7/12/23

Florida Housing Finance Corporation
c/o Zach Summerlin

Via e-mail: Zach.Summerlin@Floridahousing.org

Re: Support for the Statewide Permanent Supportive Housing Workgroup

NAMI Florida is grateful to the Florida Housing Finance Corporation for establishing, convening, overseeing, and inviting stakeholders to participate and collaborate in the statewide permanent supportive housing workgroup to create a State Plan to provide supportive housing for Florida's vulnerable populations, including those with serious mental illness and often co-occurring substance use disorders. Providing safe, supportive housing reduces high utilization of emergency services such as ERs, Crisis Stabilization Units, shelters, and jails—and is the cornerstone of recovery.

NAMI Florida is the state organization for the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), with 24 local affiliates throughout our state. Our mission is to improve the quality of life of individuals and their families affected by mental illness through education, support, and advocacy. We believe that persons with mental illnesses can **live in recovery within their community of choice**. Therefore, we consistently identify the critical need for more permanent supportive housing as a top priority.

The *2022 Florida Cultural Health Disparity and Behavioral Health Needs Assessment, An Analysis of the Managing Entity Behavioral Health System of Care*, p. 27, identified 676,982 adults with serious mental illness living in Florida in 2020. Many receive only Social Security income of \$914 per month and are unable to pay affordable housing rental rates. They may not meet the HUD criteria for homelessness but are *at risk* of homelessness. Supportive housing is a prerequisite for their recovery, allowing treatment to be effective.

Long-term sustainable funding through a Supportive Housing Trust Fund that includes some funding for health and wellness services would reduce homelessness, decrease hospitalizations, prevent incarcerations, encourage re-entry into the workforce and volunteerism, significantly reduce costs of behavioral health care, reduce stigma of mental illness by integration into the community, and support recovery and restore lives.

As evidenced by 2018 results from the pilot programs in Miami-Dade, Duval, and Pinellas Counties, providing supportive housing to individuals experiencing housing instability and utilizing an abundance of crisis services showed success in avoiding the costs of victimization, criminalization, hospitalization, emergency, and homeless services. Appropriately placed, individuals with SMI have opportunities to live lives of dignity and productivity. Additionally, state and local governments may reinvest the savings in rental assistance and other community housing supports.

Again, thank you very much for leading this promising initiative!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jarrod Strickland", is written over a white background.

Jarrod Strickland
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