

**Bridging Rental Assistance Program (BRAP)  
Monitoring Report  
June 30, 2009**

The Bridging Rental Assistance Program (BRAP) has been established in recognition that recovery can only begin in a safe, healthy, and decent environment, a place one can call home. The Office of Adult Mental Health Services recognizes the necessity for rental assistance for persons with mental illness, particularly those being discharged from hospitals, group homes, and homeless shelters. There is not a single housing market in the country where a person receiving Social Security as their sole income source can afford to rent even a modest one-bedroom apartment. In Maine, 96.1% of a person's SSI standard monthly payment is needed to pay for the average one-bedroom apartment in Cumberland or Sagadahoc Counties; and in the Kittery, Elliot, York and South Berwick area (York County), up to 124% of a person's SSI is required to pay for the average one bedroom apartment.

BRAP is designed to assist individuals with housing costs for up to 24 months or until they are awarded a Housing Choice Voucher (aka Section 8 Voucher), another federal subsidy, or alternative housing placement. All units subsidized by BRAP funding must meet the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Housing Quality Standards and Fair Market Rents. Following a **Housing First** model, initial BRAP recipients are encouraged, but not required to accept the provision of services to go hand in hand with the voucher.

The monitoring of the Bridging Rental Assistance Program (BRAP) is the responsibility of the Office of Adult Mental Health Services (OAMHS) and particularly the Director of Housing Resource Development within the OAMHS.

On July 13, 2007, because the number of persons with BRAP vouchers was 41 over the maximum, the BRAP Wait List Protocol was fully activated. The following report details the census activity over the most recent four quarters. Trending information from the previous reports (June, September, December 2008 and March 2009) is provided so ongoing activity can be readily measured against longitudinal trends. Since the last report:

The number of persons waiting for a BRAP voucher has increased, up 45% from the previous quarter, to 186 persons. The bullets below highlight some of the details regarding persons who are currently waiting for a BRAP voucher:

- Priority #1 applicants (Discharge from a psychiatric hospital within the last 6 months). Riverview and Dorothea Dix consumers are typically not waiting more than 5 days from the date of a completed application. Priority 1 applicants waiting for a BRAP voucher have increased from 34 to 54 persons, up 59%.
- Priority #2 applicants (Homeless) have increased from 64 to 91 persons, up 42%
- Priority #3 applicants (Substandard Housing) have increased from 7 to 9 persons, up 29%

- Priority #4 applicants (Community Residential Facility) have increased from 23 to 32 persons, up 39%
- Persons on the waitlist greater than 90 days have increased from 58 to 103, up 78%. CSN 6 accounts for 79% of the persons in this category with CSN 3 at 11%, and CSN 7 at 9%, CSN 2 at 1%. There are no persons waiting more than 90 days in CSN 1, 4, and 5

Since inception of the wait list, there has been a total of 745 BRAP vouchers awarded broken down as follows: Priority #1, 394; Priority #2, 288; Priority #3, 11; Priority #4, 52.

Page 5 depicts several charts and graphs detailing the status of the current BRAP voucher holders and one longitudinal graph by CSN. One trend is the length of stay on BRAP which has witnessed a substantial increase in the number of persons on the program for greater than 24 months, now representing 25% of the entire program. This is principally a result of decades of federal and state cuts to low-income and supportive housing programs. The lack of availability of these resources, particularly Section 8 at the federal level, has translated to increased pressures on state programs such as BRAP.

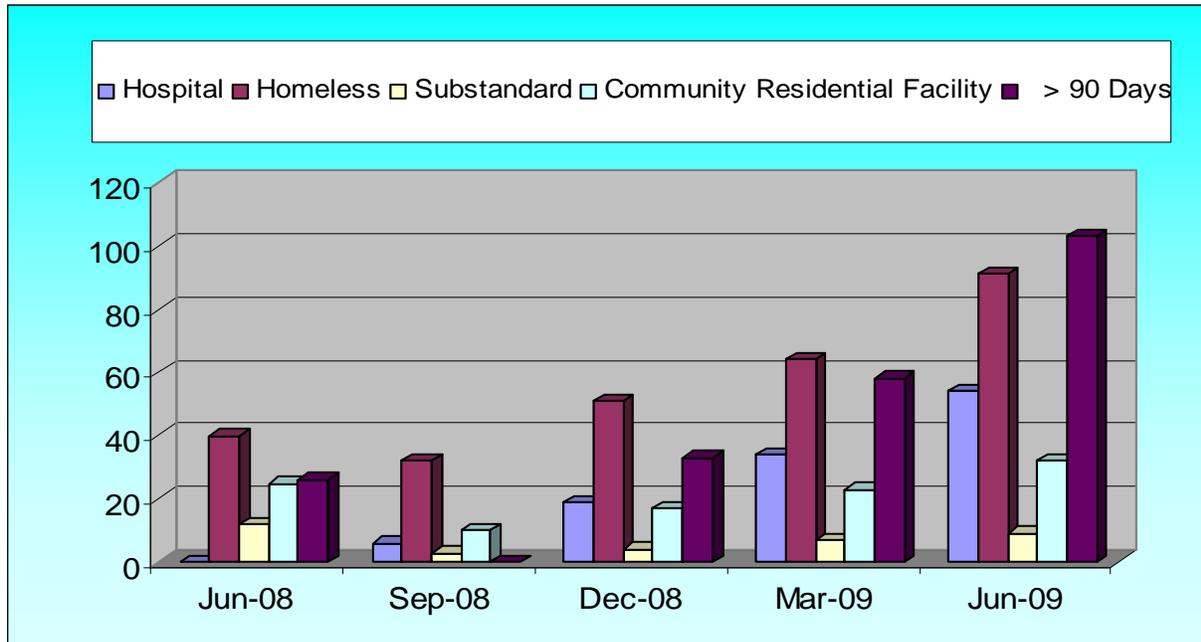
The Office of Adult Mental Health Services and our network of Local Administrative Agents are working closely with several Public Housing Authorities in pursuing a cohort of Section 8 vouchers, known as MainStream Vouchers. These vouchers are administered by Local Public Housing Authorities (PHAs), often with services coordinated by DHHS. At the time of this report, we have submitted formal comments to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, in conjunction with the National Association of Mental Health Program Directors, Maine State Housing Authority, and several other states. We can anticipate HUD issuing a Notice of Funding Availability later this summer targeting MainStream Section 8 vouchers for non-elderly disabled persons.

Despite a record of strong and persistent advocacy from both the Commissioner's Office and the Office of Adult Mental Health Services to both the Governor's Office and the Legislature, our requests for an additional \$3.5 million in each of the next two fiscal years to meet current and projected unmet needs within BRAP were not funded.

As articulated in the March 2009 report, without these increases, we will need to continue to reduce the BRAP census in order to absorb the annual increases to the Fair Market Rents (rents established by HUD on which subsidies are based). Our updated census projections call for a reduction in overall census from the current level of 550. Under such a scenario, we can anticipate continued growth in wait list numbers across all BRAP priorities and a corresponding increase in the length of time that persons will be remaining on the waitlist.

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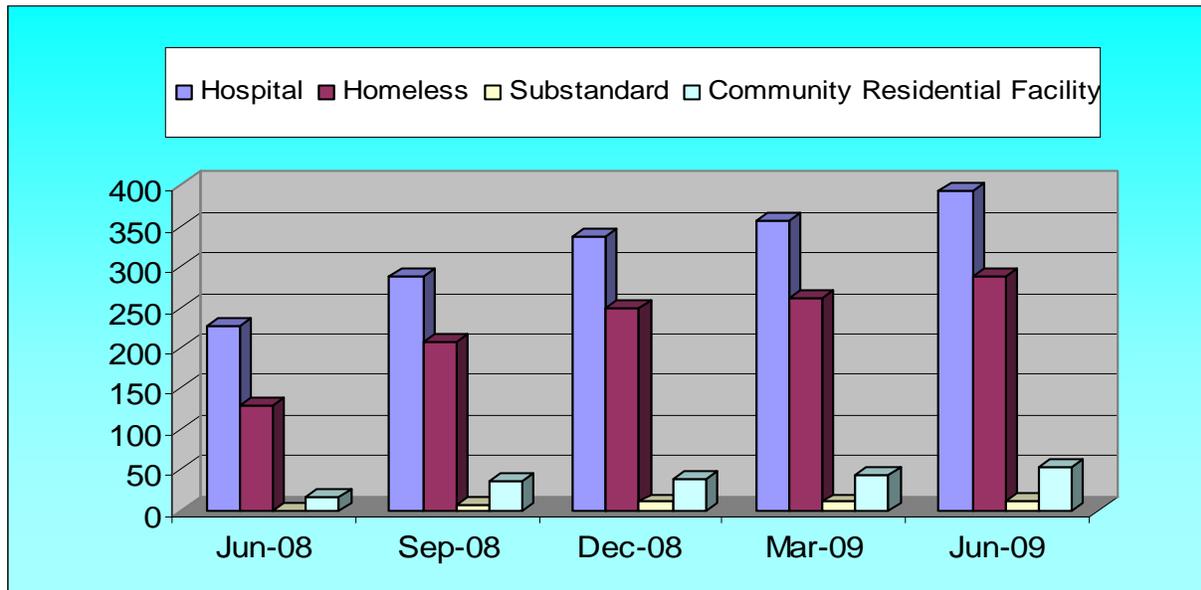
**BRAP Waitlist Status--Graph:**  
**Detail by Priority Status to include those persons waiting longer than 90 Days**



**BRAP Waitlist Status—Table:**  
**Detail by Priority Status to include those persons waiting longer than 90 Days**

Reporting Period	Jun-08	Sep-08	Dec-08	Mar-09	Jun-09	% Change relative to Last Report
Total number of persons waiting for BRAP	77	51	91	128	186	45%
Priority 1—Discharge from state or private psychiatric hospital within last 6 months	0	6	19	34	54	59%
Priority 2—Homeless (HUD Transitional Definition)	40	32	51	64	91	42%
Priority 3—Sub-standard Housing	12	3	4	7	9	29%
Priority 4—Leaving a Community Residential living facility	25	10	17	23	32	39%
Total number of persons on wait list more than 90 days awaiting voucher	26	0	33	58	103	78%

**BRAP Awards—Graph  
Cumulative Since Inception of Waitlist**



**BRAP Awards—Table  
Cumulative Since Inception of Waitlist**

Reporting Periods	Jun-08	Sep-08	Dec-08	Mar-09	Jun-09	% Change relative to Last Report
Cumulative number of persons awarded BRAP	374	537	635	671	745	11%
Priority 1—Discharge from state or private psychiatric hospital within last 6 months	228	288	337	356	394	11%
Priority 2—Homeless (HUD Transitional Definition)	129	208	249	262	288	10%
Priority 3—Sub-standard Housing	0	6	10	10	11	10%
Priority 4—Leaving a DHHS funded living facility	17	35	39	43	52	21%

Snapshot status of Current BRAP voucher holders as of June 30, 2009:

