

NEWS from the North Dakota Department of Human Services and the North Dakota Housing Finance Agency

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Contacts: Heather Steffl of the ND Department of Human Services, 701-328-4933, or Sarah Mudder of the ND Housing Finance Agency, 701-328-8056

Affordable Housing Conference is July 24 in Bismarck

BISMARCK, N.D. – The Housing Alliance of North Dakota (HAND) will present “*An Address for All*” planning conference on Friday, July 24. Organizers have invited a broad group of stakeholders to tackle the challenge of providing affordable, accessible, and safe housing options for all North Dakotans. They will meet from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. CDT at the Ramkota Hotel, 800 S 3rd St., Bismarck.

“When it comes to housing the citizens of our state, we are encountering very diverse needs, and our challenges are growing,” said Tom Alexander of Minot State University. “HAND’s goal is to bring housing advocates, service providers and other interested parties to the table to develop a plan to address our state’s housing shortfalls.”

“Many public housing programs in North Dakota have long waiting lists,” said Mike Anderson of the ND Housing Finance Agency. “In some cases the problem is a lack of affordable units; in other cases, while people may qualify for assistance to help with rent in market-rate units, there isn’t enough funding for vouchers.”

Organizers are also greatly concerned about the state’s lack of accessible housing choices, and an increasing need for supportive services that allow individuals who are elderly or who have disabilities to remain in their communities.

“To develop a North Dakota solution, we felt it would be helpful to learn more about what has worked in other areas of the country,” said Jake Reuter of the Department of Human Services.

Featured speakers include Marie Williams from Tennessee’s Department of Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities who will share that state’s successful strategies, and Patricia Tucker, a supported housing expert. Conference attendees will take part in guided discussions that will frame what North Dakota wants to do with solutions happening at the local level.

The event is sponsored by the North Dakota Department of Human Services’ Money Follows the Person initiative and its Division of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, the North Dakota Housing Finance Agency, and the North Dakota Center for Persons with Disabilities at Minot State University. For information on the conference, call 800-233-1737.

The HAND seeks to ensure that every North Dakotan has access to a decent, safe, affordable, accessible place to live.

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