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Welcome House Expands Payee Services to Lexington

[Covington, KY] Welcome House of Northern Kentucky – a Covington-based agency dedicated to ending homelessness in Kentucky – has been awarded a contract by the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government to bring its representative payee program to the city.

Welcome House’s representative payee program addresses homelessness by helping people with mental and/or physical disabilities manage their disability income, which in turn ensures stable housing. The payee helps develop a budget and directly pays rent, utilities and other monthly bills on the client’s behalf. Payee clients often transition from living on the streets with debilitating illnesses to having an income, housing, medical coverage, and the support necessary to lead a more independent life. 98% of payee clients served stay stably housed for over two years.

Expanding the payee program to Lexington is part of Welcome House’s strategy to identify and fill gaps in homeless services across the state by leveraging the organization’s established infrastructure and expertise.

“We have three decades of experience with payee programs and a record of positive outcomes,” said Welcome House CEO Danielle Amrine. “It is much more efficient for us to bring this expertise and infrastructure to Lexington than for an organization to try and replicate it from scratch. That’s what made Welcome House attractive to the city, and that’s the model we’re using across the state.”

In addition to expanding the payee program, Amrine said Welcome House will look to leverage other services in which the organization excels, including permanent supportive housing, rapid rehousing, social security outreach and services coordination.

“There is a tremendous need for these services,” she said. “We do them well, and we can do them at scale.”

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Founded in 1982, Covington-based Welcome House of Northern Kentucky works to end homelessness across the state. The organization’s continuum of services includes providing homeless individuals and families shelter and housing and ensuring people who are on the brink of homelessness or living in extreme poverty stay housed by managing their income and benefits. Welcome House also coordinates services with other community organizations to provide stability for everyone they serve. The Welcome House staff of nearly 50 includes experts in housing, budgeting, social security benefits, accounting, healthcare and street outreach. They are supported by thousands of volunteers and donors and a board of directors comprising community leaders and industry experts. Welcome House was a 2019 recipient of a \$1.25 million grant from the Day 1 Families Fund – created by Amazon founder Jeff Bezos to provide grants to organizations moving the needle on family homelessness.

