

AIDS Foundation OF CHICAGO

Support \$1.5 Million in New City HIV/AIDS Housing Funding Prevent Homelessness & Improve Health for People with HIV/AIDS

It's simple: AIDS housing saves lives. HIV-positive people with safe and affordable housing are better able to manage their healthcare, complex treatments, and receive the rest and nutritious foods they need to stay healthy. A physically disabling disease that attacks the immune system, HIV/AIDS is also a disease of poverty. Nearly 1 in 2 people with HIV/AIDS live in poverty or become too sick to earn a living. Affordable housing is scarce and rents are rising; poor people with HIV/AIDS increasingly face untenable choices between paying for rent and utilities, or food and medication. Without help, too many disabled people can scarcely afford to meet any of their basic needs. *For these reasons we urge Mayor Daley and City Council to appropriate \$1.5 million in new, ongoing city funding toward AIDS housing services in the 2008 city budget.*

After leaving prisons, substance abuse treatment or hospitals, people with HIV need housing immediately. Community residences (group living settings that provide intensive support services) are at capacity and need additional funding to reduce wait lists and serve additional clients. Facilities provide a range of vital services from ongoing substance abuse treatment; education on living with HIV; life skills; and help sustaining healthcare access, nutrition, and medication adherence.

The number of rental assistance slots has dropped by 50% for low-income people disabled by HIV/AIDS; almost 500 clients have lost assistance since 2005. Funding has declined because one-time federal funding received in 2004 is now gone. The AIDS rental assistance program provides subsidies up to \$2,250 per year to disabled people with HIV/AIDS on fixed incomes, often as little as \$623 per month. The financially strapped program has been closed to new applicants since 2005.

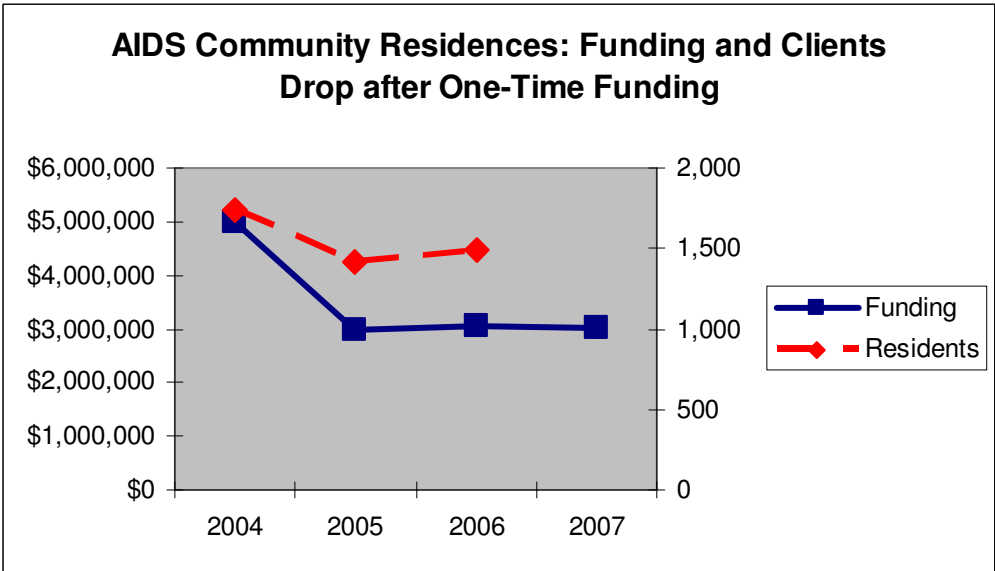
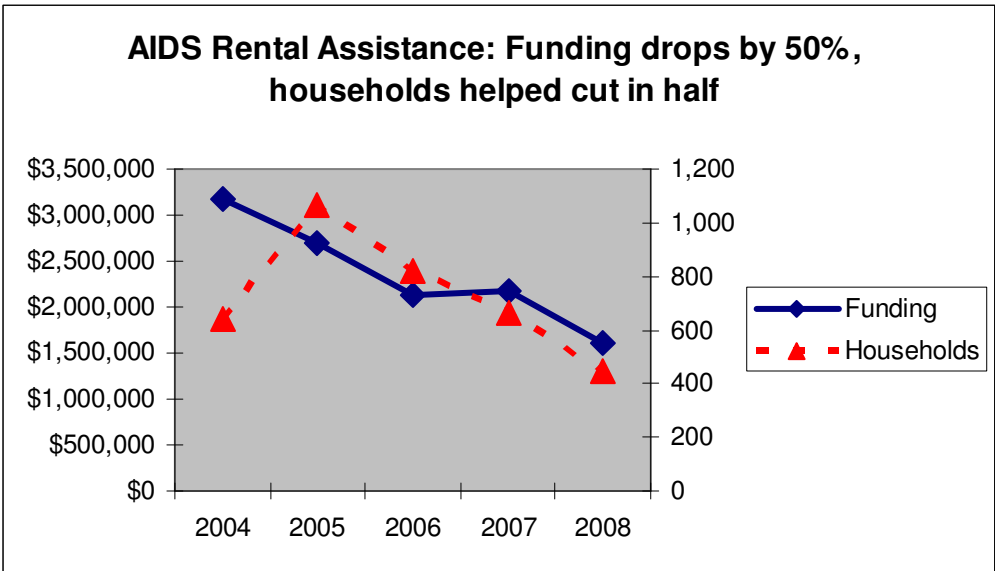
According to national estimates, **10,000-15,000 people living with HIV/AIDS in Chicago need housing assistance, but just 1,460 units are currently set aside for people with HIV/AIDS.** As many as 50% of all people living with HIV/AIDS are extremely low-income and at risk of severe health problems because of housing instability.

AFC and its partners are seeking a city funding increase of \$1.5 million to expand **rental assistance, housing locator, and community residential services** for low-income HIV/AIDS-affected households.

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HIV/AIDS Housing Funding supports the goals of Chicago's 10-year Plan to End Homelessness

- 1/3-1/2 of those living with HIV/AIDS are homeless, incapable of affording their current housing, or at risk of homelessness.
- Many AIDS housing facilities combine stable housing with medical, mental health, substance abuse, and other services so vulnerable clients can chart a path toward stability and independence.
- Additional rental assistance funding would allow clients to "graduate" to independent subsidized housing at a much lower cost, opening up beds in community residences for homeless individuals with complex needs and few (or no) family or friends to turn to for help.



Source: CDPH and AFC. 2008 data are projected. Funding was higher in 2004 because of a one-time federal bonus. That funding has been completely spent, and services for people with HIV/AIDS are likely to be cut if additional funding is not identified.