



## 2022 Year End Report

For Sarah's Circle, 2022 has been a year of sustained progress despite several challenges. Almost two years deep into the pandemic, 2022 began with record-high Covid-19 cases due to the Omicron wave, which made finding safe shelter even more difficult for Chicago women during a tough winter. Furthermore, higher rent, food, and fuel costs have placed even women with stable incomes and housing into uncertain circumstances.

Yet, Sarah's Circle has some good news to share: Despite the challenges of Omicron and inflation, we have kept hundreds of women safely housed or permanently ended their homelessness. In these tough conditions, Sarah's Circle has been a lifeline for more than 800 women. **Our staff has provided case management services to get over 450 lives back on track and placed 173 women in permanent housing.**

<b>HOW DID WE HELP WOMEN THIS YEAR?</b>	<b>804</b> Women served in all programs	<b>40,000</b> Meals provided by Sarah's Circle (all programs)	<b>245</b> Women served in Interim Housing
	<b>456</b> Women received Case Management	<b>92</b> Women served through our Rapid Rehousing Program	<b>173</b> Women placed in permanent, stable housing

### Our Programs

The growing needs of vulnerable women mean that our support has become more crucial than ever. Sarah's Circle operates a Daytime Support Center open to all women experiencing homelessness with showers, computers, laundry, nutritious meals, coats, case management, and educational programming. Our Interim Housing Program offers 50 beds, computers, case management, and comprehensive supportive services. The comprehensive supports are designed to move women from Interim Housing into stable housing as quickly as possible. We also provide 73 fully furnished studio apartments and supportive services through our Permanent Supportive Housing Program (PSH). Additionally, our Rapid Rehousing Program helps women newly experiencing homelessness find a place to live within 30 days.

This multi-faceted approach means that Sarah's Circle is tackling homelessness from a variety of angles: Our Daytime program and Interim Housing program helps supply immediate services to women currently experiencing homelessness including all life necessities, and our PSH program provides a permanent solution for women, many of whom have a long term history of homelessness.

## Mental Health

While Sarah's Circle continues to help change the lives of numerous women, there are still far too many people experiencing the trauma of homelessness. Before coming to Sarah's Circle, many clients had been living in a place not meant for human habitation like an abandoned building or a temporary situation like a medical facility or other emergency shelter. Furthermore, of the women Sarah's Circle serves, more than one in three have reported experiencing domestic violence.



*Pet therapy for vulnerable women at Sarah's Circle.*

These traumatic experiences often have a lasting impact on the physical, mental, and emotional health of vulnerable women. Quite a few of the women Sarah's Circle serves have a physical disability or a mental health condition, and many still lack access to adequate treatment. **Recently, our staff has reported a growing need for mental health services at our shelter to help support these vulnerable women.**

Providing 24-hour care 7 days a week for those in need is complex and expensive, especially considering the stress of the job involved and the staffing difficulties faced across the country. However, as needs have continued to rise, Sarah's Circle is stepping up to the challenge by increasing our mental health resources for clients, including expanded partnerships with community based mental health providers and the National Association of Mental Illness (NAMI). **Sarah's Circle is committed to providing not just the bare necessities for women but also the case management and personal support that many women need to end their homelessness.**

## Rising Costs

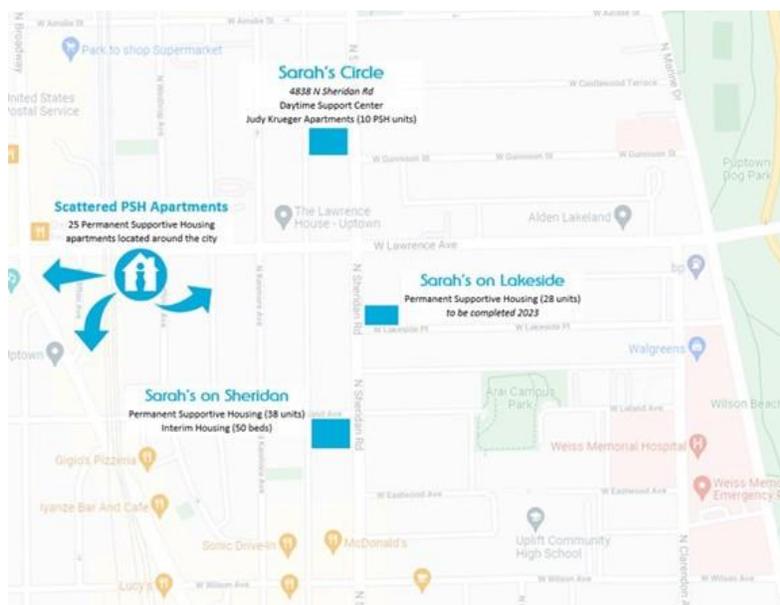
This year, rising costs, especially for rent and food, have made conditions even more precarious for many people. The 2022 Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Fair Market Rent in the Chicago area is \$1161 per month for a one-bedroom apartment, while an adult working full-time at \$15 per hour earns only \$2600 per month before taxes. Today, a renter would need to earn about \$22 an hour to afford a one-bedroom unit without paying more than the recommended 30% of income on housing. These high costs mean that even many people working full-time are struggling to make ends meet.

The reality is that many homeless women are far from attaining even these relatively low incomes. 53% of Sarah's Circle clients do not have a source of income at program entry; for those with a source of income, 82% of clients receive payments through Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) or Supplemental Security Income (SSI). Even for those who enter Sarah's Circle with some employment, the average monthly income at program entry is only \$1044 per month, far below fair market rent. For many women, the high cost of living makes finding a safe place to call home simply unattainable.

According to Housing Action Illinois there are only 36 affordable rental units for every 100 extremely low-income renter households in Illinois. **Sarah's Circle is working to permanently end homelessness for women in Chicago by building permanent housing for Chicago's most vulnerable women and providing continuous case management and support.**



*Sarah's on Lakeside, on track to open in 2024 in Uptown Chicago. The facility will provide 28 affordable housing units, more communal space, a demonstration kitchen, and case management offices.*



Sarah's Circle already houses 73 women in our Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) program. We are excited to expand this program with our third development, Sarah's on Lakeside, which will create permanent new homes for 28 women. In addition to the apartments, Sarah's on Lakeside will have dedicated program space for all the women in our PSH program.

Sarah's on Lakeside is currently on track to open in 2024. And as noted on the map

above, this third building will create a campus of three building all within one block of each other. The new development will bring our total number of permanent housing units to 101, furthering our progress in ending homelessness.

## Judith's Story

Judith is one of many women who have benefitted from our programs this year.

Judith came to Sarah's Circle's Interim Housing Program at the height of the Omicron spike. Judith has experienced multiple bouts of homelessness including most of her childhood. Before coming to Sarah's Circle Judith had been homeless for over seven years. She is a survivor of intimate partner violence and several back surgeries have left her unable to work. Although Judith is a strong woman, her circumstances often left her feeling hopeless.

After living for three months in Sarah's Circle's Interim Housing Program, with the help of her case manager, Judith was able to secure a housing voucher. Sarah's Circle covered the costs of her application fee and move-in fee. Today, Judith lives just blocks from Sarah's Circle and loves her new home. As Judith says, **"I wouldn't be where I am today without Sarah's Circle."**



*Judith, a woman who has overcome homelessness with the support of Sarah's Circle.*

As Judith's story shows, many women can beat homelessness if they are given the support and resources that Sarah's Circle provides. **Your support has directly helped Judith, and many other women experiencing homelessness, find a warm, safe place to call home.**

Sarah's Circle can only do this critical work because of the love and support of generous donors like you. Thank you for your commitment to the women of Chicago. Your help changes lives.