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DOVE to Transform Group Shelter Life to Independent Apartment Living

Launches new Housing & Economic Empowerment Program to aide dozens more seeking safe housing

QUINCY — Supported by growing trends, research and best practice initiatives in the field of domestic violence, [DOVE, Inc.](#) will transform its shelter model at the end of June, replacing six bedrooms in an aging congregate shelter building with six individual apartments to house families escaping domestic violence. DOVE will launch a new Housing and Economic Empowerment Program that will help scores of additional survivors in finding, securing and affording safe and stable housing.

The shift from a congregate shelter site to an apartment-based shelter model will allow the shelter system to provide a more supportive, healing environment for the survivors who reside in the shelter and aligns with growing trends in the domestic violence field toward a more survivor-centered approach to services.

DOVE's existing congregate shelter structure provides temporary housing to an average of 14 survivors annually. With the new program design, DOVE estimates the organization will be able to serve more survivors each year, radically enhancing services provided to clients.

In addition to better serving survivors, the move supports a more effective and efficient use of money and resources. DOVE will invest its efforts in a Housing & Economic Empowerment Program (HEEP) operating with three full-time advocates offering a range of comprehensive services.

In addition to providing housing and case management services for the six off-site transitional living apartments, advocacy staff will facilitate services for community-based clients offering monthly housing

workshops, individual client meetings to secure all eligible benefits, housing applications assistance, housing search, and develop relationships with local housing authorities. The goal is to focus with each client on a plan to build economic sustainability.

Longtime DOVE employee and **Interim Director Residential Services Maureen Flores** said, "I have been honored to work with DOVE for the last 30 years, and utilized their services myself before that, seeking emergency shelter with my children. I am also so proud to be part of this process moving shelter from a congregate living environment to that of an individual apartment model. DOVE has found a better way to assist survivors by giving them a way to live safely with dignity and peace, while also having the connection to knowledgeable Advocates who can assist them with moving forward, working on their future, and interacting with other survivors as they choose."

Caddie Nath-Folsom, Director of Legal Advocacy at DOVE, said, "DOVE began exploring the apartment model during the pandemic, and we found that families flourished in that kind of setting. It makes sense. Imagine trying to heal from trauma while living so closely in a house with many other families who are also trying to heal and rebuild. It is a hard arrangement. They don't have the personal space they need to process what they've been through and parent their children. The apartments give survivors their own space and autonomy."

"DOVE's decision reflects an in-depth assessment of what is in the best long-term interest of the organization and the survivors they serve," said **Debra Robbin, Executive Director of Jane Doe Inc.**, the Massachusetts Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence. "Transitioning from an emergency shelter model to an expanded off-site apartment model will allow DOVE to better support the safety and recovery of survivors, and ensure that DOVE's operations are sustainable, so that they can continue supporting individuals and families in need throughout Norfolk County and the greater South Shore. We look forward to continuing to partner with DOVE to secure essential resources for adults, teens, and children experiencing violence, and to continue our collective efforts to find safe, affordable housing options for all survivors who need them."

ABOUT DOVE, INC.

Founded in 1978, [DOVE, Inc.](#), has expanded from a crisis hotline to a multi-service organization providing comprehensive direct services and support for victims of dating and domestic violence, as well as their children. DOVE works specifically with adults, teens, and children who have been abused, emotionally and financially, as well as physically and sexually. DOVE's services include crisis intervention, danger assessment and safety planning, supportive counseling, emergency shelter, legal advocacy and representation, and community outreach, education, and training.

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