

HEARTBEAT DENVER STAFF MEMBERS

# FINDING A WAY HOME



Heartbeat Denver helps men transition out of homelessness through sobriety, employment, accountability, supportive community, and purpose.

Safe shelter. Steady support. A path toward independence.

# WHEN LIFE CHANGES OVERNIGHT

Life took a head-spinning turn for Barry last year. While working the line at his chef job, he received a panicked call: his apartment unit was ablaze. Racing home and facing the damage, Barry recalls, "...lost everything; everything pretty much a memory."

Management denied responsibility for faulty heating system wiring, leaving the family unhoused. Their trusted babysitter took in the kids, and Barry began his own search for shelter. He spent nights in his truck until he could no longer make payments, then stayed at an extended stay before moving into a local shelter. But the shelter's inflexible afternoon check-in time collided with Barry's crosstown bus commute. As a supervisor, his boss expected him to sign off on all tasks, making his schedule unpredictable.

A chance conversation led Barry to Heartbeat Denver. After several months at HBD, he secured a great cooking job just a block from HBD. Asked how he's managed, Barry says, "I just kept my head up. My big motivation is my children." His goal is to find housing for all of them in a few months and he's committed to "saving up to have some extra" to make the transition.

Barry is quite eloquent when he talks about Heartbeat Denver. "You have time to focus at HBD. Rules are very simple. Staff listens to you; they help navigate through the systems." In the shelter, Barry realized, "It's not all drug and alcohol related." Hearing others' stories, he sees that it is also "circumstance; nobody's above being in a place like this. It's one of the best places one could come. Usually at shelters, you feel unsafe. I can actually be at peace here."



# THE MEASURE OF OUR MEN

For Heartbeat Denver, the #1 factor in the success of our Working Men's Program is the brave, strong, and courageous measure of our men.

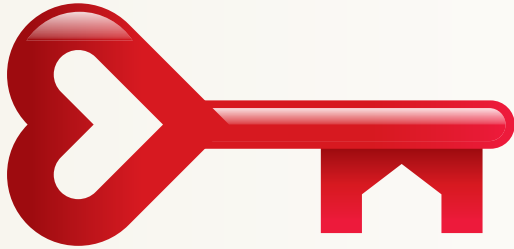
Each man who stays with the program comes to his own resolve. He chooses to maintain sobriety. He seeks and follows through with paid employment or volunteer work. He commits to the mutual respect needed to contribute to daily life in a clean, safe community with nearly 100 other men.

This is the foremost and most accurate measure of Heartbeat Denver's success. The program provides structure, stability, and support, but the men themselves do the daily work of rebuilding.

For Barry, that structure made all the difference. "You have time to focus at HBD," he says. "Rules are very simple. Staff listens to you; they help navigate through the systems."



# CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS



Success begins with **sobriety**.

**Employment** is essential.

The path forward requires personal **accountability**.

Building a supportive **community** is vital.

Long-term success requires more than stability. It requires **purpose**.

At Heartbeat Denver, these five factors guide the Working Men's Program. Together, they create the structure, support, and expectations that help men move toward lasting independence. They also remind every resident that success is not something done for him. It is something he works toward each day, with support around him and responsibility in his own hands.

**Heartbeat Denver is a Working Men's Program with one mission:** to help men transition out of homelessness into a self-sufficient, independent lifestyle as productive citizens.

Heartbeat Denver employs a dedicated team of professionals and volunteers who help ensure the shelter operates smoothly 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Our staff works together to provide a safe, supportive, and structured environment for every resident.



**Bernard Bender, Chief of Operations**  
**Bruce Heagstedt, Executive Director**

# A FOUNDATION FOR CHANGE

Shared spaces that build community



A safe, clean, and sober environment is the foundation of Heartbeat Denver's work. For men transitioning out of homelessness, stability matters. A clean place to sleep, a hot meal, laundry facilities, clothing for work, shared living spaces, life skills support, recovery meetings, and daily structure can become the foundation for the next right step.

This environment is not only about shelter. It is about dignity, accountability, and the daily support men need as they rebuild their lives. Heartbeat Denver provides a setting where men can begin to focus on sobriety, employment, responsibility, community, and long-term independence.

A safe place to rest between shifts



Clothing & essentials for a new job



# BARRIERS TO SUCCESS

The men who come to Heartbeat Denver often arrive carrying challenges that can make stability feel out of reach. These barriers may include addiction, limited job skills, difficult life circumstances, damaged credit, a prison record, gaps in daily living skills, or the long-term impact of homelessness itself.

Heartbeat Denver does not pretend these barriers are easy. Instead, the program offers structure, accountability, and support so each man can begin working through what stands between him and independence.

## COMMON BARRIERS INCLUDE:

Addiction

Job skills

Background

Life circumstances

Credit score

Prison record

Daily living skills



# THE PATH TO INDEPENDENCE



## Who We Help

The men who come to Heartbeat Denver arrive from a wide range of situations. Some are returning to society after incarceration. Others come directly from living on the streets. Some arrive after being evicted or facing personal challenges that have left them without stable housing.

Our door is open to men who are sober and willing to work toward rebuilding their lives. For those who are not yet sober, we help connect them with appropriate options such as detox centers or other interim recovery programs. Many men return from these programs ready to recommit to the structure and accountability of Heartbeat Denver's program.

## Requirements for Admission

Residents are expected to work or have a reliable source of income. Some men arrive with temporary vouchers that help cover their initial stay while they search for employment.

Many also arrive without basic necessities such as identification, a cell phone, or a job. While we do not do these things for them, we provide guidance, resources, and support to help them obtain what they need and begin moving forward toward a more stable and productive life.

**Heartbeat Denver helps men face  
real barriers with real support.**

# CHOOSING TO CHANGE

Change requires more than a safe place to stay. It requires commitment. At Heartbeat Denver, each resident is asked to take responsibility for his own progress. That means staying sober, working or seeking work, respecting the community, participating in daily life, and choosing to keep moving forward even when the path is difficult.

The men in this program are not defined by where they have been. They are actively working toward where they are going. Their courage, accountability, and willingness to change are at the heart of the mission, and their daily commitment is what turns support into lasting progress.

A man with a beard and sunglasses on his head is smiling and sitting in front of a large, textured painting of a forest scene. He is holding an acoustic guitar. The painting depicts a rustic cabin in a mountainous, forested area with a stream and trees. The man is wearing a dark shirt and is positioned in the foreground, partially obscuring the painting. The background of the painting shows a dense forest with tall trees and a small cabin with a chimney. The overall scene is set against a dark red background that transitions into the painting.

**Change requires more than a  
safe place to stay. It requires  
commitment.**

# WHERE THE WORK BEGINS



Each new resident begins with an intake process designed to understand his current situation and determine how Heartbeat Denver can best support him. During the first two days, every resident participates in orientation, where expectations for living and working within the community are clearly explained. This includes daily breathalyzer testing, shared responsibilities, program requirements, and the resources available to help him move forward.

Heartbeat Denver is unique in several important ways. Residents are expected to work or have a reliable source of income, because employment is a foundation of the program and helps build pride, accountability, and momentum. Heartbeat Denver is also the only shelter in Denver with a “night room,” allowing men who work late shifts to sleep during the day.

Residents pay **\$17 per day** or **\$119 per week**, paid in advance. A man does not need a job or money to enter the program. We work with each resident to begin a plan for success. Program fees include a bed, bedding, a locker, a bin for personal items, free laundry facilities, access to the Career Closet, weekly 12- step meetings, and life skills classes. Meals include dinner daily and breakfast Monday through Friday.

**SAFE ENTRY**

**SHARED  
EXPECTATIONS**

**STEADY  
SUPPORT**

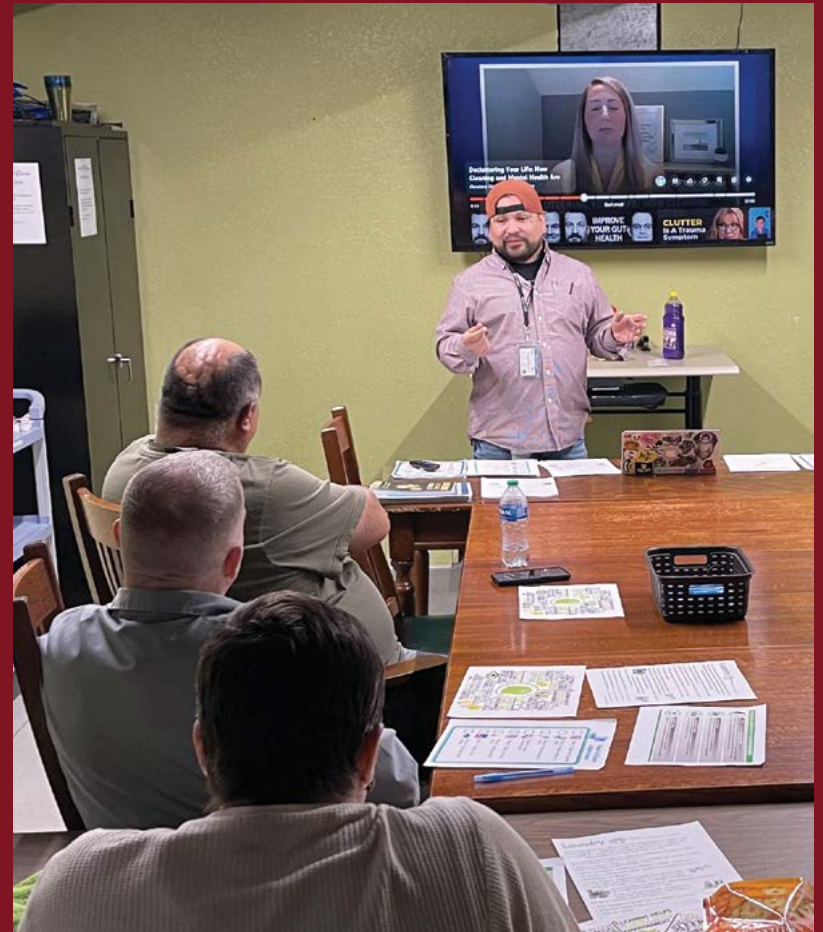
**A PATH  
FORWARD**

# AROUND THE CLOCK SUPPORT

Heartbeat Denver operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Our staff works together to provide a safe, supportive, and structured environment for every resident. This daily presence is essential to the program because accountability, consistency, and support must be available at all hours.

**Our supervisors are graduates of the Working Men's Program** who bring lived experience, personal resilience, and a deep commitment to Heartbeat Denver's mission. They provide continuous oversight of the shelter, ensuring rules are followed, residents are supported, and community standards are maintained. Supervisors work in three eight-hour shifts each day: **8:00 am to 4:00 pm, 4:00 pm to 12:00 am, and 12:00 am to 8:00 am.**

**Team leaders are residents who have demonstrated readiness for greater responsibility.** They volunteer to assist supervisors with day-to-day shelter operations and help manage the needs of each shift. In recognition of their service, team leaders are provided with a more private space in the team leader room, adjacent to the main bunk area.



**Accountability, consistency, and care are available around the clock.**

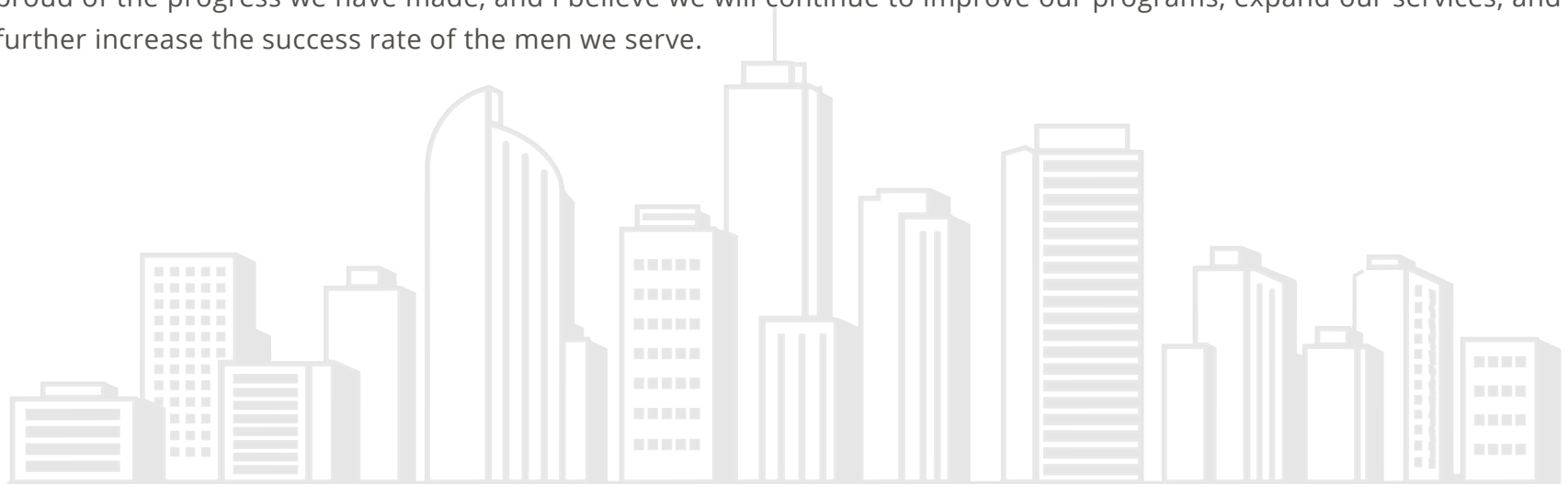
# FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

From the beginning, our primary objective has been to provide a safe, clean, and sober environment for the men who come to our program. Our first task, which began in early 2023, was the complete transformation of our physical space. From there, we built partnerships with organizations that could provide services beyond our capacity, and we developed a life skills program to help prepare residents for independent living.

I am proud to say we accomplished these objectives, and more, during our first year. In our second year, we strengthened our executive team, added a full-time chef, improved operating procedures, and made significant progress toward another major goal: helping residents find appropriate and stable housing.

With two years of experience and operations running smoothly, this past year we focused on improving every aspect of the program. We initiated formal training for supervisors, upgraded our kitchen facilities, added daily breakfasts to bracket nightly dinner, enhanced our security system, renovated our showers, and continued replacing beds and mattresses.

These improvements have contributed to a steadily increasing success rate as more residents secure appropriate housing, obtain better employment, and remain with us long enough to complete their transition to independence. I am extremely proud of the progress we have made, and I believe we will continue to improve our programs, expand our services, and further increase the success rate of the men we serve.



# MORE THAN A MEAL

**Food is an essential part of care at Heartbeat Denver.**

Our kitchen staff ensures that residents receive two hot, nutritious meals every day: breakfast and dinner. The team is led by a main chef, who procures ingredients, plans meals, and oversees kitchen operations. The chef is supported by a chef's assistant/weekend cook, and several volunteers as needed. Together, they maintain high standards for both nutrition and quality.

For the men in the program, meals provide more than nourishment. They offer stability, dignity, routine, and the reminder that a community of people cares about their well-being.



# FOOD FROM THE HEART

I, Bridges Baxter, am honored to be at Heartbeat Denver and to use my talents for this truly wonderful program. I am thankful to Bruce Heagstedt, Executive Director, and Bernard Bender, Chief Operating Officer, for having faith in me and allowing me to do what I do best.

With over 30 years of restaurant experience, I love to cook and feed others. These two great men guided and blessed me with this opportunity for employment. They have also allowed me to renovate the kitchen space so I can share my chef skills, preparing food from the heart and nourishing the bodies and souls of these working men.

I am also grateful to all the organizations throughout the Denver metro area that help us feed our men. These many religious organizations donate food, make hundreds of sandwiches, come and prepare dinners, eat with us, and volunteer their time to support us.

A special thanks to We Don't Waste, an organization that helps the entire Denver community fight hunger. We are blessed to have a weekly slot to receive a very large portion of our food needs from them. Another special thanks goes to the Men's Club of Central Presbyterian Church for picking up the food we receive each week and delivering it to the shelter.

I am so grateful, and I wish that you all are blessed by God for all of your contributions and all you do to bring Heaven here to Earth. Thank you.



# A COMMUNITY THAT SHOWS UP

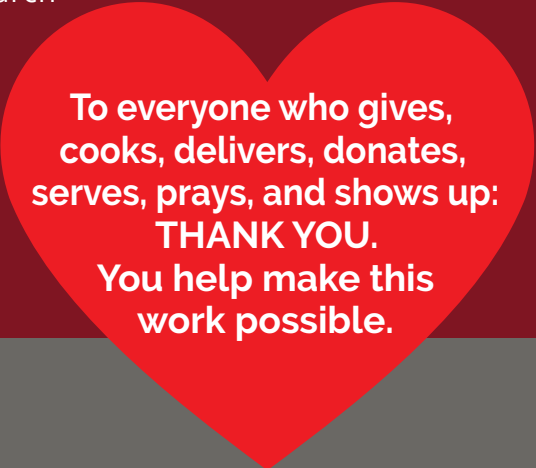
Heartbeat Denver is deeply grateful for the churches, donors, volunteers, food partners, foundations, and community members who support our men with generosity, faithfulness, and heart. Your gifts provide meals, supplies, shelter improvements, daily care, and the steady reminder that the men in this program are not alone.

That care shows up in beautiful, practical ways. On a recent Monday, a cheerful crew from Brighton First Presbyterian Church arrived with pans of homemade burritos, green chile, and all the fixings. The men feasted with great thankfulness. Brighton First Presbyterian has provided dinner for the shelter **three times a year for more than 20 years**, just one example of the steadfast support our faith communities provide.

The Lord's Daily Bread delivers protein options each week, and Risen Christ Catholic Parish provides regular food donations, including pickup and delivery of Safeway donations. Together with many faithful congregations and food partners, these gifts represent an estimated **\$80,000 in annual food support**, offering dignity, nourishment, consistency, and care.

## FAITH COMMUNITIES SUPPORTING OUR MEN

Brighton First Presbyterian Church  
Central Presbyterian Church  
Denver Catholic Workers Soup Kitchen  
First Presbyterian Church of Englewood  
Genesis Presbyterian Church  
Grace Presbyterian Church  
Green Mountain Presbyterian Church  
Montview Boulevard Presbyterian Church  
Our Lady of Loreto Catholic Parish  
Presbyterian Church of Broomfield  
Spirit of Christ Catholic Community  
St. James Presbyterian Church  
Risen Christ Catholic Parish  
The Lord's Daily Bread  
Wellshire Presbyterian Church



To everyone who gives,  
cooks, delivers, donates,  
serves, prays, and shows up:  
**THANK YOU.**  
You help make this  
work possible.

Every gift helps provide the structure, stability, and support men need  
as they do the daily work of rebuilding.

# PARTNERS IN THE MISSION

Heartbeat Denver's work is made possible through the generosity of partners who believe in the dignity, potential, and future of the men we serve. Over the past three years, more than \$700,000 in contributed support from foundations, businesses, churches, community partners and individuals has helped sustain daily operations, improve the shelter environment, strengthen services, and support men as they work toward independence. **We are deeply grateful for the organizations that invest in this mission and help make the work possible.**

## GRANTS & DONATIONS

Anschutz Foundation

Central Presbyterian Church

Colorado Housing & Finance Authority

Denver Presbytery

Colorado Trust

Wellshire Presbyterian Church

Kenneth King Foundation

Leprino Foods

SM Energy

Genesis Presbyterian Church

Safeway

## HOUSING SUCCESS RATE

**2023**

600+ men served  
72 found housing - **12%**

**2024**

654 men served  
155 found housing - **23.7%**

**2025**

501 men served  
141 found housing - **28.1%**

## ACCOUNTABILITY & IMPACT

Heartbeat Denver participates in Colorado's Homeless Management Information System, documenting services provided to men experiencing homelessness. While this data supports statewide efforts to address homelessness, Heartbeat Denver does not receive city, state, or federal government funding.

**In 2025, Heartbeat Denver reduced early program turnover by half. Men stayed longer, became better prepared, and reached housing at the highest rate in the program's recent history.**

# FROM THE CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

Greetings Everyone!

I want to start by giving honor to Jesus Christ, who is the head of my life and truly deserves all our praise. Looking forward, I feel a great sense of pride in the path we are taking. Secondly, I want to express my gratitude to your organization for taking the time to understand our work and for considering becoming a valued partner in our mission.

Over the past three years in my current role, I've witnessed the ups and downs of many individuals from diverse backgrounds. I played a key part in our transformation from the old New Genesis Shelter to our current status as one of the safest, cleanest, and most sought-after shelters in the Denver Metro area.

Our approach is straightforward yet highly effective: we engage with men in their current situations and encourage them to take responsibility for their actions. Homelessness is a persistent issue that we witness daily, whether through personal experiences or news reports from major cities. Many of these men struggle with drug and alcohol addiction, as well as the impacts of trauma from both childhood and adulthood. It's essential to provide them with the chance to rebuild their lives, relearn responsibility, and experience personal growth once more.

I sincerely hope you'll think about joining our mission at Heartbeat Denver. I would love the opportunity to meet you and show you around, so you can experience firsthand the positive impact we're making in people's lives.

In closing, I'd like to leave you all with something that I've come to learn in this thing called Life: **God is a beautiful author if we just allow him to write the Book.**

With gratitude,  
Bernard Bender, Chief of Operations



Bernard Bender, Chief of Operations

**DONATE • VOLUNTEER  
PARTNER • SHOW UP**

**HELP OPEN THE DOOR TO INDEPENDENCE:** Your support provides safe shelter, hot meals, daily structure, and steady encouragement for men working toward sobriety, employment, housing, and independence.

**Visit [hbdenver.org](https://hbdenver.org)** 303-832-0447 | [info@hbdenver.org](mailto:info@hbdenver.org) | 1680 N. Sherman St. • Denver • CO 80203