

HOME Line



2025 ANNUAL REPORT

LETTER FROM OUR Co-Executive Directors

In 2025, HOME Line entered an exciting new chapter by **formally adopting a shared leadership model**, with two Co-Executive Directors guiding HOME Line's work together. This structure reflects the values that have always shaped our mission: **collaboration, accountability, and a commitment to collective leadership**.

Housing instability is complex and deeply rooted in systems that have historically excluded tenant voices. Addressing those challenges requires not just strong legal services and policy advocacy, but leadership that reflects the collective wisdom of our staff, tenants, organizers, volunteers, and community partners.

Our shared leadership model strengthens HOME Line's ability to do exactly that. By distributing responsibility and decision-making across leadership, **we are building a more resilient organization**—one that centers collaboration, reduces reliance on a single leader, and creates space for more voices to shape the future of our work.

This approach mirrors the change we seek beyond our walls. Just as we work alongside tenants to build collective power in their homes and communities, we are committed to practicing those same principles internally.



In 2025, that work reached more renters than ever before. **Our statewide hotline served 20,241 renter households**, eviction filings reached historic highs, and tenant organizers all across Minnesota continued building networks of advocacy, leadership, and care to transform the housing landscape.

Every call answered, training delivered, tenant association formed, and policy advanced reflects the unwavering strength of this community.

Thank you so much to the renters, volunteers, partners, and supporters who make this work possible. **With your support, we are building a Minnesota where safe, stable housing is not a privilege, but a right.**

*with deep
gratitude,*

Eric Hauge

Jess Zarik

Eric Hauge & Jess Zarik
CO-EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

Tenant Hotline & Education



MINNESOTA'S ONLY FREE STATEWIDE TENANT HOTLINE

For over 30 years, renters across Minnesota have turned to HOME Line for trusted legal advice.

In 2025, demand reached the highest level in our history.

contacts came from all

87

MN counties

EDUCATION & TRAINING

HOME Line staff educate renters and community partners across the state.

In 2025:
 **147** trainings

 **3,900** participants

 **18** counties reached

Since the program began:


 **2,800+** trainings


 **86k+** participants

LANGUAGE ACCESS

Housing justice must be accessible to everyone.

 **1,196** multilingual contacts in 2025

 **4+** languages spoken by contacts, including Hmong, Somali, and Spanish, and English

 **128%** increase in multilingual contacts since 2021, reflecting growing outreach to immigrant communities across Minnesota.

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers help expand the reach of the hotline.

 **24** volunteers served in 2025

 Volunteers completed **955** follow-up contacts with renters and provided additional support to hotline advocates.

 **2** volunteers completed **50** hours of pro bono service as part of New York Bar requirements.

20,241

new renter contacts

36,377

total hotline contacts

355,120

renter households advised since 1992

Tenant Hotline: 2025

HOME Line provides free legal, organizing, educational and advocacy services so tenants throughout Minnesota can solve rental housing problems. The primary program, a statewide tenant hotline, provides renters with free, confidential, and convenient legal information about their tenant rights. The hotline began advising renters in 1992, expanding to cover the entire state in 2014.



In 2025, **20,241 Minnesota renter households** across the state – or approximately **43,712 total residents** – contacted HOME Line for Tenant Hotline Services.



HOME Line helped these households **recover or save an estimated \$1,981,880**



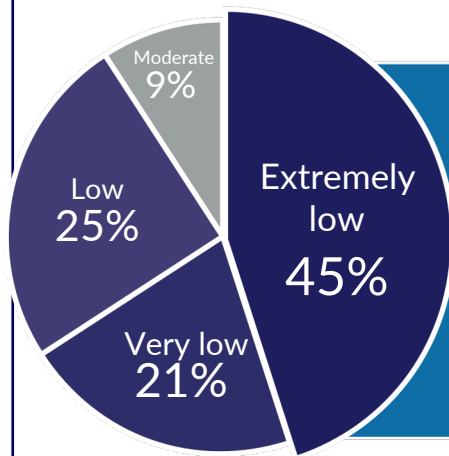
HOME Line helped to **prevent an estimated 2,429 evictions**



Renters with repair issues who followed our advice were **37% more likely to get their problem fixed.**

Top 10 Reasons for Contacts

1. Repairs	5461
2. Evictions	5307
3. Security Deposit	1842
4. Break Lease	1740
5. Lease Questions	1716
6. Landlord Notice	1397
7. Financial Aid	1331
8. Fees	857
9. Privacy / Intrusion	775
10. Neighbors	622



91% of contacts are low income; **45%** extremely low income. These income categories are those used by the U.S. Department of H.U.D.

66% of client contacts were female, **32%** were male, **2%** were non-binary or preferred to self describe.

7% Other, 7% Hispanic, 3% Asian, 2% Native American

Contact Race **50% White**

31% Black



Eviction Prevention



REACHING RENTERS BEFORE EVICTION BECOMES HOMELESSNESS

Eviction filings in Minnesota reached historic levels in 2025.

25,484

eviction filings statewide

To ensure renters know their rights, HOME Line sends a multilingual letter to every eviction defendant in Minnesota within days of filing. The letter invites tenants to call the hotline for immediate legal advice and next steps.

This simple intervention connects thousands of renters to support during one of the most stressful moments of their lives.

HOME Line also maintains one of the most accurate eviction filing datasets in Minnesota, tracking cases in real time before they may later disappear from public court records due to expungement.



8011 34th Ave. S, Suite 126,
Bloomington, MN 55425

Eviction Prevention Hotline:
XXXXXXXXXX

Email an attorney directly:
homelinemn.org/email

Free legal advice about your eviction, call:

Para consejo legal gratuito sobre su caso de desalojo (eviction), llame al:

Haddii aad rabto talo sharci oo bilaash ah oo ku saabsan guri ka saarid, naga soo wac:

Yog koj tus tswv tsev ncaaws koj tawn koj lub tsev xauj, peb muaj kev pab pub dawb kws lij choj. Hu rau:

December 27, 2025

Dear **MN Tenant**:

HOME Line is a non-profit organization that provides free legal advice to Minnesota renters on landlord-tenant issues. As part of our eviction prevention work we check court records every day for new eviction cases so we can reach out to tenants and advise them of their rights.

We are sending you this letter to let you know that your landlord has filed an eviction case against you. You may not have received anything from the court yet. You may have received a notice from your landlord that they intend to file a case.

Your case number is: XXXXXXXXXXXX You can look up the case information online at

Impact Litigation

STRENGTHENING TENANT RIGHTS THROUGH THE COURTS

In 2025, HOME Line filed four amicus briefs, including three before the Minnesota Supreme Court.

Amicus briefs allow organizations like HOME Line to provide courts with legal expertise and real-world insight into how laws affect renters statewide.

The outcome:

3 MAJOR TENANT VICTORIES!

Cases helped protect:



Anti-discrimination housing policies (Source of Income Protections).



Tenants facing illegal lockouts.



Renters receiving housing subsidies.



A fourth case challenging the eviction expungement protections that HOME Line supported remains pending before the Minnesota Supreme Court.

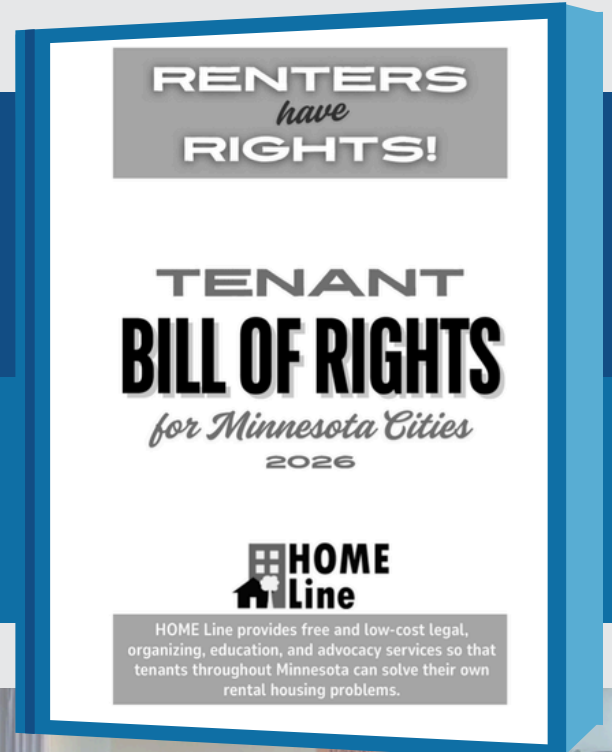
People-Powered Policy



HOUSING POLICY BY RENTERS FOR RENTERS

In 2025, HOME Line released the Minnesota Tenant Bill of Rights (City Edition) – outlining 49 policies cities can adopt to strengthen renter protections.

To ensure policymakers heard directly from renters, HOME Line launched a tenant storytelling project.



Tenant Narratives

A STORYTELLING SERIES FOR STRONG RENTER PROTECTIONS

26 Minnesota renters shared their experiences explaining how policies like Just Cause eviction protections and Source of Income protections could improve housing stability.

These stories helped spark conversations with policymakers and communities across the state.



“What if [my landlord] decides they don’t want to fix these [maintenance issues], and they find a way to get rid of me?”

I support Just Cause Protection because it works. It worked for us, and I believe it can work for everyone.”

**Mary Levi,
Minneapolis renter**



“I lost my [Section 8] voucher because I couldn’t find [a landlord] in time who would accept it.

I support Source of Income Protections for renters to have a sense of power within themselves...[Rental] subsidies are a valid source of income. We have the right to use them.”

**Fontaine Thompson-Robinson,
Richfield renter**



**FONTAINE THOMPSON-ROBINSON
MN HOUSE DISTRICT 51A**

I'm a renter in Richfield, here in Minnesota

Organizing

FROM INDIVIDUAL STRUGGLES TO COLLECTIVE POWER

HOME Line's organizing program supports renters in forming tenant associations, developing leadership skills, and advocating for housing justice.



Through training, facilitation, and strategic support, tenants learn how to organize with neighbors to address unsafe housing conditions, rising rents, and displacement pressures.

TENANT LEADERSHIP:

HOME Line supports a growing coalition of tenant leaders who meet regularly to share organizing strategies and coordinate advocacy across Minnesota.



In 2025, the Tenant Coalition doubled in size and expanded its geographical reach.

This space is fostered by HOME Line, Jewish Community Action, New American Development Center, and The African Career, Education, & Resource Inc. Tenants from seven cities in the greater Twin Cities area have attended. Leaders from four established tenant associations have continued to advance and sustain their work with support from the group.

Tenant leaders work on many projects:

organizing within their own buildings, eviction prevention outreach, and advocating for stronger tenant rights and protections in their communities.

In 2025, we saw **Right to Organize** go into effect, providing protections for every tenant in the state looking to organize.

It is the most comprehensive policy of its kind in the U.S.

Due to the passage of this policy, as well as increasing pressures on affordability and shifts in the political climate, we saw a

120% increase in organizing requests from 2024 to 2025.



Saint Louis Park



A TENANT ORGANIZING STORY

1

Through door knocking outreach, the eviction prevention project in Saint Louis Park learned of the impending sale of a large affordable housing complex in their community.

Tenant Coalition leaders Chad and Liz stepped in to support residents.

2

What began as informal chats among neighbors about their rights during a sale, quickly evolved into working to address maintenance issues, lease renewals, and maintaining stability for residents after the sale of their homes.

HOME Line's organizing team was brought in to offer a tenant rights presentation and support continued outreach to tenants.

3

Chad and Liz took proactive steps to educate themselves on local tenant protections and door knocked every single unit in the complex. Hitting over 150 doors with support from the local advocacy team, they began to understand

that the issues were deeper than the sale of the property.



4

TODAY, Chad and Liz continue to support tenant leadership in the building. This has led to easy access for

eviction prevention door knocks and plans to expand tenant organizing in the building and across the city.

WHY ORGANIZING MATTERS >>

When renters organize together, they gain the collective power to:

- negotiate repairs
- prevent displacement
- advocate for policy change
- strengthen their communities

AmeriCorps VISTA Organizing Program



DEVELOPING THE NEXT GENERATION OF TENANT LEADERS

HOME Line's AmeriCorps VISTA program builds organizing capacity in communities across Minnesota.

2025 IMPACT:

887

volunteer hours recruited

92

community meetings hosted

1,682

tenants engaged

74

rental units repaired

15,000+

hours of service



In Duluth, VISTA member Shi helped launch the Duluth Tenants Union.

Tenants gathered on the steps of City Hall to announce the group's launch and demand repairs to the city's aging rental housing stock.

This moment marked the beginning of a new tenant-led movement in the region.

HOME Line Financials

Statement of Activities For Year Ended December 31, 2025

REVENUE	
Contributions Income	54,010
Foundation Grants	981,500
Government Contracts	738,489
Other Revenue	13,471
VISTA Cohort Host Contracts	9,000
Total Revenue	<u>\$ 1,796,470</u>
EXPENSE	
Rent	94,540
Personnel Costs	1,537,929
Contracted Services	25,857
Professional Fees	17,558
Office Supplies	6,482
Communications	12,280
Insurance	9,942
Other	20,981
VISTA	47,571
Postage	18,245
Total Expense	<u>1,791,385</u>

Statement of Financial Position As of December 31, 2025

Assets	
Current Assets	708,145
Bank Accounts	465,941
Accounts Receivable	215,121
Other Current Assets	27,083
Total for Current Assets	<u>708,145</u>
Other Assets	364,677
Total for Assets	<u>1,072,822</u>
Liabilities and Equity	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	478,728
Accounts Payable	0
Credit Cards	3,377
Other Current Liabilities	475,350
Total for Current Liabilities	<u>478,728</u>
Total for Liabilities	<u>478,728</u>
Equity	594,094
Total for Liabilities and Equity	<u>1,072,822</u>

THANK YOU TO OUR FUNDERS:

The McKnight Foundation
 The Pohlard Family Foundation
 Greater Minnesota Housing Fund
 Federal Home Loan Bank of Des Moines
 Family Housing Fund
 The F. R. Bigelow Foundation
 The St. Paul Foundation
 Hugh J. Andersen Foundation
 Target Foundation
 Greater Twin Cities United Way
 Andersen Corporate Foundation
 Otto Bremer Trust

Minnesota State Bar Foundation
 Ramsey County Bar Foundation
 Fair Housing Implementation Council
 Minnesota Housing
 Minnesota Dept. of Revenue
 Minnesota Dept. of Corrections
 Neighbors For More Neighbors
 St. Paul & Minnesota Foundation
 F.R. Bigelow Foundation
 Paul Birnberg
 U of M Center for Urban & Regional
 Affairs

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 City of Bloomington
 City of Eden Prairie
 City of Plymouth
 Hennepin County
 Ramsey County
 Corporation for National
 and Community Service
 Legal Services Advocacy
 Committee
 ...and 194 Individual
 Donors!

Who We Are

MISSION

HOME Line provides free legal, organizing, educational and advocacy services so tenants throughout Minnesota can solve their own rental housing problems.

HOME Line works to improve public and private policies relating to rental housing by involving affected tenants in the process.

STAFF

Eric Hauge
Co-Executive Director

Jess Zarik
Co-Executive Director

Deb Riebel
Office Manager

Mike Vraa
Managing Attorney
& Hotline Director

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Supervising Attorney

Matt Eichenlaub
Housing Attorney

Pattye Hechter
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Stephen Rathke
Housing Attorney

Michael Dahl
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Impact Litigation &
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Tenant Advocate

Erik Vogel
Tenant Advocate and
Volunteer Coordinator

Gigi Luna
Tenant Advocate

Oscar Nieves Rubio
Eviction Data
Assistant

Ubah Shire
Tenant Advocate

Tim Anderson
Housing Attorney

Myah Grimm
Housing Attorney
& Saeks Public
Interest Resident

Melissa Johnson
Housing Attorney

Lillian Cox
Housing Attorney

Alex Mueller
Housing Attorney

Regan Reeck
Managing Organizer

Austin Fleming
VISTA Project Director

Savannah Mans-Vail
VISTA Leader

Tami Noblet
VISTA Tenant
Organizer

BOARD

Kirstin Burch
Board President
PRG, Inc.

Julie Martinez
Board Treasurer
Metro Transit

Alisha Bowen
Minnesota Department of
Human Rights

Margaret Kaplan
U of M Center for Urban
and Regional Affairs

Calondra Chandler
Tenant Leader

Pat Longs
Catholic Charities

**Emma Riebel-
Paszkiwicz**
Research Data Assistance
Center (ResDAC)

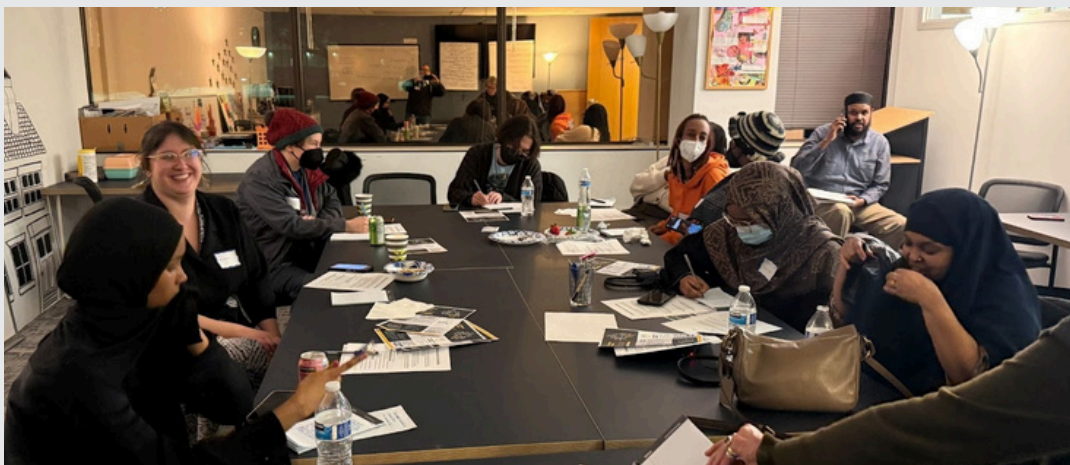
**Madeleine
Hammerlund**
MN HIV Housing Coalition
Clare Housing



HOUSING JUSTICE is a collective effort.

Every call answered, tenant trained, building organized, and policy advanced moves Minnesota closer to a future where everyone has a safe and stable place to live.

THANK YOU to the tenants, volunteers, partners, individual donors, and all the supporters who make this work possible.



www.homelinemn.org



Huge thank you to Ellie B for this beautiful report