



Newcomers Update

Safety, Housing, Education, and Homeless Committee
February 28, 2024

Introduction: Sarah Plastino, Newcomer Program Director

Mayoral Appointee, currently reporting to Anne-Marie Braga at Denver Human Services

About Sarah:

- Immigration defense attorney and advocate
- 15+ yrs experience working directly w/ immigrants & asylum seekers, including children
- Extensive policy, advocacy, community relations, and communications experience
- Spanish speaker
- Denver-based since 2017, 4 yrs providing free legal services at Aurora ICE Detention Facility
- Former CIRC Board Member, Professor at DU Sturm College of Law, CiviCO Fellow



Newcomer Snapshot



- Numbers are decreasing
 - <2,400 newcomers currently in shelter
 - Down from 4,500 newcomers on Jan. 31

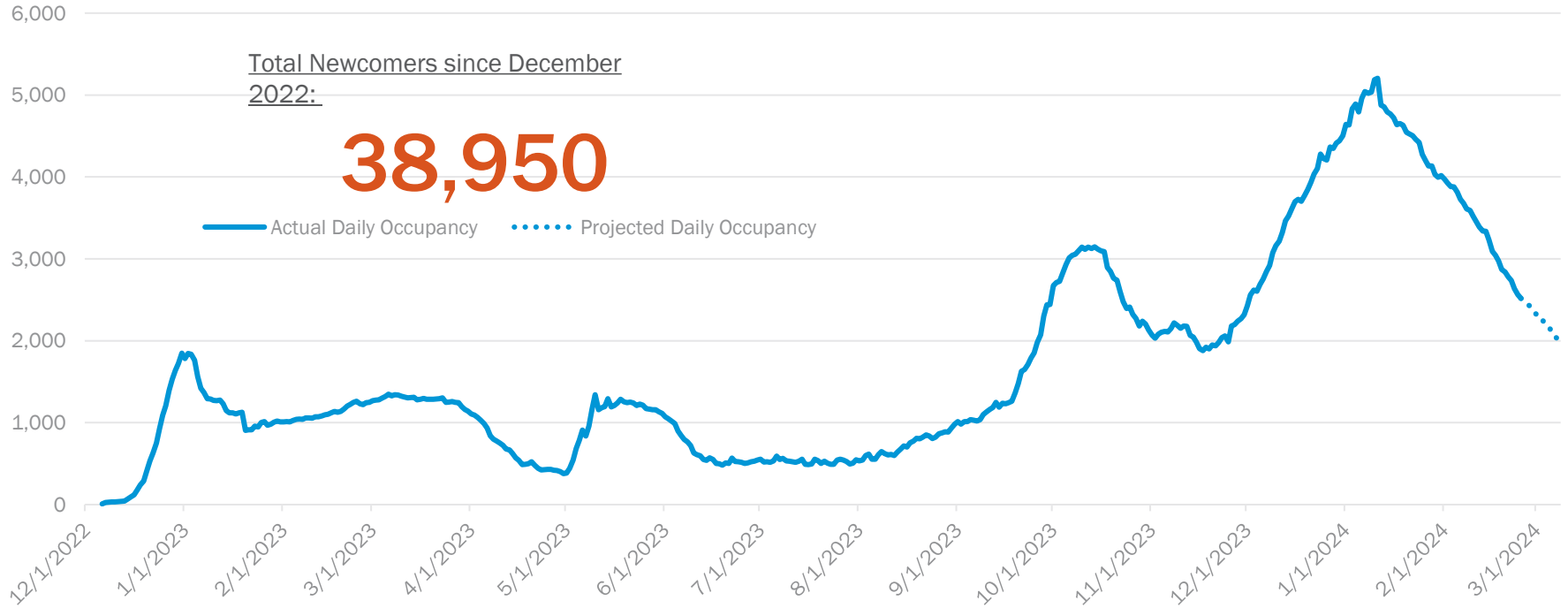


- 300 newcomers arrived in past two weeks
 - Average of 22 new arrivals per day
 - 6 buses from Texas in Feb (40 in Jan, 140 in Dec)



- 10 facilities currently activated, with plans to close some

Actual Daily Occupancy



Shelter Transition Plan

Currently Operating:

- 7 non-congregate hotel shelters
- 1 congregate shelter, with 1 on standby if needed
- 1 transitional housing facility

Consolidation and Closure Plan

- Close four hotel shelters by first week of April
- Standby congregate shelter comes offline on March 30

Discharge Process

- Our community partners are providing individualized support for each family. Upon discharge some move to transitional housing, some long-term housing, some travel onward.
- We have several organizations (13 navigators) tracking where families/individuals are going once discharged. Part of the mini-grant is to share this info at the end of March.
- Thanks to our community partners, we have not seen a large uptick in encampments.

Work Authorization Clinic Update

- 600 applications submitted through 2/23/24
- Eligibility screenings at newcomer shelters were key to preparing applicants, along with community volunteers – especially Spanish-speakers who can help with translation/interpretation, and large spaces like the Webb's atrium
- Lutheran Family Services, JAMLAC, Catholic Charities, AILA CO, Haven of Hope, Colorado Lawyers Committee have been great partners
- Based on current USCIS adjudication times, applicants should receive work permit cards in 2-3 weeks from date of the clinic
- Additional clinics scheduled through the beginning of March, anticipate assisting 700 more people.

Case Management Update

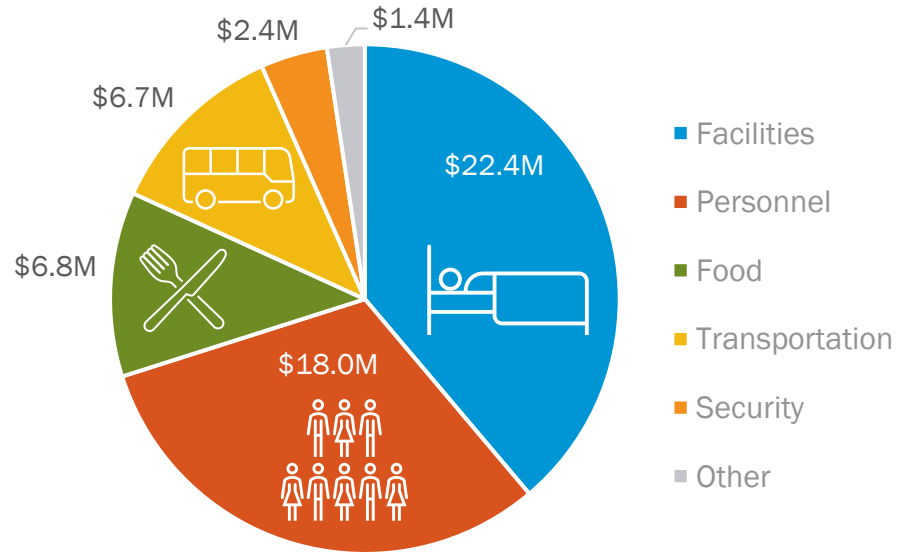
- This has been a huge success!
- Couldn't have done it without our nonprofit partners: ViVe Wellness, Papagayo, Lutheran Family Services, Village Exchange Center, Denver Dream Center, Focus Points, and Haven of Hope
- Assisting newcomers with rapid case management includes onward travel and resources for housing, education, workforce training, legal assistance, food, and others as necessary
- Initial mini-grants are through April 1, 2024

Border Crisis Special Revenue Fund

Total Costs since December 2022:

~\$58M

Total Costs by Category



Coordination with Regional/State/Federal Partners

Resources

- Please visit www.denvergov.org/newcomers to see the latest information.
- Please keep the suggestions and connections coming.

Questions?