

News Release



For Immediate Release

For more information, contact:

Sonja Cantu, Public Information Officer

540-372-1010

spcantu@fredericksburgva.gov

Madonna House Response: Update May 26

(Fredericksburg, VA) May 26, 2022 – Support efforts are ongoing for the displaced residents of the May 16th fire at Madonna House at Belmont Seniors Apartments. At this time, multiple residents are temporarily housed at the Clarion Hotel & Suites and the Sleep Inn. The City of Fredericksburg especially wishes to thank the Clarion Hotel for their above and beyond level of incredible support by providing shelter to the displaced residents as well as on-site work spaces for City staff and supporting organizations. The hospitality and helpfulness of the Clarion hotel staff, especially to the displaced residents, has been truly exceptional.

The City of Fredericksburg Department of Social Services, with help from the Fredericksburg Regional Continuum of Care and the American Red Cross, have been working to identify relief funds and housing options for the displaced residents. And they have been working alongside Madonna House Property Management to help identify a plan for each individual resident who is in temporary shelter due to the fire.

Approximately 25 apartments were fire damaged and will require several months of renovations before they can be reoccupied. The City's Fire Marshals and Building Inspectors have been assisting the Madonna House Property Management with plans for a phased reopening of the approximately 46 other apartments which were less damaged, with the goal to expedite plans and return residents to these 46 apartments as soon as possible. The property management firm at Madonna House has committed to returning 100% of the displaced residents to their apartments, if they so desire.

The residents of Madonna House senior apartment community are older adults living on a fixed income. Many of the displaced residents have lost all of their belongings – and fundraising efforts are ongoing. Members of our community who wish to help may do so in two ways:

- 1) Fredericksburg Social Services has received \$540 in gift cards to date, and will continue to accept gift cards in *any amount*. Gift cards may be delivered during business hours to Fredericksburg Department of Social Services, 608 Jackson St., Ste. 100, Fredericksburg, VA 22401. Please note that at this time our DSS cannot accept cash or donated goods. For more information about donating, please call 540-372-1032.
- 2) Healthy Generations Rappahannock Area Agency on Aging has set up a Go Fund Me called "Help for Fire Displaced Madonna House Residents" which is online at <https://www.gofundme.com/f/help->

[for-fire-displaced-madonna-house-residents](#). All funds from this campaign will be used to help with expenses and any other needs that the displaced older adults may have.

The community's outpouring of support during this emergency has been tremendous. And as Christen Gallik, Director of Fredericksburg Social Services stated, "This is a marathon not a sprint. These are our people, people of Fredericksburg, and we will be with them to ensure they have what they need."