

Partners for Housing: Renovations at Union Street allow for larger families

- [By KIRSTEN BECKER Guest Columnist](#)
- Jan 19, 2022 Updated Mar 28, 2022

With an average of 40 households applying for shelter each month, and only four or five available spaces, Partners for Housing's Union Street Place emergency homeless shelter is at full capacity and has been for some time.

Most rooms are the size of a single motel room and can accommodate single women or small families. Three of the units have an additional small sleeping area, allowing for families of four to have more space during their 90-day stay.

Melody Morrow, Housing Advocate at USP, explained the recent renovations made, which allow for a larger family.

"The staff came together [six months ago] and recognized that the old office space could be better utilized as a larger guest apartment," she said. "Especially since there is a lack of larger space for families with six or more people in them in shelters across Minnesota."

Partners for Housing's waitlist for USP has several families with five or more people, too many to safely be housed in the standard rooms.

The full-time staff and night staff had been using the former two-bedroom-plus-foyer apartment as their offices, but made the decision to downsize their office space in order to make room for larger families.

Morrow explained that they converted one of the smaller units into the new office, utilizing extra time in between meetings and regular tasks to paint, clean and update the old office, creating a three-bedroom plus bath apartment.

“We could not have done it without the help of a faithful volunteer, Arvin Verburg, who installed a wall and updated the bathroom,” Morrow stated. “The shelter aid and night staff rounded out the labor force for this undertaking.”

The newly renovated space is now complete and is housing its first larger family. The USP team is pleased to see the fruits of their labors continue to fulfill a need in the St. Peter community.

Partners for Housing’s mission is to guide individuals and families toward housing stability. Women and families seeking housing are encouraged to fill out an application at partnersforhousing.org.

To become involved with their programs or to donate, please contact 507-387-2115 or visit the website listed above.

Kirsten Becker is the communications manager for Partners for Housing, which works on housing issues in the area, including Nicollet, Le Sueur and Blue Earth counties.