

# ROCKY MOUNTAIN REFUGE 2025 ANNUAL REPORT



# Our Mission

- At least 276 people experiencing homelessness died in 2025 in Denver. End of life care is difficult or impossible to obtain when you have no home or family. This is a sad increase from the year before.
- Unhoused people approaching the end of their lives have shockingly few choices for care and what care is available is often not tailored to their needs. This leaves them feeling isolated and unsupported during one of the most critical times in their lives.
- People experiencing homelessness have no safe place to store medications, often have little care to assist in toileting or other activities of daily living. Friends and associates often are struggling with their own mental, addiction, and physical health issues and are not able to be supportive care givers.
- Without our end of life care services and supportive staff many people experiencing homelessness will die on the streets, or other less than pleasant circumstances, often in uncontrolled pain, afraid, and alone.

# Highlights for 2025

- Rocky Mountain Refuge completed it's first full calendar year of care giving services with no interruptions.
- We were able to hire a Program Manager who has revamped our documentation.
- Channel 9 created and shared a documentary concerning the Refuge.
- Served 18 people with 438 days of care.

# Program Manager

As part of our ongoing effort to improve the care we provide, we were able to hire a Program Manager, **Solomon Svehla**.

Since joining the Refuge, Solomon has revamped our internal documentation systems, giving us a much clearer and more reliable method for tracking medications, scheduling, and resident care needs. These improvements strengthen our ability to coordinate care with Hospice partners and helps to ensure that our residents receive consistent attention from our team.

He has also reorganized our rooms and storage areas, allowing care supplies to be kept more efficiently while creating additional room for residents. These practical changes have made our space calmer, more functional, and better suited to the needs of those in our care.



# Channel 9 Documentary

**Rocky Mountain Refuge** received meaningful media attention this year when 9NEWS spent several months profiling the stories of individuals receiving care inside the Refuge.

The series highlighted the deeply personal journeys of our residents and the compassionate work of our volunteers and staff.

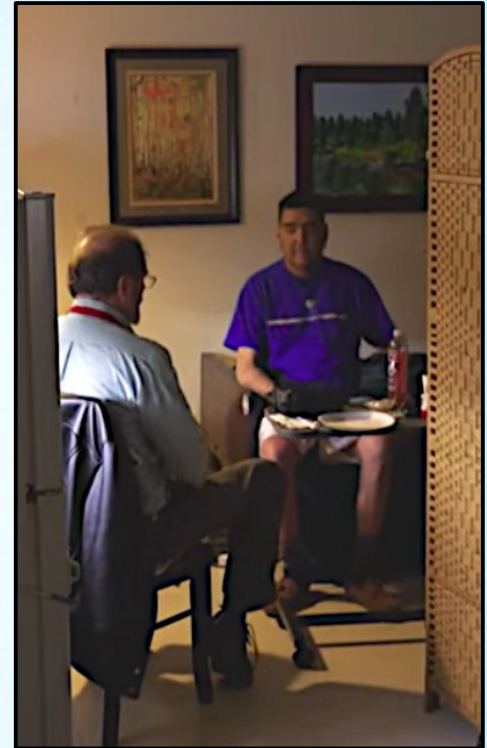
By sharing these stories with the broader community, the coverage helped raise awareness about the need for dignified end-of-life care for people experiencing homelessness.

Here's the short (2 minute) intro version of Channel 9's documentary.

<https://youtu.be/EcE9LAN6fgk?si=MgSk34O96fzMs9pr>

Here's the longer full version of Channel 9's documentary.

[https://youtu.be/wLtDa\\_lwxYk?si=fD1FNLHfPqrx2zaX](https://youtu.be/wLtDa_lwxYk?si=fD1FNLHfPqrx2zaX)



# Why we do this work Our Impact

In this image are the folks we served in 2025.

Most of them died in the Refuge, all of them had no where else to turn during their last days.

Some stayed for months and we were able to form deep relationships with them. Others were with us for a day or so and we barely got to know them.

Often when people find they are safe, they relax and nature takes its course. No matter the length of stay, we were able to care for them because of our valued supporters.



# Some of the Stories

Each of our friends who came to us had a story and we were honored to be part of it. Here are portions of their stories.



James

**James** was an avid outdoors-man and enjoyed discussing his favorite places in the mountains of Colorado. He was especially fond of our painting of a group of people on a mountain lake in a canoe and got outside as much as he could while staying with us.



Ted

**Ted** and **Desire'** both were able to reconcile with their families and able to spend a few days reconnecting with them. We do our best to help when people reconcile with their families and are very happy when it works out.



Desire'

**Jennifer** wanted to live until her grandson was born. She did get to see pictures of him and know that he was born perfect and healthy in every way. She passed three days later, her last wish granted.



Jennifer

**Christopher** was a veteran, and musician. He had fifty guitars! We were working with the VA to get him into one of their facilities when he passed peacefully with us.



Christopher

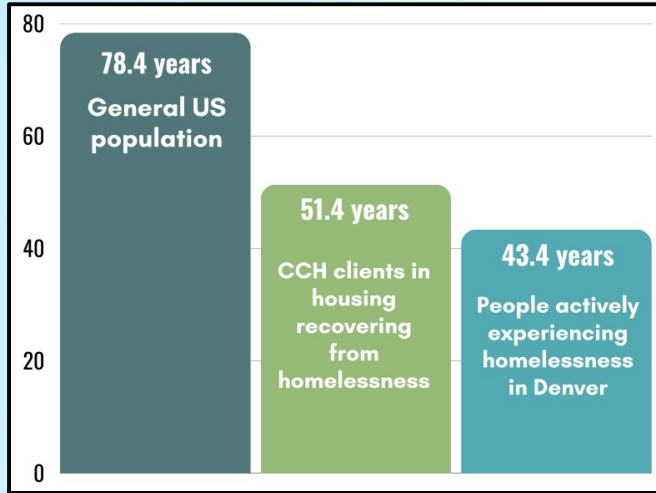
**Jose** was an extremely kind and gentle person. We worked with him for several weeks hoping to get him into the Refuge. Unfortunately, we only have three beds and he died a couple days before we could bring him in. Even so we remember him and were able to have a memorial service for him with many of his friends and family attending.



Jose

# 2025 Metro Denver Deaths

Comparison of General population vs. Unhoused



Tragically the average age of death for someone experiencing homelessness in Denver was 43.

We feel suicides are woefully under reported as are the chronic disease deaths.

\*Data from Colorado Coalition for the Homeless and the Office of the Medical Examiner and are approximations.

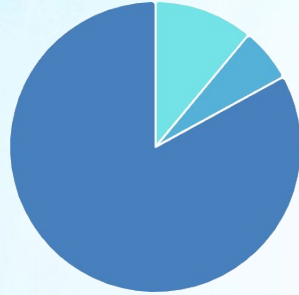
Manner of Death	
Accident/Overdose	82.3%
Natural/Illness	8.0%
Homicide	0.5%
Pending	5.3%
Suicide	2.2%
Undetermined	2.2%

Place of Death	
Outdoors (Sidewalk/Alley, Street/Road)	27.3%
Hospital or Supervised Facility	24.7%
Unknown/Other	17.2%
Residence	16.7%
Hotel/Motel	6.6%
Business	3.1%
Vehicle	2.6%
Transit Station	1.3%
Homeless Camp	0.1%

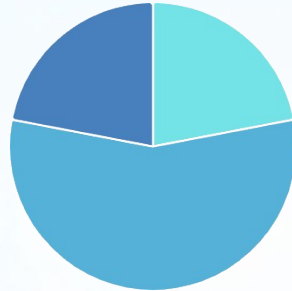
# Resident Demographics



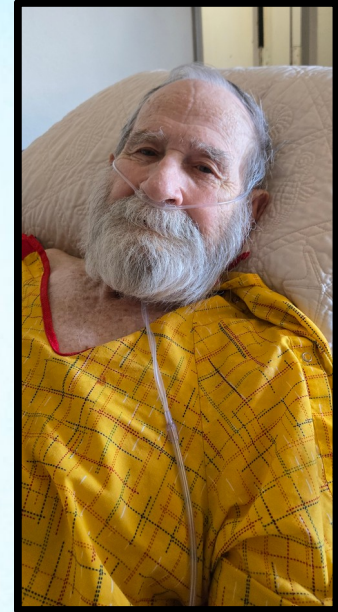
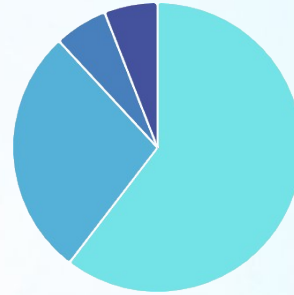
Racial  
Identity



Age  
Distribution



Gender  
Identity



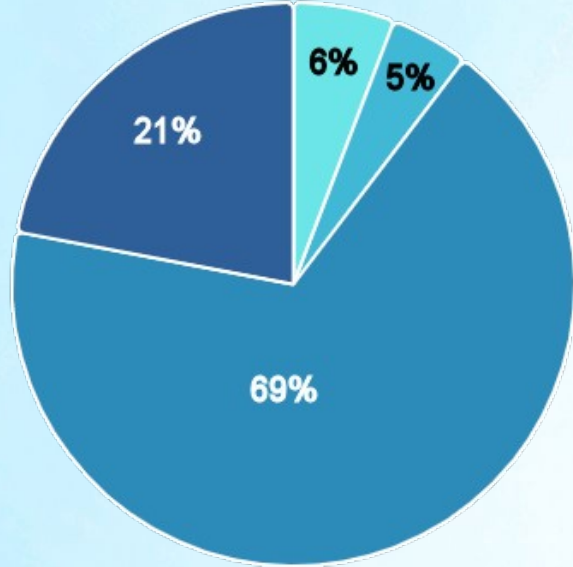
## 2025 Resident Demographics

Race: 83% Caucasian, 11% African American, 6% Native American

Age Groupings: 25-49 22% 50-64 56%, 65+, 22%.

Gender: (self reported) 61% Man, 28% Woman, 6% Trans Woman, 6% Non-Binary

# Our Finances



Hospital Contract Income	5%
Foundations	6%
Religious Organizations	21%
Individuals	69%

In 2025, Rocky Mountain Refuge reported total income of \$264,843.12. The majority of this support was contributed by individual donors. While we do not receive funding from Medicare or Medicaid, we do receive limited contract income through a partnership with a local hospital.

Total expenditures for 2025 were \$321,801.99, supported by both current-year revenue and funds carried forward from the prior year.

Expenses were primarily allocated to caregiver compensation and direct program support, reflecting our continued commitment to delivering high-quality end-of-life care.

To continue this work we need your support, can you help?

<https://rockymountainrefuge.org/donate>

