

# Gardner House and Allen Family Center

## Fact Sheet

A public-private partnership, Gardner House and Allen Family Center are designed to respond to the crisis of family homelessness in King County through an innovative combination of permanent supportive housing, affordable housing, and a one-stop services hub for families living in the building and in the larger community. Gardner House was named in honor of Faye Gardner Allen, the mother of Paul Allen and Jody Allen.

### **Gardner House**

Gardner House provides 95 apartments for low-income families and families experiencing homelessness.

- 28 units are Permanent Supportive Housing, 19 units are for formerly homeless families moving from supportive housing or shelter, 47 units are affordable housing for families earning up to 60% of area median income, and one (1) is an onsite manager unit.
- The building has 37 one-bedroom, 42 two-bedroom, and 16 three-bedroom apartments.
- There are two in-home childcare units, specifically designed for those in need of affordable housing who are, or want to become, licensed childcare providers.
- Many families moved directly from homelessness, so Mercy Housing Northwest partnered with Humble Design to furnish apartments with donated furniture and household goods.
- There are 94 families currently living in Gardner House, with 131 children, 73 under the age of 5. Resident families speak a total of 13 different languages. While this is a mixed-income residence, even the 50% or 60% units are serving families that were one event away from experiencing homelessness.

### **Allen Family Center**

The Allen Family Center is the first of its kind in Seattle, co-designed by the service providers based on input from families to deliver coordinated care as a team.

At the Allen Family Center, there is no wrong door for families to find help. It was designed to help break through service fragmentation that has challenged access for families experiencing homelessness.

The Allen Family Center provides services including:

- Diversion, housing placement, and homelessness prevention
- Help in securing affordable and culturally appropriate childcare
- Health education
- Financial stability
- Job navigation
- Mental and behavioral health services
- Immigrant and refugee family-centered services

Service providers at the Allen Family Center include Child Care Resources, Mary's Place, Mercy Housing Northwest, and Refugee Women's Alliance (ReWA).

Other features include:

- Technology Center with computer and printer access for job searching, emailing with teachers, printing homework, and more, provided by Comcast NBC Universal.

- Resource room that provides necessities like diapers, wipes, toothbrushes, personal hygiene products, and socks
- Space for community events and social gatherings
- Food pantry

To access services at the Allen Family Center, families can call 206.584.2832, email [jamela.mohamed@mercyhousing.org](mailto:jamela.mohamed@mercyhousing.org), or walk in at 3190 S Hanford St. Allen Family Center is located across the street from Mount Baker light rail station and is on numerous bus routes.

### **COVID-19**

Staff at the Allen Family Center worked with King County Public Health to establish health and safety protocols and is offering a mix of in person and remote services. Precautions include

- Asking anyone experiencing symptoms not to enter and instead call or email to access services
- Providing hand sanitizer at entry
- Wiping down tables, chairs, and children’s toys after use
- Disinfecting keyboards and mice in the Technology center

A complete list of COVID-19 practices is available.

### **Funding**

Funding for the development and construction of Gardner House and Allen Family Center was provided by:

- The Paul G. Allen Family Foundation (\$30 million)
- Seattle Office of Housing (\$5 million)
- Low-income housing tax credit equity from U.S. Bank CDC
- A tax-exempt bond construction loan from Bank of America
- The Allen Family Center received a Building Communities Fund award from the Washington State Department of Commerce.
- Operating funds for the Allen Family Center come from the City of Seattle Human Services Department and the Department of Education and Early Learning.

### **Additional building features**

- The north façade features a mural from Tacoma-based artist [Kenji Hamai Stoll](#) inspired by lotus flowers.
- For Gardner House families, there is a safe, enclosed playground on the second floor of the building, provided by the Seattle Seahawks.
- A large community room and covered courtyard area provide space for programming that is focused on children’s activities, health and wellness, and family support.
- This is Mercy Housing Northwest’s most environmentally friendly building to date, built to Evergreen Sustainable Development Standards and featuring a solar panel array, stormwater bio retention, and water and energy-saving fixtures.
- Gardner House and Allen Family Center are located in a transit- and amenity-rich area, one block from the Mount Baker Link Light Rail Station, two blocks from a King County Metro bus transit hub, and within walking distance to and close to schools, grocery stores, pharmacies, banks, restaurants, and other community services