

## Building Stability: Munson Healthcare Boosts Safe Harbor Manistee Services and Reinforces Its Regional Commitment to Housing

Manistee, MI — February 25, 2025 — On the first hard freeze of the season, the lights at Safe Harbor Manistee flicker on and volunteers begin setting out bowls of warm dinner. For neighbors who've spent their days bracing against the wind off Lake Michigan, the promise of warmth and a safe bed—just for tonight—can be lifechanging. This winter, that promise extends even further, as Munson Healthcare supports expanded services that help guests take meaningful steps toward long-term stability and independence.

Through its community health investments, Munson is helping Safe Harbor Manistee strengthen basic needs supports and skill building resources—including access to laundry facilities, financial literacy education, life skills coaching, and educational opportunities such as GED preparation. These investments help ensure guests experience not only immediate safety and stability, but also the tools necessary to rebuild their lives.

“Warmth and safety matter—but so do the building blocks of independence,” said Jeff Carter, Director of Safe Harbor Shelter, operated through ECHO is love. “Munson’s support strengthens the resources and guidance we can offer guests as they work toward long-term stability.”

### Housing Is Health—and Munson Is Investing Accordingly

The partnership is rooted in Munson’s Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA), which identifies economic security and housing as core drivers of health.

“Housing is health, and stability is built—often one achievable step at a time,” said Kristi Johnson, Chief Nursing Officer for Munson Healthcare’s South Region, including Manistee Hospital. “Access to clean clothing, help with budgeting, or support while pursuing education can remove critical barriers and create pathways forward. We’re honored to invest in these social determinants of health alongside Safe Harbor Manistee.”

Munson Healthcare’s investment in Manistee is part of a larger,

region-wide commitment to supporting housing stability and economic security in Northern Michigan. In the past year, Munson has directed:

- \$150,000 to street medicine programs in Traverse City, Cadillac, Benzonia, and Kalkaska
- \$75,000 to Goodwill Northern Michigan, supporting regional homelessness solutions
- \$10,000 to River House to help survivors of domestic violence build long-term security in Grayling

Together, these investments underscore Munson’s belief that housing and health are deeply connected—and that partnerships strengthen the pathway from crisis to stability.

### About ECHO His Love and Safe Harbor

ECHO His Love began in 1992 as Love for Children supporting Manistee County families with young children, expanded to Love INC of Manistee in 2005, and into Benzie County in 2006. Today, ECHO His Love mobilizes area churches to meet physical and spiritual needs—connecting basic needs with resources, teaching life skills through Family Life Centers, providing Safe Harbor winter shelter, and repurposing quality donated goods through the Love INC Store. The shelter is open from November 1 through April 30 with 20 beds providing 2,960 overnight stays each season. This work is carried out by a small staff, more than 300 volunteers, 44 church partners, and numerous community organizations, service clubs, and businesses. Love has no boundaries.

To learn more, visit [Ministry | United States | ECHO His Love](#).



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