



**NEWS from the Shelby County Mayor's Office**

***Lee Harris, Mayor***

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**MEDIA ADVISORY**

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**SHELBY COUNTY MAYOR LEE HARRIS ANNOUNCES AN INVESTMENT IN TRANSITIONAL HOUSING FOR SHELBY COUNTY'S TRANSGENDER RESIDENTS**  
*Shelby County Government invested \$194,000 in transitional housing at My Sistah's House, a Memphis group which seeks to bridge the gap in services for trans and queer people of color.*

**WHO:** Shelby County Division of Community Services Director Dorcas Young Griffin, Senior Policy Advisor for Mayor Lee Harris Jerri Green, My Sistah's House Executive Director Kayla Gore, Tri State Black Pride, Tennessee Equality Project, and members of Shelby County's TLGBQ community

**WHAT:** An investment announcement for transitional housing at My Sistah's House

**WHEN:** Friday, April 14, 2023 at 11:45 a.m.

**WHERE:** 1483 Ethlyn Ave., Memphis, TN, 38106

**Shelby County, TN** – On Friday, April 14, 2023, members of Shelby County Government, staff at My Sistah's House, and members of the TLGBQ community, will gather to celebrate the investment in critical transitional housing for some of Shelby County's most vulnerable community members.

Since 2016, My Sistah's House has provided emergency housing, advocacy, and resource assistance to the most vulnerable members of the transgender, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and queer communities, with a focus on trans women of color. My Sistah's House is building and renovating homes with a mission to help trans women move from shelters to home ownership.

Economic hardships have highlighted the need for transitional housing across the country. Members of the Black trans community experience homelessness at a higher rate than most of the country. In 2018, the National LGBTQ+ Task Force reported that 41% of Black trans people were without housing at one point in time, which is about five times higher than the rest of the country.

Shelby County Government will invest \$194,000 into the transitional housing program at My Sistah's House.

**Shelby County Mayor Lee Harris:** “Transitional housing is a proven way to give people a path to independence. We are providing stable, safe housing to the community's most vulnerable because all Shelby County residents deserve a chance to feel secure, happy, and valued. Unfortunately, our trans community faces disproportionate hardships every day and are now being legislated against for simply being who they are. These kinds of investments in transitional housing can reduce homelessness, increase public safety, and create a brighter future for all of us.”

**Jerri Green, Senior Policy Advisor for Mayor Lee Harris:** “Black trans people are some of our community's most vulnerable. The National Center for Transgender Equality reports one in five trans individuals experience homelessness in their lifetime and a third live in poverty. We know those numbers are higher in trans and queer communities of color. Now, with state laws targeting this community and their very existence, the need to support the trans community is even greater. The way we treat our community's most vulnerable is a reflection of all of us. My Sistah's House is doing compassionate and critical work and I'm grateful for the Harris Administration's investment in this work.”

**Kayla Gore, Executive Director of My Sistah's House:** “When My Sistah's House first started, there were only 71 beds available in emergency shelters across Memphis and Shelby County and none of them were designated as trans-specific. As a Black trans woman, I know the need for security. So far, we've been able to provide that security to 35 trans and queer people of color through our emergency housing program. With this investment from Shelby County Government, that security can go even further.”

(End of Release)