

1. What is Saranam and what is their purpose?



Saranam, located in Albuquerque, New Mexico, is an innovative two-generational program that addresses the significant underlying causes of homelessness—lack of support systems and community, poverty, despair and isolation. Saranam provides **families** with safe housing, intensive case management, a supportive community, and a pathway forward to self-sufficiency through education. With basic living needs provided for up to two years, families are able to focus their efforts on education, vocational development and acquiring life skills for independent living.

Saranam’s ultimate goal is for families to achieve self-sufficiency. To assist them on this path Saranam provides basic living needs to include fully furnished apartments, household supplies, and clothing. With these basic needs covered, families have up to 24 months to focus their efforts on education, vocational development and career goals while acquiring life skills for independent living.

Additionally, Saranam is committed to a new way of looking at generational poverty. A two-generational approach is an antipoverty initiative that provides services for both children and their parents. This approach helps families get what they need to create a legacy of economic stability and overall well-being that passes from one generation to the next. This approach recognizes that families come in all different shapes and sizes and that families define themselves.

The importance that a parent’s education, economic stability, and overall health has on a child's trajectory is well documented. Likewise, children's education and healthy development inspire and encourage parents to set the entire family on a more secure path.

We work from and towards the needs of both the parent and the child, using research, education, and personal experience to determine what to include, change, or reform in our program. We have an 80% success rate of families successfully exiting the program into permanent, safe, stable living situations, where they are able to support themselves. The life skills we provide ensure that families are able to maintain and sustain these outcomes. The 80% of families who exit successfully do so by earning income through employment or scholarship and using it to provide for their housing, utilities, and basic living supplies. Additionally, we provide support, programming and opportunities to increase assets for our alumni.

2. Is Saranam a homeless shelter?

No. Saranam is **NOT** a shelter, group home, drug/alcohol treatment facility, domestic abuse shelter, mental health treatment facility, nor do we provide any type of shelter services, public food pantry, or other emergency services. Saranam serves families for

two years at a time with one intake per year, so we do not have any transient population traffic to our campus.

3. Why is this site location appropriate for Saranam?

Saranam has been looking for an appropriate site for nearly three years. Our requirements are 3-5 acres, capability to house 20-30 units, near public transport such as the bus lines that connect to CNM/UNM and downtown easily (within a 1 hour ride), near grocery and retail centers and childcare, and is in a safe residential area. We have looked at apartment complexes, rehabbing office/hotel buildings and vacant land. This site fits all requirements and is adjacent to the United Methodist Church.

4. Does Saranam have any other sites in Albuquerque?

Yes, Saranam has operated an east side Albuquerque site since 2005. At this location families reside in an actual apartment complex (24 units), we have programming, classes and administrative offices in three office locations within a block, walking distance, of the residential complex.

5. How many homes are being proposed and how many families will live there?

This plan is for 30 small homes to be built, each will house one family for up to two years. The plans is for twenty 864 square foot two bedroom homes and ten 1,296 square-foot four bedroom homes.

6. What are the houses built from?

We are utilizing APS portables as framing and will completely and beautifully transform them inside and out with new stucco, windows, doors, and other finishes. The buildings are using the frames only and the exterior and interior will be a new exterior and interior. Please see the site plan, perspectives and renderings at saranamabq.org/expansion. Yes, this is what they will really look like when we occupy them.

7. Describe your typical family?

A typical family at Saranam consists of a single mother and two young children. Sometimes we have a two-parent family, a single dad or a grandmother with grandchildren. All families have an adult and at least one minor child. The majority of children in Saranam are under the age of 10 years old.

8. How long do residents stay in the housing?

Residents can stay for up to two years at Saranam. Sometimes, families meet their personal and educational goals before that time and choose to move into their own housing earlier, but the majority of families stay until the units are needed for an incoming class (2 years).

9. How is the development managed, is there an onsite manager?

Saranam utilizes a professional management company who is responsible for all aspects of facility management. They respond to maintenance calls and upkeep of the property. There is no on-site manager however Saranam staff are on-site weekdays

8am to 5pm, with evening classes/activities three evenings a week until 7pm and at least monthly weekend/Saturday activities.

10. Are drugs and alcohol allowed onsite?

Drugs are absolutely not allowed onsite. Alcohol is legal and our residents are allowed to purchase as anyone may. We do closely monitor our families for any issues around sobriety including regular on-site drug testing of all families. If someone tests positive, we work them on developing a plan for sobriety including 12-step programs, counseling and continued drug testing, or removal from the program and site.

11. Will there be crime at the property?

Is there crime in your neighborhood? In our 15 year experience at our east side campus, crime on a property is not perpetrated by those who live there, but rather others who are trespassing. Families who live at Saranam are working very hard to change their lives and want to live in a safe neighborhood, just like you. Their close relationship with every single resident in the complex actually provides a very strong “neighborhood watch” where they know who is supposed to be on site and who is a stranger. Our families protect their neighborhood and support each other in a way that is closer than most neighbors do around the city.

12. What about domestic abuse? Are ex-partners allowed on site?

Safety is of the utmost importance at Saranam. We screen out anyone we see as potentially dangerous. Of course some of the families we work with have an abusive ex-partner. We work closely with them to move away from that person, obtaining restraining orders if there is active pursuit. Our families know that if their guests cause any problems, they may be asked to leave the program, so they are very careful of who they invite to their homes. All of our residents know each other well, and know who is visiting. We have, in 15 years, only had a few incidents where we have had to ask a family to leave due to putting the Saranam community in an unsafe situation.

13. How are families screened before moving into Saranam?

Saranam’s application process is quite extensive. We intake 10-12 families each year from over 70 applications. The 14-page application is the first screener – if a family is unable to complete the application, they are not ready to do the hard work required by Saranam. The applicant must have a referral from another case worker, therapist, doctor, school, faith community, or organization that can vouch for them, ensuring that the family has been working hard to change their life already, and is wanting more than just the housing – wanting to go to school to improve their lives. We screen on eligibility – that the applicant is indeed a family with at least one adult and one minor child in their custody/guardianship. We do background checks screening out all sexual offenses and diving deep into understanding any drug or violent offenses with the focus on maintaining a safe community. We send applicants for observed drug test at a local lab. Then families in the program interview applicants. With their observations, perceptions and questions, the clinical staff then interviews applicants. A diverse cohort is put together where everyone has someone to relate to and something to learn from others.

14. What happens if Saranam fails and sells the property?

Saranam has been working on the feasibility for this project for over 5 years. We are a strong organization who is very successful at strategic planning and makes moves very conservatively. We have no reason to believe this project is going to fail.

The timeline for the project first requires receiving approval by the Environmental Planning Commission (EPC) for an amendment to the existing site plan, which will take 2 months. The proposed multi-family use as detailed on the site plan is permissive on the current zoning of MX-L.

We plan to begin a capital campaign to raise funds for building the site, which should be 18-24 months (before the COVID-19 pandemic hit). If this project fails, the land may be up for sale and will have to go through the same City processes we are currently in for new a new site plan and user through EPC. If Saranam does not purchase this land for this project, Mesa View UMC may decide to sell to another unknown entity anyway.

15. What training and education is provided to the families?

Saranam's ultimate goal is for families to achieve self-sufficiency and long-term stability. To assist them on this path Saranam provides basic living needs to include fully furnished apartments, household supplies, and clothing. With these basic needs covered, families have up to 2 years to focus their efforts on education, vocational development and career goals while acquiring life skills for independent living.

In year one, adults receive over 700 hours of basic education on Saranam's campus from qualified instructors in order to develop academic skills in preparation for further study (GED, college prep, etc.) as well as life skills (parenting, financial literacy, safety, home care, relapse prevention, etc.)

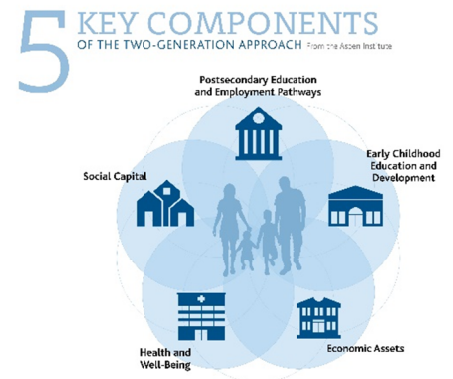
Next, adults receive vocational assessment around individual interests and abilities, set vocational goals and attend off-site training, vocational school or academic programs to prepare for employment. Parents typically attend CNM, but some attend UNM or other colleges or certificate training schools in Albuquerque.

Saranam provides families with guidance on career, academic, and financial goals and assistance with referrals, counseling, crisis management, childcare, transportation and enriching community activities.

While participating in Saranam, families receive a year of practical life-skill instruction to address the barriers and challenges that led to homelessness. Families develop individual transition plans with specific goals to resolve barriers to self-sufficiency.

Saranam ensures that relationship and community building are integral parts of the program. Saranam uses a peer group model whereby families enter and move through the program as a cohort. Living in the same housing complex, they immediately begin to create an established community, aiding them to gain important social skills such as conflict resolution, mutual reliance, negotiation and trust.

Saranam provides training to the whole family and for the children, specifically, too. Our family and children's programming provides access to on-site activities and developmentally appropriate life skills classes that mirror the adult classes. Children in our program can also receive private tutoring. Toddlers and preschool children participate in reading circles. We bring a wide variety of enrichment activities to the children, teens, and families each week, including science, arts, music, theater, entrepreneurship and financial management, cooking classes, anti-bullying initiatives, internet safety, and yoga.



We believe a two-generational approach is necessary to break the cycle of poverty and homelessness. Saranam's two-generational programming approach is an innovative characteristic that lays the foundation for families to attain self-sufficiency and break the cycle of poverty. Research shows that parents' education, economic stability and overall health has an impact on their children's trajectories. Similarly, children's education and healthy development inspire parents and set the entire family on a more secure path. Saranam's programming encompasses all five key components of a two-generational approach:

- 1) postsecondary education and employment pathways,
- 2) early childhood education and development,
- 3) economic assets,
- 4) health and well-being, and
- 5) social capital.

Education is mandatory for adults entering Saranam. Having a high school diploma is the single most effective preventive strategy against adult poverty, and research corroborates that educational attainment positively influences earning potential.

16. What is the success rate of the program?

Education = increase income

As a core component of the program Saranam knows educational attainment positively influences earning potential increasing earning potential by \$9,600 annually for a person earning a high school diploma or GED, with an **additional \$6,200** or more for people with an associate's degree. *A total of 14 high school/GED, 17 Associate Degrees, 2 Bachelor Degrees, and 11 Vocational Certificates have been earned over the last five years with many more in progress!*

Self-sufficiency.

Saranam's **80% success rate** of families exiting the program into permanent, safe, stable living situations. Our families generate income and pay taxes, rent, utilities, etc. becoming stable, productive members of the community-at-large. Alumni continue to be stable and are now even purchasing their own homes!

Cost Savings.

The annual cost for housing and education at Saranam is **\$10,478 per person and \$33,530 for a family**. The **estimated annual cost to the city of Albuquerque per homeless person is \$42,790**, including medical, jail and emergency shelters. That is an annual savings of **\$32,312 per person**. Additionally, in the end, Saranam families are no longer homeless and are supporting themselves.

17. Do you have testimonials I can read?

Absolutely! Please go to <https://saranamabq.org>. You can find testimonials/stories under News/Events, in our blogs, newsletters, annual reports and under Program/families. Please visit our facebook page <https://m.facebook.com/SaranamLLC> and/or follow us on Instagram https://www.instagram.com/saranam_abq/ for current stories and updates.

18. Does Saranam have a website link?

Please visit <https://saranamabq.org>.

19. Was the TRNA contacted and were meetings held?

This project was on the agenda and conversations started at the November 2019 TRNA board meeting. Responses to suggestions on site plan were presented as an agenda item at the January 2020 meeting. We were planning another presentation of the overall project at the planned March meeting which was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

17. What is EPC?

The Environmental Planning Commission (EPC) reviews and decides requests for Master Development Plans associated with mixed-use form based projects, and a number of other planning and entitlement matters. The EPC is an appointed, nine-member, volunteer citizen board. The EPC conducts regularly scheduled hearings on the second Thursday of each month in the Plaza del Sol hearing room at 600 2nd NW in Downtown Albuquerque. Hearings generally begin at 8:30 a.m. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, upcoming EPC meetings are being held online through video conferencing, with meeting information and more general information found at the City's EPC website: <https://www.cabq.gov/planning/boards-commissions/environmental-planning-commission>

20. What is the application to EPC on?

The proposed application to the EPC is for an amendment to a previously approved site plan for the existing Church. The proposed use of multi-family dwellings are allowed in the MX-L zoning for the site. The EPC board will assess the application based on the site plan amendment and the proposed use, and not the operator of the property.

21. When is the EPC hearing and how do I attend?

Saranam decided to reschedule the EPC application to the Thursday June 11th hearing. The application was rescheduled to provide additional opportunities to communicate the details of Saranam and the organizations intent to the neighbors. A number of neighbors received incorrect information from social media platforms and were miss-

informed as to the user of the development. This additional time will allow their concerns to be answered through an online or in-person facilitated meeting which Saranam is trying to coordinate with the City, pending the release of the Governor's restrictions due to COVID-19. As soon as this information is available it will be communicated through the TRNA website and all other online forums available.

22. Is multi-family development allowed on the site?

Yes, the multi-family use proposed is permissible in the Mixed Use – Low Intensity Zone District (MX-L) which is the zoning for the site. More information on the allowable uses for the MX-L zone can be found on Table 4-1-1: Allowable Uses or click this link: <http://documents.cabq.gov/planning/agis/IDO/UseTables/AllowableUses-MX-L.pdf>

21. I still have questions, who at Saranam can I contact?

For questions about Saranam and operations, please contact Tracy Weaver, Executive Director at Saranam at 299-6154 x 102# or by email at saranam.tracy@gmail.com.

For questions about the site plan or development process, please contact Tierra West at 858-3100.