

Program Requirements – Interim Housing

Shelter

Shelter beds funded through this RFA will prioritize people who are unsheltered, are experiencing chronic homelessness and are enrolled in a housing program. Under this umbrella, focus should be on Couples and Women.

Performance measures used for Shelter programs funded through this RFA will be: 1) average length of time from shelter entry to exit into permanent housing (lower amount of time is better); 2) number of exits from shelter to permanent housing (higher placement rate is better); 3) reuser rates of people who exit the shelter but return to homelessness (lower rates are better).

Shelter programs funded under this RFA must:

1. Promote Dignity and Respect

- a. Consistently implement practices to meet people where they are and provide person-centered care that focuses on personal strengths.
- b. Establish formal policies and value statements that convey clear expectations that shelter guests will be treated with dignity and respect in every interaction. Monitor adherence to expectations. Provide people served with a grievance process.
- c. Expectations of shelter guests are behavior based, clearly communicated, and transparent and easily accessible for review.
- d. Follow practices that help ensure cultural awareness and provides appropriate protections for shelter seekers across demographic differences, meeting all HUD shelter requirements.
- e. Set only behavior-based and reasonable requirements for shelter guests, and enforce requirements in a fair and transparent way.
- f. Involve shelter guests in governance and operations.
- g. Provide safe, clean, and accommodating conditions.

2. Adopt a Housing First Approach and Create Low-Barrier Access to Emergency Shelter

- a. Have minimal expectations or requirements of people seeking shelter.
- b. Focus on addressing disruptive or dangerous behaviors rather than compliance to rules or case plans.
- c. Welcome self-defined family and kinship groups to seek shelter together.

- d. Accommodate pets and belongings.
- e. Allow guests to remain in the shelter 24/7
- f. Actively participate in the local Continuum of Care.

3. Use Emergency Shelter Stays as a Platform for Housing Access

- a. The housing barriers of shelter guests are identified within 48 hours and the focus of staff is to work with households to alleviate housing barriers and link with housing options.
- b. Use data routinely to detect trends, identify frequent users, and monitor housing success and other performance measures.
- c. Formally collaborate with Coordinated Entry, Rapid Rehousing and Permanent Supportive Housing Programs to help persons living on the street and shelter be rehoused.
- d. Provide or assist the household with connections to other community resources and people supports that help them improve their safety and well-being and achieve their long-term goals.
- e. Be staffed by a core of employees who are suitably trained to effectively utilize HMIS and provide Diversion, as well as trauma informed, housing-focused services to a population with high barriers to housing stability. Staff should also provide great customer service and ensure the program offers services in a culturally aware and appropriate manner to each program participant.

Examples of Housing-focused, Low-Barrier Shelter policies can be found here:

<https://app.box.com/s/8xxqzf8vfiongo0lmn9kj6a7e1jq01mi>

Transitional Housing

Transitional Housing funded through this RFP will serve people who meet the HUD definition of literally homeless and are exiting incarceration, hospitalization, or other systems of care; persons fleeing domestic violence; persons recovering from substance use disorders; and youth (ages 18-24).

Performance measures used for transitional housing programs funded through this RFP will be: 1) average length of time from transitional housing program entry to exit into permanent housing (lower

amount of time is better); 2) number of exits from transitional housing to permanent housing (higher placement rate is better); 3) reuser rates of people who exit transitional housing but return to homelessness within 2 years (lower rates are better).

This RFA may fund facility-based programs, but preference is given to Transition-In Place programs.

Transitional housing programs funded under this RFA must:

1. Promote Dignity and Respect

- a. Consistently implement practices to meet people where they are and provide person-centered care that focuses on personal strengths.
- b. Establish formal policies and value statements that convey clear expectations that persons will be treated with dignity and respect in every interaction. Monitor adherence to expectations. Provide people served with a grievance process.
- c. Have expectations of program participants clearly communicated and easily accessible for review.
- d. Practice cultural awareness and equity to effectively serve program participants across demographic differences.
- e. Set only minimal and reasonable requirements for housing placement, and enforce requirements in a fair and transparent way. Programs should limit eligibility criteria to those required by funders and/or facility structure (for example, funding for youth or unit size suitable for families with children).

2. Promote a Housing First Approach and Create Low-Barrier Access to Housing

- a. Have minimal expectations or requirements of people seeking assistance. Programs must not terminate or deny services to households based on refusal to participate in supportive services. Supportive services are helping or educational resources that include support groups, mental health services, alcohol and substance abuse services, life skills or independent living skills services, vocational services and social activities. Supportive services do not include housing stability planning or case management.
- b. Formally collaborate with outreach, Coordinated Entry, Shelter, and Permanent Housing programs to help persons access the housing they need in the shortest timeframe possible.
- c. Use data routinely to detect trends, monitor housing success and other performance measures.

- d. Be staffed by employees who are suitably trained to effectively utilize HMIS, utilize motivational interviewing techniques, provide progressive engagement, as well as trauma informed, housing-focused services to a population with high barriers to housing stability. Staff should also provide great customer service and ensure the program offers services in a culturally aware and appropriate manner to each program participant.

3. Provide Rent and Move-In Assistance

- a. Provide assistance to cover move-in costs, deposits, and up to 24 months of rental and/or utility assistance.

4. Provide Housing Stability Support Services

- a. Help program participants address issues that may impede access to Permanent Housing (such as credit history, arrears, substance use disorder, and legal issues).
- b. Make appropriate and time-limited services and supports available to families and individuals to allow them to stabilize quickly in housing.
- c. Monitor participants' housing stability and be available to resolve crises.
- d. Provide or assist program participants with connections to other community resources and people supports that help them improve their safety and well-being, remove barriers to living in Permanent Housing and achieve their long-term goals.
- e. Ensure that services provided are client-directed, respectful of individuals' right to self-determination, and voluntary.