



DMA – Diana T. Myers & Associates, Inc.,
under contract with PA DCED



Best Practices in Serving Survivors of Domestic Violence

Western PA CoC –
December 17, 2019

Presented by:

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Against Domestic Violence
(PCADV)

Training Outline

Introduction

Overview of best practices in serving survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking

Eligibility - Homeless due to fleeing domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking (category 4)

Emergency Transfer Plan

Overview of Best Practices

What is Domestic Violence?

Domestic violence is a pattern of coercive behavior used by one person to gain power and control over another in an intimate or familial relationship.

Many terms are used interchangeably to describe and discuss domestic violence. It may also be referred to as: abuse, domestic violence, battery, intimate partner violence, or family, spousal, relationship or dating violence.

According to the CDC, 1 in 4 women and 1 in 7 men have experienced physical abusive from an abusive intimate partner. National data shows that 80% of homeless families report DV in their past, and 50% cite DV as the cause of homelessness.

What is Domestic Violence?

Domestic violence can be characterized by many types of abuse. Any or all of these types of violence/abuse may occur in domestic violence situations

- Emotional Abuse
- Physical Violence
- Stalking
- Sexual Violence
- Financial Abuse
- Verbal Abuse

Domestic Violence Housing First (DVHF)

DVHF was innovated by programs in DC, Oregon and Washington State

- Needed alternative to traditional model
- Movement away from “housing ready”
- Driven by concept that once housing is secured, other pressing matters are more easily addressed

Application to DV

- Never enough shelter space
- De-prioritization of transitional housing by HUD
- PH reduces risk of future violence and returns to homelessness
- Core tenants of survivor driven, trauma informed services, flexible funding and community connection

Survivor Driven, Trauma Informed Services

Survivor Driven (Victim Defined) Advocacy

- “Victim defined advocacy: means offering options, resources and strategies that are *relevant* to each victim’s priorities, decisions, and risks. This must be done in a way that does not undermine a victim of her ability to implement the strategies she has chosen.” (Jill Davies)
- When the answers to the following questions drive the focus, advocacy is victim defined: What is the survivor most concerned about? What does the survivor want right now? What can wait?

Trauma Informed Services

- The term trauma-informed is used to describe organizations and practices that incorporate an understanding of the pervasiveness and impact of trauma and that are designed to reduce re-traumatization, support healing and resiliency, and address the root causes of abuse and violence. (NCDVTMH 2013, adapted from Harris and Fallot 2001)

Best Practices in Serving Survivors

- **Safety**

- If the survivor is interested, refer to local DV program for safety planning assistance. Connection and coordination with your local DV agency is essential.
- Safety planning is tailored to the survivor's life and daily activities—each day may even be a little different
- Safety planning is a process, not a one-time event or check list

- **Confidentiality**

- Make sure the survivor knows that you will not share their disclosure and/or story with anyone
- Do not record any specifics regarding a survivor's story in HMIS
- If a survivor feels uncomfortable sharing, don't press for information

- **Trauma Informed**

- Interact with kindness and compassion
- Ask questions (even uncomfortable ones) slowly and clearly
- Focus on strengths if survivor needs further support

Eligibility

Homeless due to fleeing domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking (category 4)

HUD Homeless Definition Under HEARTH

4 Categories:

- Category 1: Literally homeless
- Category 2: Imminent Risk of Homelessness
- Category 3: Homeless under Other Federal Statutes – N/A in Western PA CoC
- **Category 4: Fleeing or Attempting to Flee Domestic Violence**

Program Eligibility Under HEARTH

- **Emergency Shelter:**
 - **All categories of Homelessness**, depending on funding source
- **Transitional Housing:**
 - Category 1: Literally Homeless
 - Category 2: Imminent Risk of Homeless
 - **Category 4: Fleeing/Attempting to Flee DV**
- **Rapid Rehousing:**
 - Category 1: Literally Homeless (CoC & ESG)
 - **Category 4: Fleeing/Attempting to Flee DV (CoC only)**
- **Permanent Supportive Housing: (Disability +)**
 - Category 1: Literally Homeless
 - **Category 4: Fleeing/Attempting to Flee DV**

Homeless Definition Under HEARTH

Category 4: Fleeing or Attempting to Flee Domestic Violence

Any individual or family who:

- Is fleeing, or is attempting to flee domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or other dangerous or life-threatening conditions,
 - Persons who are fleeing or attempting to flee human trafficking may also qualify as homeless under Category 4.
- Has no other residence (see slide 13),
AND
- Lacks the resources or support networks to obtain other permanent housing

What does “fleeing” mean?

- The concept of “fleeing” will look different for every survivor because every survivor’s situation is different. With the domestic violence advocate’s or housing provider’s guidance, survivors can decide if their situation makes them eligible for housing resources under Category 4.
- Some of the questions a provider can ask to work through this process are:
 - Did someone do something that made them feel unsafe?
 - Do they feel like they need to leave the current living situation in order to stay safe?
 - Did someone make them or ask them to do something that made them feel unsafe or uncomfortable in order to continue to stay in a home?
 - Do they feel unsafe to return to the home that they left? Are they worried about the safety of any children, dependents or pets?

What does
“fleeing”
mean?

HUD Exchange Ask A Question # 129735 (response dated 1/31/19)

A household would meet Category 4 of the definition of homeless if they are fleeing or attempting to flee from domestic violence and meet all other requirements, **regardless of where they are residing** (including staying with friends and family).

Also, see handout with AAQ # 129902

What does
“dangerous
or life
threatening
conditions”
mean?

- HUD clarifies that the level of danger experienced by a survivor should not dictate eligibility under Category 4.
- Specifically, the phrase “dangerous or life-threatening”, as stated in the definition, should not be construed to describe the level of violence needed for a survivor to be considered homeless.
- HUD identifies that interpersonal violence inherently is dangerous and life-threatening and should be considered as such when considering Category 4 eligibility.

Documentation of Homelessness



"I have some paperwork to catch up. If I'm not back in two days, organize a search and rescue team!"

Documentation
of Homelessness
Under HEARTH

Category 4: Fleeing/Attempting to Flee DV

- For Victim Service Providers:
 - Oral statement by the individual or head of household seeking assistance which includes: they are fleeing; they have no subsequent residence; and they lack resources.
 - The statement must be documented by a self-certification form or a certification by the intake worker

Documentation
of Homelessness
Under HEARTH

Category 4: Fleeing/Attempting to Flee DV (continued)

- For **NON**-Victim Service Providers:
 - Oral statement by the individual or head of household seeking assistance that they are fleeing. This statement is documented by self-certification or by the caseworker. Where the safety of the household is NOT jeopardized the oral statement must be verified; AND *(continued on next slide)*

Documentation
of Homelessness
Under HEARTH

Category 4: Fleeing/Attempting to Flee DV (continued)

- For **NON**-Victim Service Providers:
 - Certification by the individual or head of household that no subsequent residence has been identified; AND
 - Self-certification, or other written documentation, that the individual or family lacks the financial resources and support networks to obtain other permanent housing.

Documentation Examples

- Rebecca and her 2 children are currently staying in a DV shelter. They were referred for Rapid Rehousing services through the Coordinated Entry System. She informs the Rapid Rehousing provider that her husband hit her and one of her children, she has no money and nowhere safe to go. They both had significant bruises on their arms.

Documentation of DV shelter stay is sufficient verification of fleeing. In addition, would need certification that no subsequent residence and lacks financial resources/ support to obtain other permanent housing.

Documentation Examples

- Susie left her home because her boyfriend hit her and she does not feel safe returning home. She has no money and no where safe to go. She's currently staying with her mom and is being enrolled into a Rapid Rehousing program.

Needs: Self certification of fleeing, with case-worker certification is needed if safety is not jeopardized. In addition, would need certification that no subsequent residence and lacks financial resources/ support to obtain other permanent housing.

HUD's VAWA Final Rule

CoC Interim
Rule updated
to
incorporate
HUD's VAWA
Final Rule

- § 578.99(j) *Protections for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking—(1) General.* The requirements set forth in 24 CFR part 5, subpart L (Protection for Victims of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, or Stalking), implementing the requirements of VAWA apply to all permanent housing and transitional housing for which Continuum of Care program funds are used for acquisition, rehabilitation, new construction, leasing, rental assistance, or operating costs.

Components of the Rule

- Basic Housing Protections
- Allowable Evictions
- Documentation of Survivor Status
- **Notice of Occupancy Rights**
- Confidentiality
- **Emergency Transfer Plans**
- Lease Bifurcation
- **Lease addendums and Rental Agreements**

New
requirements
of CoC-
funded
providers

- Project Participants should be provided with:
 - VAWA Notice of Occupancy Right
 - Victim Self-certification Form
- Landlords should be provided with:
 - VAWA lease addendum

Notice of Occupancy Rights - CoC

- In the CoC program the **VAWA Notice of Occupancy Right & Victim Self-certification Form** must be given to a tenant by the recipient/sub:
 - When a program participant applies and is admitted to permanent housing or transitional housing;
 - When an individual or family applies and is denied permanent housing or transitional housing;
 - When a program participant receives notification of eviction;
 - When a program participant is notified of termination of assistance.
- In tenant based rental assistance it must also be given by the owner when a tenant receives an eviction.

Notice of Occupancy Rights - ESG

- In the ESG program the **VAWA Notice of Occupancy Right & Victim Self-certification Form** must be given to a tenant by the recipient/sub:
 - When a program participant begins receiving ESG rental assistance;
 - When an individual or family applies and is denied ESG rental assistance;
 - When an individual or family's application for a unit receiving project-based rental assistance is denied;
 - When a program participant is notified of termination of ESG rental assistance; and
 - When a program participant receives notification of eviction

Lease Addendums

- All agreements between the landlord/owner and tenant in CoC or ESG assisted housing should be outlined in a **VAWA lease addendum** and must include the following elements:
 - Right for the lease to be broken without penalty, if the tenant qualifies for an emergency transfer, except for tenant based rental assistance
 - Language that protects individuals from being denied access to housing and/or evicted from their housing on the basis of or as a direct result of being a survivor
 - Construction of lease terms and terms of assistance
 - Limitation of VAWA protections
 - Confidentiality requirements

Rental Agreements

- **Rental Agreements CoC and ESG recipients must outline VAWA protections in all rental agreements/housing assistance contracts** with private housing owners and manager, including:
 - Requirement to include VAWA lease addendum to all leases in units assisted by CoC or ESG funds
 - Requirement to coordination on emergency transfers
 - Obligation for the owner to notify the recipient before a lease is bifurcated and/or a notice of eviction is provided
 - For CoC program, if a notice of eviction is given to a tenant, obligation to provide both the notice of rights and self certification forms with that notice

Emergency Transfer Plan (ETP) per CoC Interim Rule

- § 578.7(d) *VAWA emergency transfer plan*. The Continuum of Care must develop the emergency transfer plan for the Continuum of Care that meets the require
- § 578.51(m) *VAWA emergency transfer plan costs*. Recipients and subrecipients of grants for tenant-based rental assistance may use grant funds to pay amounts owed for breaking the lease if the family qualifies for an emergency transfer under the emergency transfer plan established under § 578.99(j)(8).

Western PA CoC Emergency Transfer Plan (ETP)

- The Western PA CoC developed an ETP so participants in homeless assistance projects who are victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, and/or human trafficking can be safe and have access to stable housing.
- In accordance with VAWA, Western PA CoC homeless assistance programs, providing housing assistance, must allow participants (who are victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, and/or human trafficking) to request an emergency transfer from the participant's current unit to another unit, either within the program or externally.

Emergency Transfer Plan (ETP)

- CoC and ESG Emergency transfer plans must allow survivors of a VAWA defined crime to transfer to a safe dwelling unit under a covered housing program if the victim/survivor:
 - Requests the transfer; AND
 - Reasonably believes that they are threatened with imminent harm if they stay in the same unit; OR
 - In the case of sexual assault, if the sexual assault occurred on the premises within 90 days of the request for transfer.

Emergency Transfer Plan (ETP)

- Internal transfer – when a survivor can safely move to another available unit or housing program without having to apply as a new applicant (Required to allow move)
- External transfer – when a survivor can safely move to another available unit/housing program that requires a new application process (Required to outline steps to assist)
- Safe unit – any housing option that a survivor determines is safe
- Available unit – not defined in the rule but HUD guidance has instructed communities to locally define based on a reasonable move-in time

Western PA CoC ETP timing and availability

- Updates to the Western PA CoC's ETP are currently being discussed.
- At this time, there are no specific timelines requiring the housing provider to accept/reject the ET request within a specific number of days. Nor are there timelines to complete the transfer.
- If a housing provider accepts the Emergency Transfer Request, but is not able to provide an internal transfer (through any housing resources operated by the organization or in partnership with another housing provider), **an external transfer will be facilitated through Coordinated Entry**, who will then assist the housing provider to identify an alternate safe unit.
 - <https://form.jotform.com/193496376242164>

Western PA CoC ETP timing and availability

- Households awaiting an external transfer through Coordinated Entry are to be prioritized for the next available unit for which they are eligible. Due to the emergency situation, these households should not be added to a waiting list and left to wait until they are reprioritized.
 - Eligible based on situation at the time of entry into the program they now need to flee
- If a participant reasonably believes a proposed transfer would not be safe, the participant may request a transfer to a different unit. If a unit is available, the transferred participant must agree to abide by the terms and conditions that govern occupancy in the unit to which the participant has been transferred. The program participant cannot be moved into a unit/ project unless they meet the eligibility for that project.

Summary of
implementation
requirements
(covered today)
of the HUD
VAWA Rule

- Project Participants should be provided with:
 - VAWA Notice of Occupancy Right
 - Victim Self-certification Form
- Landlords should be provided with:
 - VAWA lease addendum
- To request ETP,
<https://form.jotform.com/193496376242164>

Resources

- Western PA CoC Emergency Transfer Plan (Policy)-
UPDATES COMING SOON
<https://pennsylvaniacoc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Western-PA-CoC-VAWA-Emergency-Transfer-Plan-Policy.pdf>
- VAWA Notice of Occupancy Rights
<https://www.hud.gov/sites/documents/5380.docx>
- Victim Self-certification Form
<https://www.hud.gov/sites/documents/5382.docx>
- VAWA Lease Addendum
<https://www.hud.gov/sites/documents/91067.doc>

Resources

- HUD Webinar: VAWA Housing Protections - Implementation within ESG and CoC Programs
<https://www.hudexchange.info/trainings/courses/vawa-housing-protections-implementation-within-esg-and-coc-programs-webinar/>
- HUD Webinar: VAWA Housing Protections: Implementation Considerations for ESG and CoC Programs
<https://www.hudexchange.info/trainings/courses/vawa-housing-protections-implementation-considerations-for-esg-and-coc-programs/>

Questions



Leigh Howard <leigh@dma-housing.com>

Question Response for CoC Question ID 129902 - HUD Exchange Ask A Question

1 message

aaq@hudexchange.info <aaq@hudexchange.info>
To: leigh@dma-housing.com

Wed, May 1, 2019 at 2:09 PM

Question Status: Answered

Thank you for submitting a question via the HUD Exchange. The response to your question is listed below.

Requestor Name: Leigh Howard

Requestor Email: leigh@dma-housing.com

Question Related To: Continuum of Care Program

Question ID: 129902

Question Subject:

Eligibility re: DV Category 4

Question Text:

Hi - I am wondering if you could further describe part ii within part 4 of the HUD homeless definition - "has no other residence". For example, if an individual flees and is on the couch of a sibling for 2 days, but is not permitted to stay beyond one week, is that individual eligible for CoC-funded RRH assistance without entering an emergency or DV shelter? Any additional information provided would be helpful. Thank you, Leigh

Response:

Thank you for your question. We regret the delay in responding to your inquiry. It is likely that you resolved the issue or no longer need the information. If you still need this issue resolved, please follow the instructions to reopen your ticket, and we will provide a response. We apologize for any inconvenience.

In order to be considered Category 4 of the **HEARTH: Defining "Homeless" Final Rule**, an individual or family must meet the following criteria:

- (i) Is fleeing, or is attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or other dangerous or life-threatening conditions that relate to violence against the individual or a family member, including a child, that has either taken place within the individual's or family's primary nighttime residence or has made the individual or family afraid to return to their primary nighttime residence;
- (ii) Has no other residence; and
- (iii) Lacks the resources or support networks, e.g., family, friends, and faith-based or other social networks, to obtain other permanent housing.

HUD would like to clarify that a household can meet this criteria for Category 4, **regardless of where they are residing (including staying with friends and family)**.

Please note that persons self-identify as victims of domestic violence, so that status is valid as long as the individual chooses to identify themselves as such. Therefore, if a household identifies as fleeing or attempting to flee DV that would make them eligible under Category 4 of the homeless definition, so long as they also meet the additional eligibility criteria of having no other residence **and** lacking the resources or support networks to obtain other permanent housing.

To help determine if the household meets the additional eligibility criteria of having no other residence and lacking the resources or support networks to obtain other permanent housing, intake workers should identify whether the individual or family has another safe and viable residence. A housing situation that is unsafe due to putting the individual or family in imminent danger of further abuse is not considered a resource or support network. Furthermore, a housing situation in which

the household is at imminent risk of being removed from the location is also not considered a viable residence. In both scenarios providers must not disqualify an individual or family from being considered Category 4 of the homeless definition based on these situations.

Recipients and subrecipients must document a client's homelessness status **at intake** into the project, and should follow HUD's stated preferred order for documentation. Below are the Category 4 documentation requirements, as found in the [HEARTH: Defining "Homeless" Final Rule](#). Please note that the documentation standards for Category 4 are different for victim service providers and non-victim service providers.

- The following applies to **victim service providers**:
 - An oral statement by the individual or head of household seeking assistance which states: they are fleeing; they have no subsequent residence; and they lack resources. The statement must be documented by a self-certification or a certification by the intake worker.
- The following applies to **non-victim service providers**:
 - Oral statement by the individual or head of household seeking assistance that they are fleeing. This statement is documented by a self-certification or by the caseworker. Where the safety of the individual or family is not jeopardized, the oral statement must be verified; and
 - Certification by the individual or head of household that no subsequent residence has been identified; and
 - Self-certification, or other written documentation, that the individual or family lacks the financial resources and support networks to obtain other permanent housing

Finally, HUD would like to clarify that self-certification by the individual or head of household would be acceptable by HUD if the individual considers him or herself as having no other residence and lacking the resources or support networks to obtain other permanent housing based on the criteria above. HUD expects intake workers to use their professional judgment to determine that the documentation collected is sufficient based on HUD's recordkeeping standards outlined above while also ensuring the safety of the individual or family is not jeopardized during the intake process.

RRH: Eligibility requirements under recent CoC Program NOFAs are provided below.

The [CoC Program interim rule](#) states that to be eligible for CoC Program-funded RRH, the household must be a homeless individual or family (see section [578.37\(a\)\(1\)\(ii\)](#) for more information). Additional eligibility criteria is set forth in the Fiscal Year NOFA under which the project was funded and the grant agreement currently in effect.

- RRH projects created through reallocation and funded as new projects under the [FY 2013 - FY 2014 CoC Program Notice of Funding Availability \(NOFA\)](#), must serve households with children living on the streets or in emergency shelter. RRH projects that were originally funded to serve individuals and families coming from streets or emergency shelters may be renewed under the FY 2013 - FY 2014 CoC Program Competition and may continue to serve individuals and families coming from the streets or emergency shelters.
- RRH projects created through reallocation and funded as new projects under the [FY 2015 CoC Program NOFA](#), [FY 2016 CoC Program NOFA](#), [FY 2017 CoC Program NOFA](#) must serve homeless individuals and families who enter directly from the streets or emergency shelters and persons who meet the criteria of paragraph (4) of the definition of homeless. Please note:
 - There is no requirement that individuals and families who meet the criteria of paragraph (4) of HUD's definition also be currently living on the streets or in emergency shelters in order to be eligible for RRH assistance funded through a new FY 2015, FY 2016, or FY 2017 CoC Program RRH project.
 - New RRH projects funded through the FY 2017 CoC Program NOFA may also serve individuals and families who meet one the following criteria:
 - Residing in a transitional housing project that was eliminated in the FY 2017 CoC Program Competition;
 - Residing in a transitional housing funded by a Joint TH and PH-RRH component project as defined in Section III.A.3.h. of the FY 2017 CoC Program NOFA); or
 - Receiving services from a VA-funded homeless assistance program and met one of the above criteria at initial intake to the VA's homeless assistance system.

Please note: the response provided in this email is specific to the question you submitted and may not apply to similar questions. Therefore, please use discretion in providing the response to others, as the answer may not apply to their particular situations.

Please click on the [\[View Question\]](#) button below to perform the following actions:

- [View your question](#), answer, and any applicable attachments
 - [Ask a new, unrelated question](#) using the same requestor information
 - [Reopen this question](#) if you need more assistance with the same question
-



Leigh Howard <leigh@dma-housing.com>

Question Response for CoC Question ID 129735 - HUD Exchange Ask A Question

1 message

aaq@hudexchange.info <aaq@hudexchange.info>
To: leigh@dma-housing.com

Thu, Jan 31, 2019 at 4:55 PM

Question Status: Answered

Thank you for submitting a question via the HUD Exchange. The response to your question is listed below.

Requestor Name: Leigh Howard

Requestor Email: leigh@dma-housing.com

Question Related To: Continuum of Care Program

Question ID: 129735

Question Subject:

ESG RRH - Category 4?

Question Text:

Thank you for your very clear answer! Can you also clarify whether this explanation is consistent with CoC-funded RRH? If not, can you clarify the differences between the eligibility?

Thank you, Leigh

Response:

Thank you for your question.

Rapid re-housing funded by the ESG Program is a separate and distinct program with different funding sources and eligibility criteria than the rapid re-housing program funded through the HUD CoC program. In particular, with regard to eligibility, households that meet *only* the Category 4 definition of homelessness (and NOT the Category 1 definition as well) are not eligible to receive ESG rapid re-housing assistance; however, the same households may be eligible for CoC rapid re-housing assistance provided all other CoC rapid re-housing eligibility criteria have been met. This is because to be eligible for assistance under the CoC Program, an individual or family must meet the definition of homeless as set forth in section 578.3 of the [CoC Program interim rule](#) **AND** they must also meet any additional eligibility criteria set forth in the CoC Program NOFA under which the project was funded.

Therefore, a household's eligibility for CoC-funded RRH will vary greatly depending on the NOFA through which the RRH project was funded. We have first provided the RRH eligibility criteria under recent CoC Program NOFAs, below, so you can understand the different eligibility requirements that may apply to your CoC RRH project.

- RRH projects created through reallocation and funded as new projects under the [FY 2013 - FY 2014 CoC Program Notice of Funding Availability \(NOFA\)](#), must serve households with children living on the streets or in emergency shelter. RRH projects that were originally funded to serve individuals and families coming from streets or emergency shelters may be renewed under the FY 2013 - FY 2014 CoC Program Competition and may continue to serve individuals and families coming from the streets or emergency shelters.
- RRH projects funded as new projects through the Permanent Housing Bonus or created through reallocation under the [FY 2015 CoC Program NOFA](#), [FY 2016 CoC Program NOFA](#), or the [FY 2017 CoC Program NOFA](#) must serve homeless individuals and families who enter directly from the streets or emergency shelters **and persons who meet the criteria of paragraph (4) of the definition of homeless**. RRH projects funded as renewal projects that were originally funded to serve households coming from other locations through the respective CoC Program NOFA may continue to serve households based on those eligibility requirements.

Please note:

- **There is no requirement that individuals and families who meet the criteria of paragraph (4) of HUD's definition also be currently living on the streets or in emergency shelters in order to be eligible** for RRH assistance funded through a new FY 2015, FY 2016, or FY 2017 CoC Program RRH project.
- New RRH projects funded through the [FY 2017 CoC Program NOFA](#) may also serve individuals and families who meet one the following criteria:
 - Residing in a transitional housing project that was eliminated in the FY 2017 CoC Program Competition;
 - Residing in a transitional housing funded by a Joint TH and PH-RRH component project as defined in Section III.A.3.h. of the FY 2017 CoC Program NOFA); or
 - Receiving services from a VA-funded homeless assistance program and met one of the above criteria at initial intake to the VA's homeless assistance system.

As a reminder, a household would meet **Category 4** of the definition of homeless if they are fleeing or attempting to flee from domestic violence and meet all other requirements, **regardless of where they are residing** (including staying with friends and family). If the household meets the criteria of Category 4 then they would be considered homeless and would be eligible for assistance funded through the CoC Program (including but not limited to CoC funded Transitional Housing, SSO, the Joint TH-RRH component, PSH or RRH) depending on the eligibility criteria of the NOFA through which the project was funded.

Category 4 Definition of Homeless Criteria: In order to be considered Category 4 of the homeless definition, an individual or family must meet the following criteria:

- (i) Is fleeing, or is attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or other dangerous or life-threatening conditions that relate to violence against the individual or a family member, including a child, that has either taken place within the individual's or family's primary nighttime residence or has made the individual or family afraid to return to their primary nighttime residence;
- (ii) Has no other residence; and
- (iii) Lacks the resources or support networks, e.g., family, friends, and faith-based or other social networks, to obtain other permanent housing.

HUD expects intake workers to use their professional judgment when assessing an individual's homeless status or eligibility, including considering all resources and support networks available to the household in order to determine if the individual or family seeking assistance would be eligible for the program.

Recipients and subrecipients must document a client's homelessness status *at intake* into the project, and should follow HUD's stated preferred order for documentation. Below are the Category 4 documentation requirements, as found in the [HEARTH: Defining "Homeless" Final Rule](#). Please note that the documentation standards for Category 4 are different for victim service providers and non-victim service providers.

- The following applies to **victim service providers**:
 - An oral statement by the individual or head of household seeking assistance which states: they are fleeing; they have no subsequent residence; and they lack resources. The statement must be documented by a self-certification or a certification by the intake worker.
- The following applies to **non-victim service providers**:
 - Oral statement by the individual or head of household seeking assistance that they are fleeing. This statement is documented by a self-certification or by the caseworker. Where the safety of the individual or family is not jeopardized, the oral statement must be verified; and
 - Certification by the individual or head of household that no subsequent residence has been identified; and
 - Self-certification, or other written documentation, that the individual or family lacks the financial resources and support networks to obtain other permanent housing.

For information about the eligibility criteria and recordkeeping requirements for the [Homeless Definition Final Rule](#), please review the [Criteria and Recordkeeping Requirements for the Definition of Homelessness](#) and the [Recording and Documenting Homeless Status](#) training module.

Please note: the response provided in this email is specific to the question you submitted and may not apply to similar questions. Therefore, please use discretion in providing the response to others, as the answer may not apply to their particular situations.

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