

# Western PA CoC Written Standards Training 2021 – Permanent Supportive Housing

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# What are the Written Standards?

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- Required by HUD
- Provide guidance for CoC and ESG programs related to service delivery
- Ensure that all programs are operating in a consistent, coordinated way that is compliant with HUD and CoC standards



# Structure of Written Standards

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- Standards for all project types
  - Includes recordkeeping and case management standards
  - *If you did not attend the training on Standards for all Project Types or watched the recording yet, please check it out!*
- Standards by project type – specific standards that must be followed if you are operating PSH, RRH, etc.
- Appendices
- Templates – separate document. Not required, but available as a resource



# Standards for Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)



# Access

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- Referrals must come through CE
- Projects must follow CoC Order of Prioritization in filling vacancies



# Eligibility

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- Literally homeless (Cat. 1) or Fleeing/Attempting to Flee DV (Cat. 4)  
AND
- At least one member of the household has a disability (note: disabilities of a child do not meet qualifications for chronically homeless)
- 100% of CoC-funded PSH units are chronic dedicated



# Eligibility: Chronic Homelessness Definition

Chronic homelessness is defined as an individual or head of household ***with a disabling condition*** who has either:

**Been continuously homeless for a year or more.**

- Homeless = sleeping in a place not meant for human habitation (e.g. streets or shelter)
- Stays in institutional care facilities for fewer than 90 days will not constitute a break in homelessness, but are included in the 12-month total, as long as the individual was living or residing in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or an emergency shelter immediately before entering the institutional care facility.

OR

**Has had four (4) episodes of homelessness in the last three (3) years, as long as the combined occasions equal at least 12 months and each break in homelessness separating the episodes was at least 7 consecutive nights.**

- Homeless = sleeping in a place not meant for human habitation (e.g. living on the streets OR living in a homeless emergency shelter)



# Prioritization

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- All CoC and ESG funded projects are required to prioritize individuals and families with the longest history of homelessness and with the most severe service needs for all available CoC resources
- If there are no chronically homeless households choosing to occupy a particular PSH unit, it may then be rented to a non-chronically homeless household per the Order of Prioritization





# Prioritization

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- **Top Priority:** Chronically Homeless/Literally Homeless and highest VI-SPDAT score (working your way down by score)
- **Next Priority:** Chronically Homeless PSH to PSH transfer or RRH to PSH Transfer
- **Next Priority:** Non-Chronic/Literally Homeless and highest VI-SPDAT score

Full Order of Prioritization can be found in the Standards



# Prioritization

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- Projects should consider household's county of preference for chronically homeless households, **BUT:**
- Before moving on to non-chronic households, PSH projects should identify chronically homeless households residing anywhere in the CoC, and offer PSH opening first



# Prioritization: Emergency Transfers due to DV

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If emergency transfer is needed due to DV:

- Provider should offer alternate unit within their organization's own inventory whenever possible
- If alternate unit not available, the provider should follow the process outlined in the Emergency Transfer Plan. Emergency transfer requests may be expedited and prioritized in order to identify a housing resource for which the participant/ household is eligible as soon as possible



# Documentation (PSH Specific)

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- Documentation of Disability\*
- Documentation of Chronic Status\*
- See Documentation for All Project Types for additional requirements

*\*there's a template for that!*



# Duration and Amounts

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Each participant should be assessed at least annually to determine whether they are able to move from PSH to other permanent housing without supports

- If exit is feasible, staff should support in this transition, including identifying alternative housing and connection to community supports
- Staff are encouraged to assist participants in signing up for all appropriate subsidized housing



# Duration and Amounts

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To determine rent for rental assistance projects, rent contribution or maximum occupancy charge is highest of the following:

- 30% of the family's monthly adjusted income;
- 10% of the family's monthly gross income; or
- If the family is receiving payments for welfare assistance from a public agency and a part of the payments is specifically designated by the agency to meet the family's housing costs, the portion of the payments that is designated for housing costs



# Duration and Amounts

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- For projects that provide PSH using funds other than rental assistance funds, the occupancy charge is optional and can be lower but not higher than the maximum occupancy charge outlined on previous slide
- If an assisted unit is vacated before the expiration of the lease, the project may pay no more than 30 days from the end of the month in which the unit was vacated



# PSH-Specific Standards

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- Households must have a lease for at least one year which is automatically renewable for a term of at least one month and only terminable for cause
- Scattered-site projects should engage landlords, including identifying available units, facilitating move-in, and ensuring participants' ongoing success in housing
- PSH clients should be terminated only in the most severe cases





# PSH-Specific Case Management

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- Support services must be made available to participants, but they may not be required for continued eligibility
- Case managers should offer monthly case management meetings, with more offered as needed
- Household case management needs may decrease over time



# PSH-Specific Case Management

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- HUD encourages communities to explore **Moving On strategies** for clients who may no longer need or want the intensive services offered in PSH but continue to need assistance to maintain their housing
- There are indicators that a client may be ready to explore Move On Options



# Performance Measures

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- **Clients retain their housing or exit to permanent housing:** At least 95% of households
- **Clients increase their income through either employment or benefits:** At least 40% of adults will increase their income
- **Clients linked to mainstream benefits:** At least 70% of households
- Clients do not return to homelessness within 2 years



# Next Steps

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- All CoC and ESG funded programs sign off by July 1<sup>st</sup> that their program(s) understand the standards, and will implement them: <http://s.alchemer.com/s3/WS-Form>
  - If there are standards that programs are not implementing, make a plan to implement those standards by Sept. 1, 2021.
- Feedback on the standards is welcome year-round: <http://s.alchemer.com/s3/West-Written-Standards-Feedback>



# Questions?

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- Email [westerncoc@pennsylvaniacoc.org](mailto:westerncoc@pennsylvaniacoc.org)

