Western PA CoC Written Standards Training 2021 – Rapid Rehousing

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What are the Written Standards?

- 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

- 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 Rapid Rehousing (RRH)

Access

- Referrals must come through CE

- Projects must follow CoC Order of Prioritization in filling vacancies

Eligibility

- Literally homeless (Cat. 1) or Fleeing/Attempting to Flee DV (Cat. 4)*
  AND

- Must be unable to access housing without assistance

NOTE: There are no income requirements at the time of enrollment

Prioritization

- **Top Priority:** Chronically Homeless/Literally Homeless and highest VI-SPDAT score (working your way down by score)

- **Next Priority**: Non-Chronic/Literally Homeless and highest VI-SPDAT score

- **Next Priority:** Non-Chronic/Literally Homeless and longest length of time homeless

Full Order of Prioritization can be found in the Standards

Prioritization

- Projects should consider household's county of preference for chronically homeless households, **BUT:**

- Before moving on to non-chronic households, RRH projects should identify chronically homeless households residing anywhere in the CoC, and offer RRH opening first

Prioritization: Emergency Transfers due to DV

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 (RRH Specific)

- Documentation of Homelessness*

- Executed Lease*

- (ESG) Landlord-Agency Agreement*

- Passed Inspection

- Housing Stability Plans*

- See Documentation for All Project Types for additional requirements

*there's a template for that!

Duration and Amounts

- Amount of rental assistance is highly individualized
  - Whenever possible, level of subsidy should lessen over time =   the project will pay less toward rent while the participant pays more until the participant is paying in full and exits the project

- Average length of subsidy goal = 6 months
  - Some households may need longer if extenuating circumstances
  - Projects should create internal extension approval process if more support is needed

Duration and Amounts

- First month's rent can be offered in full to assist the household

- If the tenant is responsible for paying their own utilities, grantees must follow the requirements for utility payments and reimbursement

- For ESG-funded projects, unit rent must NOT exceed Fair Market Rent (FMR) AND it must not exceed Rent Reasonableness

- For CoC-funded Projects, unit rent may exceed FMR, but may not exceed Rent Reasonableness

RRH-Specific Standards

- Providers should not wait until permanent housing is found to enroll the household in HMIS/program (enroll once both parties agree to work together)

- Projects should add a move-in date once participant moves in to unit

- Exit planning should start upon enrollment

- Income is reassessed at least quarterly for the purposes of adjusting rental payments

RRH-Specific Standards

Programs should provide housing locator services:

- Recruit landlords; provide education/outreach to landlords

- Assist households to find appropriate rental housing

- Help households negotiate lease agreements

RRH-Specific Case Management

- Case manager meetings are required monthly (with additional meetings offered as needed)

- Meetings should be in the client's home or in a mutually agreed-upon community setting whenever possible

Performance Measures

- **Clients exit to permanent housing:** At least 81% of households

- **Clients increase their income through either employment or benefits:** At least 48% 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

- All CoC and ESG funded programs sign off by July 1st 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?

- Email westerncoc@pennsylvaniacoc.org