

# Western PA CoC Written Standards Training 2025

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# What are the Written Standards?


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- 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
- Required by HUD

# Structure of Written Standards

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- Standards for all project types
  - Includes recordkeeping and case management standards
- Standards by project type – specific standards that must be followed if you are operating PSH, RRH, etc.
- Appendices
- Optional Forms and Templates – separate document. Not required, but available as a resource



# Standards for Transitional Housing (TH) and Joint Transitional Housing-Rapid Rehousing (TH-RRH)

# Access

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- Referrals must come through Coordinated Entry.
- Projects must follow CoC Order of Prioritization in filling vacancies.
- TH should be as low barrier as possible while honoring eligibility and prioritization criteria.

# Eligibility

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

AND

- Households must either present with multiple barriers to obtaining and retaining housing or have one primary barrier other than financial.

*People whose primary barrier to housing stability is economic in nature do not require TH as TH provides more intensive supports.*

**Regarding Chronic Homelessness Status:** A household enrolled in TH for longer than 7 days loses their Chronic Homelessness status.

# Prioritization

Priority Bracket	Criteria	Tie-Breaker
First Priority	Special populations designated by the CoC	HN/SN Score, LOT Homeless, then CE Assessment Tool score
Second Priority	People experiencing chronic homelessness	HN/SN Score, LOT Homeless, then CE Assessment Tool score
Third Priority	All eligible households not included under First Priority or Second Priority	HN/SN Score, LOT Homeless, then CE Assessment Tool score

# Prioritization

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- Because TH may serve as crisis housing, if there are no chronically homeless households prioritized for a project, the project may, through CE case conferencing, prioritize households facing emergency situations, such as high lethality DV situations.



# Prioritization

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- **TH residents who were chronically homeless prior to entering TH lose their chronic homelessness status once enrolled in TH.** It will be important for the TH Provider and CE Assessment Center to assist the household in making an informed decision.
- Households who are chronically homeless who are being referred to TH should be discussed at case conferencing, to ensure the household makes an informed decision about accepting a TH placement.

# Prioritization

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**In applying the order of priority,** households shall be considered for:

- all counties they've expressed interest in via the CE assessment;  
AND
- all counties in the region where they are currently experiencing homelessness

# Transfers into TH

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- If the household was chronically homeless at entry into their current project, the household will be prioritized in the Second Priority Bracket.
- Within each priority bracket, it will be determined via case conferencing where a transferring household will be prioritized compared to currently homeless households.

# Documentation (TH Specific)

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- Executed Occupancy Agreement
- *See Documentation for all Project Types for additional requirements*

# Duration and Amounts

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- TH should be used as temporary/bridge housing with stays lasting for only as long as it takes for a household to secure permanent housing
  - Enrollments should not exceed 12 months, except in extenuating circumstances.
  - Average enrollment should be 6 months or less.
- Longer-term TH, in excess of six months or twelve months, should be targeted to people who face more severe challenges to finding housing.

# Duration and Amounts

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For TH projects using rental assistance, rent contributions are mandatory. 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 non-rental assistance projects, the occupancy charge is optional and can be lower, but not higher, than the maximum occupancy charge on previous slide.

# TH Specific Case Management

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- Exit planning should start upon project entry.
- Case managers should offer to meet with participants at least bi-weekly.
- *This stipulation supersedes any language requiring case managers to offer meeting only monthly.*



# TH Performance Measures

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- **At least 83% of households** who exit TH exit to permanent housing.
- **At least 48% of adult participants** will increase their income through either employment or benefits.
  - **22% of adults** will increase earned/ employment income.
  - **30% of adults** will increase non-employment income.
- Average length of stay will be **12 months or less** (target goal: 9 months or less).
- **No more than 6% of households** that exit to permanent housing after being homeless should become homeless again within 12 months.

# TH-RRH Specific Standards

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- Grantees administering Joint TH/RRH projects should follow RRH and TH specific standards.
- Projects must offer both components: participants are able to choose TH Only, RRH only, or both TH and RRH.

# TH-RRH Eligibility

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- Literally homeless (Cat. 1); or
- Fleeing/Attempting to Flee DV (Cat. 4); or
- Those residing in a TH project that is being eliminated; or
- Those residing in TH being funded by another Joint Component project

# TH-RRH Prioritization

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- TH-RRH projects should follow the Order of Prioritization for TH and RRH projects, depending on which project component participant will be entering.
- Projects should target and prioritize people experiencing homelessness with higher needs (i.e., multiple barriers to obtaining and retaining housing and/or those who are most vulnerable).

# TH-RRH Amount and Duration

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- Projects must offer both components: participants are able to choose TH Only, RRH only, or both TH and RRH.
- The maximum duration of support for both components combined is 24 months per household.
- The project will provide enough RRH assistance to ensure that at any given time a project participant may move from TH to permanent housing.

# TH-RRH HMIS/ Reporting

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- TH/RRH projects must be set-up in HMIS data system as two-different Projects: one TH project and one RRH project.
- CoC-funded TH/RRH must submit one APR for TH and one APR for RRH.

# TH-RRH Case Management

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- For projects with operating or leasing dollars where occupancy agreements or sub-leases are used, the role of the case manager and the role of landlord should be separate and distinct to ensure the case manager can engage with the participant to build trust and rapport instead of focusing on holding the participant accountable to their lease.

# Next Steps

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- All CoC- and ESG- funded programs sign off by April 30, 2025 that their program(s) have reviewed the WS, understand them, will implement them, and will ensure that all new hires review the standards and recorded CoC trainings within 60 days of hire:  
<https://survey.alchemer.com/s3/8216721/Western-PA-CoC-Written-Standards-Acknowledgment-Form-2025>
- If there are standards that programs are not implementing, make a plan to implement those standards by June 30, 2025.
- Feedback on the standards is welcome year-round:  
<https://survey.alchemer.com/s3/7127925/Western-PA-CoC-Written-Standards-Annual-Feedback>