

Ryan White Program Standards of Care – Housing Services

County of Santa Clara Public Health Department
Sexual Health and Harm Reduction Program



Santa Clara County HIV Commission



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

How This Document is Organized

Service Definition

Key Activities

Requirements

- 1.0 ARIES
- 2.0 Intake/Eligibility
- 3.0 Recertification
- 4.0 Care and Treatment
- 5.0 Service Access, Management, and Closure
- 6.0 Grievances
- 7.0 Client Rights, Responsibilities, and Confidentiality
- 8.0 Staff Requirements and Qualifications
- 9.0 Cultural and Linguistic Competency
- 10.0 Fiscal Responsibility
- 11.0 Licensure and Quality Assurance
- 12.0 Continuous Quality Improvement

References and Published Guidelines

Introduction

This document describes the “Housing” service category of supportive services under the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program (RWHAP). It serves as a supplement to the Universal Standards of Care released by the Santa Clara County HIV Commission and County of Santa Clara Public Health Department. This document highlights each of the requirements and standards that apply to Housing services and must be followed by any provider receiving RWHAP funding for this service category. All service providers are responsible for understanding and maintaining compliance with the USOC, which apply to every RWHAP service category.

How This Document is Organized

Within this document, the Standards of Care are described in terms of (1) Service Definition and (2) Requirements.

Note: This document pertains to the service category of Housing and does not address the additional requirements for those providing services under the Housing Plus Project.

Service Definition

Housing provides transitional, short-term, or emergency housing assistance to enable a client or family (household) to gain or maintain outpatient/ambulatory health services and treatment, including temporary assistance necessary to prevent homelessness and to gain or maintain access to medical care. Activities within the Housing category must also include the development of an individualized housing plan, updated annually, to guide the client’s linkage to permanent housing. Housing may provide some type of core medical (e.g., mental health services) or support services (e.g., residential substance use disorder services). Housing activities also include housing referral services, including assessment, search, placement, and housing advocacy services on behalf of the eligible client, as well as fees associated with these activities.

Key Activities

Allowable activities in this service category include:

- Housing that provides some type of core medical or support services, such as:
 - Residential substance use disorder services,
 - Residential mental health services,
 - Residential foster care,
 - Assisted living residential services.

- Housing that does not provide direct core medical or support services but is essential for a client or household to initiate or maintain access to and compliance with HIV-related outpatient/ambulatory health services and treatment. This includes paying or supplementing rent. In some cases, this can include hotel/motel vouchers, when done on a limited basis as part of an overall plan to transition the client to permanent housing.
- Housing referral services to other (non-Ryan White) housing programs

Unallowable activities in this service category include:

- Mortgage payments
- Direct cash payments to clients
- Rental or security deposits. Such deposits are typically returned to clients as cash which would violate the prohibition on providing cash payments to clients.

Requirements

In addition to complying with all the standards, measures, and monitoring criteria identified in the USOC, service providers shall adhere to the specifications for providing Housing Services as updated below.

1.0 ARIES: AIDS Regional Information & Evaluation System

Standards, Measures, and Monitoring criteria identified in USOC 1.0

2.0 Intake: Client/Eligibility

Standards, Measures, and Monitoring criteria identified in USOC 2.0

3.0 Recertification

Standards, Measures, and Monitoring criteria identified in USOC 3.0

4.0 Care and Treatment

4.1 Intake Appointment and Assessment

Additional Standards, Measures, and Monitoring criteria identified in USOC 4.0

#	Standard	Measure
4.1.1	<p>First Appointment: The first appointment should be made as soon as possible, and no later than 10 days from the client referral/self-referral. The intake process should begin at this visit, or sooner if feasible. Subsequent appointments must be offered as soon as possible and no more than 30 days after the request to meet. At the first appointment, clients must receive an orientation to available Housing Services.</p> <p>Agencies must have a process to ensure timely follow up after missed appointments, preferably within 24 hours, which includes documenting missed appointments and attempts to reschedule.</p>	<p>Record of referral dates and scheduled appointments in client file.</p> <p>Policy and Procedures for appointment scheduling and missed appointments</p>
4.1.2	<p>Eligibility Screening: Providers must ensure the client has been deemed eligible for RWHAP services by the referring agency. Providers should ensure that any consents and Releases of Information specific to Housing Services are completed and in the client's file; providers must take the necessary steps to obtain these forms if missing.</p>	<p>Record of eligibility in client file</p>
4.1.3	<p>Newly Identified Clients: Providers must work with other RWHAP providers to ensure that newly diagnosed clients and clients new to the RWHAP system of care are evaluated for and provided with Housing Services as needed.</p>	<p>Monitored via discussions during site visit</p>
4.1.4	<p>Initial Assessment: Housing Services providers must meet with each client to assess their housing needs and consider any barriers and available local resources. Clients will need to submit proof of the need (i.e., eviction warning notices) to be considered for Housing Services. Funds for Housing Services can only be used as a last resort and providers must ensure that all other avenues for housing assistance have been exhausted.</p>	<p>Record of assessment in client file</p>
4.1.5	<p>Criteria for Housing Services: Housing Service providers must have written criteria for acceptance or rejection of clients. A ranking criterion must also be developed in the event of a wait list.</p>	<p>Monitored via discussions during site visit</p>

4.2 Individualized Housing Plan (IHP)

#	Standard	Measure
4.2.1	<p>Individualized Housing Plan (IHP): Providers must create an IHP for each client. A comprehensive IHP should take into consideration client’s health status, financial status, and individual preference. Providers must also consider client behavioral, psychosocial, developmental, and physiologic strengths and limitations. An IHP must at a minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess current housing needs, • Incorporate client input, • Guide the client’s linkage to permanent housing, • Include any referrals and linkages to other needed services, and • Be signed and dated by staff providing Housing Services. 	IHP in client file
4.2.2	<p>Duration: Housing Services are intended to be temporary in nature. Service providers are required to work with clients to develop an IHP with the goal of eventual self-sufficiency. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines transitional housing as lasting up to 24 months. Providers may extend beyond 24 months, if necessary, based on individual client assessment, which must include a transitional plan to permanent housing with a concrete timeline. The Public Health Department Sexual Health and Harm Reduction Program must be made aware of such an instance.</p>	Duration of service via contract monitoring and client-level data system
4.2.3	<p>Documentation: All client contacts, as well as services, referrals, and other assistance provided to clients must be recorded in the client chart. In addition, any payments made on behalf of a client shall be documented and a copy of the payment maintained.</p>	Records in client files
4.2.4	<p>Reassessment: IHPs for each client must be reviewed and updated every six months. Client progress must be included in the documentation.</p>	IHP in client file

5.0 Service Access, Management, and Closure

Standards, Measures, and Monitoring criteria identified in USOC 5.0

6.0 Grievances

Standards, Measures, and Monitoring criteria identified in USOC 6.0

7.0 Client Rights, Responsibilities, and Confidentiality

Standards, Measures, and Monitoring criteria identified in USOC 7.0

8.0 Staff Requirements and Qualifications

Additional Standards, Measures, and Monitoring criteria identified in USOC 8.0

8.1 Education & License

#	Standard	Measure
8.1.1	<p>Education/Experience: There are no minimum educational standards for housing staff. Housing Services must be provided by persons who possess a comprehensive knowledge of local, state, and federal housing programs and how to access these programs.</p> <p>Individual supervision and guidance must be available to all staff as needed.</p>	Documentation of experience with housing programs in personnel files

8.4 Orientation/In-Service

#	Standard	Measure
8.4.1	<p>Initial Training: All staff must complete an initial training session related to their job description. Training should be completed within 15 days of hire. Topics must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• General HIV knowledge, such as transmission, care, and prevention,• Local housing resources, including Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA),• Privacy requirements,• Navigation of the local HIV system of care, including the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program (RWHAP) and AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP),• Fair Housing and related laws.	Documentation of initial training in personnel files



8.4.2	Ongoing training: Housing staff must receive ongoing annual training as appropriate for their position. Training may be any combination of in-person, articles, home studies, or webinar, and must be clearly documented and tracked for monitoring purposes.	Documentation of ongoing training in personnel files
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9.0 Cultural and Linguistic Competency

Standards, Measures, and Monitoring criteria identified in USOC 9.0

10.0 Fiscal Responsibility

Additional Standards, Measures, and Monitoring criteria identified in USOC 10.0

10.3 Fiscal Management

#	Standard	Measure
10.3.1	Confidentiality: Payments made on behalf of clients need to maintain client confidentiality and should not indicate “HIV” or “AIDS” on the check. If the name of the organization includes “HIV” or AIDS,” generic checks should be used.	Monitored via discussion during site visit
10.3.2	Back Rent: Housing Service funds can pay a landlord back rent up to three months on behalf of an eligible client. The client must provide documentation from the landlord stating the amount of back rent owed. It is not necessary to wait for an eviction notice as the goal is to avoid disruption in housing. Avoidance of a similar event should be addressed in the clients IHP.	Records in client files
10.3.3	Payments: Housing Service providers must provide documentation and assurance that no RWHAP funds are used to provide direct payments to clients, including for rent or mortgages.	Monitored via discussion and records reviewed during site visit

11.0 Licensure and Quality Assurance

Standards, Measures, and Monitoring criteria identified in USOC 11.0

12.0 Continuous Quality Improvement

Standards, Measures, and Monitoring criteria identified in USOC 12.0

References and Published Guidelines

California Department of Public Health, Office of AIDS (2020). *HIV Care Program Standards of Care*, 1-179

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