

**GEORGIA BALANCE OF STATE CONTINUUM
OF CARE
WRITTEN STANDARDS**

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Introduction

The Georgia Balance of State (BoS) Continuum of Care (CoC) is responsible for coordinating and implementing a system to meet the needs of the population and subpopulations experiencing homelessness within the geographic area of the CoC, which is comprised of 152 counties throughout the state. Both the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) Rule and the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Continuum of Care Program Interim Rule state that the CoC must establish and consistently follow written standards for providing Continuum of Care assistance.

These written standards have been developed in conjunction with the Collaborative Applicant (Georgia Department of Community Affairs), the Continuum's four (4) ESG entitlement jurisdictions [Gwinnett County, Clayton County, Macon-Bibb County and the State of Georgia (Georgia Housing and Finance Authority)] and with stakeholders throughout the Continuum, including Continuum recipients and sub-recipients. They will be reviewed annually, and any substantial changes will be approved by the BoS CoC Board of Directors.

The written standards have been established to ensure that persons experiencing homelessness who enter projects throughout the Balance of State CoC jurisdiction will be given similar information and support to access and maintain permanent housing. All projects that receive State of Georgia ESG and Georgia BoS CoC funding are required to abide by these written standards where applicable. ESG funded projects in Clayton County, Gwinnett County, and Macon-Bibb County are required to follow the written standards of those jurisdictions unless listed jurisdictions have adopted the BoS CoC written standards. The CoC strongly encourages projects that do not receive either of these sources of funds to accept and utilize these written standards.

It should be noted that the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) regulations for each of the referenced programs shall always take precedence over any of the standards outlined in this document (<https://www.hudexchange.info/>). The CoC Program Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) may authorize additional eligibility requirements. Projects funded under the CoC program must follow both CoC Program NOFO and other HUD-issued guidance and requirements. Previous CoC competitions were known as the Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA), and where applicable based on a project's operating year, references to the NOFO in this document can be considered references to previous competitions known as the NOFA. In addition, local ESG Programs may impose additional requirements to their funding recipients that do not apply to other CoC recipients.

The HUD Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP) Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) may authorize additional eligibility requirements, as approved by HUD. Projects funded under YHDP must follow both YHDP NOFO and other HUD-issued guidance and requirements. In addition, projects utilizing HUD-approved special activities under YHDP that conflicts with the Balance of State CoC Written Standards will take precedence over the Balance of State Written Standards.

The Continuum of Care Supplemental to Address Unsheltered and Rural Homelessness (Special NOFO) may authorize additional eligibility requirements, as approved by HUD. Projects funded under the Special NOFO must follow both Special NOFO and other HUD-issued guidance and requirements.

Please note that if a project utilizes any future waiver or guidance issued by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) that conflicts with the Balance of State CoC Written Standards, such waiver or guidance will take precedence over the Balance of State CoC Written Standards for the duration of the applicable waiver or guidance.

In the event of a declared state of emergency, natural disaster, public health crisis, or other extenuating circumstances, the Balance of State CoC may issue emergency protocols which would be in effect for the duration of and in response to those circumstances. Such guidance will be issued in a separate addendum to the Written Standards.

General Standards

The following standards apply to all projects funded through the CoC or with State ESG funds.

HMIS Participation

All organizations receiving ESG or CoC funds must participate fully in the CoC's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) to enter data on persons served and assistance provided. Victim service providers receiving ESG or CoC funds are required by 24 CFR 576.400(f) and 580.32(d) to use a comparable database that meets all HUD standards for HMIS and provides for security, data quality, and privacy.

Coordinated Entry Process (a/k/a Coordinated Assessment System)

All projects located within the GA BoS CoC that receive CoC and Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) funding are required to participate in the coordinated assessment system and are therefore subject to complying with the Coordinated Entry Written Standards, Policies and Procedures as outlined and developed by the GA BoS CoC. This system will include all homeless subpopulations and involve the use of a standardized assessment tool designated by the Coordinated Entry Written Standards. This system will establish a uniform decision-making process to prioritize households seeking assistance and provide referrals to those households. The coordinated entry system (CES) will ensure that those with the greatest needs receive priority for housing and service provision and that no unnecessary barriers exist for individuals to receive assistance. The Coordinated Entry Written Standards, Policies and Procedures, related materials, and training webinars can be found at: <https://www.dca.ga.gov/safe-affordable-housing/homeless-special-needs-housing/georgia-balance-state-continuum-care/balance>.

The terms "Coordinated Entry Process" and "Centralized or Coordinated Assessment System" are used interchangeably throughout federal guidelines. The CoC Program interim rule at 24 CFR 578.3 defines centralized or coordinated assessment as the following:

"...a centralized or coordinated process designed to coordinate program participant intake assessment and provision of referrals. A centralized or coordinated assessment system covers the geographic area, is easily accessed by individuals and families seeking housing or services, is well advertised, and includes a comprehensive and standardized assessment tool..."

For the purpose of this document, the term "Coordinated Entry" or "Coordinated Entry Process" are used to reference "Centralized or Coordinated Assessment System" and "Coordinated Entry Process."

Removal of Barriers

For CoC-funded projects, the CoC will be assessing project level eligibility criteria in order to identify and remove barriers to accessing services and housing that are experienced by homeless individuals and families. Organizations should be working towards the removal of barriers to project entry, and barriers to remaining in projects, as these barriers both deny housing to individuals and families that really need intensive services and often result in low occupancy rates. Organizations may need to change their project design in order to address this.

All projects that have committed to a Housing First approach must ensure that their projects do not screen any individuals or families out for assistance based upon perceived barriers to housing or services. All BoS providers are encouraged to review their policies and remove barriers wherever possible. Examples of this include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Having too little or no income
- Current or past substance abuse
- Having a criminal record (w/exception of state mandated restrictions)
- Having a history of domestic violence

In addition, assistance may not be terminated to any recipients based upon these barriers. Examples of this include:

- Failure to participate in supportive services and case management activities
- Failure to make progress on a services plan
- Loss of income or failure to improve income
- Being a victim of domestic violence

Termination of Assistance

ESG or CoC-funded homeless assistance providers may terminate assistance to a program participant who violates program requirements or conditions of occupancy. Termination under this section does not bar the provider from providing further assistance at a later date to the same individual or family.

In terminating assistance to a program participant, the provider must have in place a formal process that recognizes the rights of individuals receiving assistance under the due process of law. This process, at a minimum, must consist of:

- Providing the program participant with a written copy of the program rules and the termination process before the participant begins to receive assistance.
- Written notice to the program participant containing a clear statement of the reason(s) for termination.
- The option for a review of the decision, in which the participant is given the opportunity to present written or oral objections before a person other than the person (or a subordinate of that person) who made or approved the termination decision.
- Prompt written notice of the final decision to the program participant.

Providers of permanent supportive housing for hard-to-house populations of homeless persons must exercise judgement and examine all extenuating circumstances in determining when violations are serious enough to warrant termination so that the participant's assistance is terminated only in the most severe cases.

Faith-based Activities

The minimum standards required for faith-based providers are as follows:

- Providers receiving funding through ESG or CoC programs may not engage in inherently religious activities as part of those funded activities. Those religious activities must be offered separately from the ESG or CoC-funded projects and all participation must be voluntary.
- All religious organizations receiving ESG or CoC funding shall retain their independence from government and may continue with their missions provided that ESG or CoC funds are not used to support inherently religious activities. They shall also maintain authority over their internal governance.

- No organization receiving ESG or CoC funds may discriminate against a participant based on religion or religious beliefs.
- ESG and CoC funds may be used for the rehabilitation of structures that are used for eligible activities under the programs but may not be used to rehabilitate structures used specifically for religious activities.

Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity

It is the policy of the BoS CoC to comply fully with all federal, state, and local nondiscrimination laws and to operate in accordance with the rules and regulations governing Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity in housing and employment. The BoS CoC, including its recipients and subrecipients, shall not on account of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, family status, disability or age deny any family or individual the opportunity to apply for or receive assistance under HUD's Programs. All recipients and sub-recipients of ESG and CoC funding must comply with the requirements for equal opportunity, nondiscrimination, and affirmatively furthering fair housing as outlined in Section 578.93 of the Continuum of Care Program interim rule and any applicable ESG regulations.

Language Access Plan

All recipients and sub-recipients of ESG and CoC funding must provide Limited English Proficiency (LEP) persons with meaningful access to federally funded programs. HUD issued new guidance on Fair Housing Act Protections for Persons with Limited English Proficiency on September 15, 2016, and DCA issued its updated Language Access Plan (LAP) effective 2022-2027 that details its plan to provide LEP persons with meaningful access to programs. DCA will provide guidance and training to State of Georgia ESG sub-recipients and Balance of State CoC recipients on providing language access services, including the components of a meaningful LAP, options for translation and interpretation services, and assistance with identifying methods to ensure meaningful access to programs and activities. More information on DCA's Fair Housing Policy can be found on the DCA Fair Housing Statement page at: <https://www.dca.ga.gov/fairhousing>, and the updated LAP can be found at: https://www.dca.ga.gov/sites/default/files/final_dca_lap_2022.2.pdf.

Allowable Family Limitations and Prohibition against Involuntary Family Separation

The CoC Interim Rule 24 CFR 578.93 (e) and 24 CFR 576.102(b) explicitly prohibit any kind of involuntary family separation and the denial of admission to selected family members in all CoC Program-funded projects and ESG-funded emergency shelters. It is acceptable for programs to limit participation to only households with children. However, if a project accepts any households with children, they must accept all households with children. This means that any provider that has historically accepted only women with children may not limit their project to that population. They must also accept couples with children or single men with children as well.

In addition, the age and/or gender of a child under age 18 must not be used as a basis for denying any family's admission to a project receiving ESG or CoC funding.

Equal Access Requirements

HUD published a final rule on September 21, 2016, entitled *Equal Access in Accordance with an Individual's Gender Identity in Community Planning and Development Programs* that became effective on October 21, 2016. This rule includes the following central provisions:

- All HUD-assisted and HUD-insured housing must be made available without regard to actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status.

- Owners and administrators of HUD-assisted housing and HUD-insured housing are prohibited from inquiring into an applicant or occupant’s sexual orientation and gender identity for the purpose of determining eligibility or otherwise making housing available.
- The definition of “family” is revised to include all families regardless of the actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status of its members.

This rule shall apply to all ESG or CoC-funded projects with two exceptions. This prohibition on inquiries does not prohibit lawful inquiries of an applicant or occupant’s sex where the housing provided or to be provided to the individual is temporary, emergency shelter for adults only with a physical configuration such that privacy is a concern, specifically shared bathing areas or shared sleeping areas. A shared bathing area is one in which there are multiple toilet stalls or shower stalls or open showers. Nor does it apply to inquiries made for the purpose of determining the number of bedrooms to which a household may be entitled. In addition, this provision does not prohibit voluntary self-identification of sexual orientation or gender identity by participants. The BoS CoC, including recipients and subrecipients, will comply with the Equal Access Rule at 24 CFR 5.105 and 5.106.

Complete State of Georgia ESG program requirements for written standards, policies and procedures, including ones not addressed in this document, can be requested from DCA ESG staff or found in the Georgia Department of Community Affairs *Emergency Solutions Grant Guidebook* at: <https://www.dca.ga.gov/safe-affordable-housing/homeless-special-needs-housing/emergency-solutions-grants>.

Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) Requirements

Under the HUD Final Rule Implementing VAWA Reauthorization Act of 2013, the Georgia BoS CoC adopted policies to include provisions for protection of victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, sexual battery, or stalking, regardless of sex, gender identity, gender expression or actual or perceived sexual orientation.

These policies and procedures apply to CoC-funded Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) and Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) programs. ESG-funded programs are subject to VAWA policies issued by the administrator of ESG funds. As a part of these policies and procedures, the CoC has put in place a policy for emergency transfers. The full details of the policy can be found in the *GA BoS CoC VAWA Policies and Procedures* located at: <https://www.dca.ga.gov/housing/homeless-special-needs-housing/georgia-balance-state-continuum-care/policies>.

Please note that the Written Standards include an updated definition for the Category 4 definition of homelessness in response to the *Violence Against Women Act Reauthorization Act of 2022*. The update to the Category 4 definition is based on guidance from the *Violence Against Women Act Reauthorization Act of 2022: Overview of Applicability to HUD Programs* notice found at: <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2023-01-04/pdf/2022-28073.pdf>. The linked notice states that Section 605 of VAWA 2022 amended section 103(b) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act to allow “ESG and CoC recipients [to] implement the new definition prior to HUD rulemaking, provided that ESG recipients and CoCs update the relevant written standards and policies as needed to reflect the new statutory criteria.” The Violence Against Women Act Reauthorization Act of 2022: Overview of Applicability to HUD Programs, 88 F.R. 321 (to be codified at 24 C.F.R. Part 5).

The Category 4 definition is updated in the Balance of State CoC Written Standards (Appendix I) prior to HUD Rulemaking to allow this. Please note that further updates to these written standards and the VAWA Policy may be needed once HUD guidance is released.

Youth Participants in CoC-funded Projects

For CoC Projects funded under a NOFO with an expanded allowance for youth aged 24 and under, as provided through the Consolidated Appropriations Act relevant to a NOFO competition (as applicable):

- As provided by the Consolidated Appropriations Act relevant to a NOFO competition (previously 2021, 2022, and 2023), youth aged 24 and under must not be required to provide third-party documentation that they meet the homeless definition in 24 CFR 578.3 as a condition for receiving services funded under the NOFO (as applicable). If the intake worker cannot obtain a higher level of documentation (e.g., a letter from a third-party) the youth can self-certify and the intake worker should document their effort to obtain a higher level of documentation, including notes about why they were not able to.
- Additionally, any youth-serving provider funded under the NOFO (as applicable) may serve unaccompanied youth aged 24 and under (or families headed by youth aged 24 and under) who have an unsafe primary nighttime residence and no safe alternative to that residence.
 - HUD interprets “youth-serving provider” as a private nonprofit organization whose primary mission is to provide services to youth aged 24 and under and families headed by youth aged 24 and under.
 - HUD interprets “living in unsafe situations” as having an unsafe primary nighttime residence and no safe alternative to that residence. These youth-related requirements supersede any conflicting requirements.

STREET OUTREACH PROJECTS

Definition

Street outreach projects are those activities that are undertaken to identify potential homeless project recipients for the purpose of providing them with immediate support and intervention activities.

Eligibility

HUD Eligibility

Recipients of these services must meet the HUD definition of homelessness under Category 1. These would be unsheltered homeless individuals and families, meaning those with a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground.

CoC projects funded under the Rural Homelessness Set Aside are limited to serve counties defined as Rural in the Special NOFO.

CoC projects funded through the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP) NOFO must be dedicated to youth and young adults (singles and youth families) where the head of household is aged 24 and under at the time of program enrollment. Under YHDP, all youth must qualify as homeless under categories 1, 2, and 4, except as stated in I.C.5. and I.C.6. of Appendix A.

- Appendix A – I.C.5. discusses serving households who are homeless under other federal laws, however this is not allowed in the Balance of State CoC, nor supported in the Coordinated Community Plan (CCP).
- Appendix A – I.C.6. discusses serving households who lack 3rd party documentation or living in unsafe situations. As stipulated in I.C.6. of Appendix A, youth aged 24 and under must not be required to provide third-party documentation that they meet the homeless definition in 24 CFR 578.3 as a condition for receiving services in projects funded under the YHDP NOFO. Additionally, any youth-serving provider funded under the YHDP NOFO may serve unaccompanied youth aged 24 and under and families headed by youth aged 24 and under who are living in unsafe situations. HUD interprets “youth-serving provider” as a private nonprofit organization whose primary mission is to provide services to youth aged 24 and under and families headed by youth aged 24 and under. HUD interprets “living in unsafe situations” as having an unsafe primary nighttime residence and no safe alternative to that residence. These requirements supersede any conflicting requirements under the YHDP NOFO, this appendix, the Act, or the CoC Program rule.

CoC Recommendations

Agencies administering Street Outreach Projects must have policies on safety standards and procedures.

Engagement should occur during times when there is a reasonable expectation to believe people have no housing options.

ESG-funded Street Outreach projects should operate as assessors for coordinated entry in the Balance of State CoC.

When documenting category 4 for youth, the intake worker needs to ask only enough questions to know what is going on, and they should rely on the youth’s own statement. If the youth indicates there is a safety risk then no further documentation of the safety risk is needed – the intake worker should simply document what the youth stated.

Required Documentation

Documentation must be included in the case file, and/or scanned into the HMIS client record that demonstrates eligibility as follows:

- 1) Literally Homeless (in order of preference)*
 - a. Third party verification (HMIS print-out, or written referral/certification by another housing or service provider); or
 - b. Written observation by an outreach worker; or
 - c. Certification by the individual or head of household seeking assistance stating that (s)he was living on the streets or in shelter;
 - d. For individuals exiting an institution – one of the forms of evidence above and:
 - i. Discharge paperwork or written/oral referral, or
 - ii. Written record of intake worker’s due diligence to obtain above evidence and certification by individual that they exited institution
 - e. *Youth aged 24 and under that cannot provide third-party verification of homelessness cannot be disqualified from service in CoC-funded projects for lack of documentation.

*If the provider is using anything other than a Third-Party Verification, the case file must include documentation of due diligence to obtain third party verification. Appendix V and Appendix VI provide more details on exactly what is needed in the case file.

Assessment/ Prioritization

Individuals and families shall be assessed where they are and will be offered the following Street Outreach services, as needed and appropriate: *engagement, case management, emergency health and mental health, and transportation services* where they are otherwise not available in the mainstream. Based on the need of services population, Street Outreach projects must assess, prioritize, and re-assess the need for essential services related to street outreach, and they should continuously engage unsheltered persons and persons experiencing chronic homelessness (and most at risk of becoming chronically homeless), even if they repeatedly decline housing and services. When appropriate based on the individual's needs and wishes, the referral to permanent supportive housing or rapid re-housing that can quickly assist the individuals to obtain safe, permanent housing shall be prioritized over the provision of or referral to an emergency shelter. Street Outreach Projects are required to utilize the Coordinated Entry Process as outlined in the Coordinated Entry Written Standards Policies and Procedures, which will provide information on prioritization and reassessment for services.

EMERGENCY SHELTERS

Definition

Any facility or project (including hotel/motel voucher projects) where the primary purpose is to provide a temporary shelter for the homeless in general, or for specific populations of the homeless, which does not require occupants to sign leases or occupancy agreements.

Eligibility

HUD Eligibility

Individuals and families entering the shelter system must be homeless per the HUD Homeless Definition, Category 1, literally homeless, Category 2, imminent risk of homelessness, Category 3, homeless under other federal statutes, or Category 4, fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence (with documentation as detailed elsewhere in this document). Shelter facilities may accept clients that are not HUD-defined homeless, but they must administratively separate those clients so that ESG funds are not used for non-HUD-defined homeless clients.

CoC Recommendations

Projects should have expedited admission processes, to the greatest extent possible, including providing assistance with obtaining necessary documentation. Further, shelters should not require, upon admission, that residents have IDs or be entered into HMIS. Projects should also not require any fees.

ESG-funded Emergency Shelters should operate as assessment centers for coordinated entry in the Balance of State CoC. Victim Service Providers should assess their residents.

When documenting category 4 for youth, the intake worker needs to ask only enough questions to know what is going on, and they should rely on the youth's own statement. If the youth indicates there is a safety risk then no further documentation of the safety risk is needed – the intake worker should simply document what the youth stated.

Required Documentation

Documentation must be included in the case file, and/or scanned into the HMIS client record that demonstrates eligibility as follows:

- 1) Literally Homeless (in order of preference)*
 - a. Third party verification (HMIS print-out, or written referral/certification by another housing or service provider); or
 - b. Written observation by an outreach worker; or
 - c. Certification by the individual or head of household seeking assistance stating that (s)he was living on the streets or in shelter;
 - d. For individuals exiting an institution – one of the forms of evidence above and;
 - i. Discharge paperwork or written/oral referral, or
 - ii. Written record of intake worker’s due diligence to obtain above evidence and certification by individual that they exited institution
 - e. *Youth aged 24 and under that cannot provide third-party verification of homelessness cannot be disqualified from service in CoC-funded projects for lack of documentation.

*If the provider is using anything other than a Third-Party Verification, the case file must include documentation of due diligence to obtain third party verification. Appendix V and Appendix VI provide more details on exactly what is needed in the case file.

Assessment /Prioritization

Emergency Shelter projects are required to utilize the Coordinated Entry Process as outlined in the Coordinated Entry Written Standards Policies and Procedures. Domestic violence (DV) projects may utilize the coordinated entry system but are not required to participate due to issues of confidentiality. Homeless youth (12 – 18 yrs. of age) may still access shelter through a Runaway & Homeless Youth Hot Line. Priority will be given to individuals and families with no income and to those who have extremely low income (30 percent of AMI) as dictated by Area Median Income.

TRANSITIONAL HOUSING PROJECTS (TH)

Definition

Transitional Housing Projects provide subsidized housing and supportive services, for a period not to exceed 24 months, to facilitate the movement of homeless individuals and families to permanent housing.

Eligibility

HUD Eligibility

Individuals and families must be homeless per the HUD Homeless Definition, Category 1, literally homeless or Category 4, fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence.

CoC Requirements

Priority should be given to individuals and families with no income and to those who have extremely low income (30 percent of AMI) as dictated by Area Median Income. Additional income limits may be set by additional funding sources of the transitional housing project.

Entitlement jurisdictions within the CoC may further restrict funding of TH projects to require (and only fund) TH projects that serve high barrier households and/or special needs populations as they determine.

CoC Recommendations

While permanent housing is preferred, research does show that transitional housing may be an effective tool for addressing certain needs, such as housing for underage homeless youth experiencing homelessness, safety for persons fleeing domestic violence, and assisting with recovery from addiction.

Homeless individuals and families entering into TH are not expected to be able to qualify for permanent housing. Further, the enrollment of a chronically homeless client into a TH program causes that client to lose their chronically homeless determination making them ineligible for many programs. In cases where households become eligible for permanent housing, it is expected that TH providers will coordinate with organizations that administer these projects in their area. The provision of supportive services and case management are required to be available in transitional housing projects.

In order to lower barriers to entry, reduce lengths of stay, and improve exits to permanent housing, the CoC supports the utilization of transitional housing beds as bridge housing for people who are homeless, where shelter beds are not available and permanent housing has been identified. It should be established at entry that they are chronically homeless and waiting to move into PSH, and the client should not be enrolled into the transitional housing project or be expected to follow service plans associated with the transitional housing project. Please note that there should be a reasonable expectation that the household will move into permanent housing within 30 to 90 days.

Transitional Housing Client Contribution Policy

Those residing in Transitional Housing are not required to pay rent. Transitional housing providers may impose occupancy charges. If the TH provider chooses to charge rent or occupancy charges, the charges may not exceed those specified in 24 CFR 578.77.

TH Component Program Fees

Other than rent or occupancy charges detailed above, no fees may be charged to TH program participants. This includes meals, copayments for services, transportation, and any additional services that may be provided to program participants.

When documenting category 4 for youth, the intake worker needs to ask only enough questions to know what is going on, and they should rely on the youth's own statement. If the youth indicates there is a safety risk then no further documentation of the safety risk is needed – the intake worker should simply document what the youth stated.

Required Documentation

Documentation must be included in the case file, and/or scanned into the HMIS client record that demonstrates eligibility as follows:

- 1) Literally Homeless (in order of preference)*
 - a. Third party verification (HMIS print-out, or written referral/certification by another housing or service provider); or
 - b. Written observation by an outreach worker; or
 - c. Certification by the individual or head of household seeking assistance stating that (s)he was living on the streets or in shelter;
 - d. For individuals exiting an institution – one of the forms of evidence above and:
 - i. Discharge paperwork or written/oral referral, or

- ii. Written record of intake worker's due diligence to obtain above evidence and certification by individual that they exited institution
- e. *Youth aged 24 and under that cannot provide third-party verification of homelessness cannot be disqualified from service in CoC-funded projects for lack of documentation.

*If the provider is using anything other than a Third-Party Verification, the case file must include documentation of due diligence to obtain third party verification. Appendix V and Appendix VI provide more details on exactly what is needed in the case file.

Assessment/ Prioritization

Transitional housing projects are required to utilize the Coordinated Entry Process as outlined in the Coordinated Entry Written Standards Policies and Procedures. Participants may be referred from a broad range of social services including shelter and street outreach. Priority will be given to individuals and families with no income and to those who have extremely low income (30 percent of AMI) as dictated by current HUD limits. Additional income limits may be set by additional funding sources of the transitional housing project.

Families already living in assisted units who qualify for an Emergency Transfer under VAWA, but who do not have a safe unit immediately available for internal transfer, shall have priority over all other applicants for Transitional Housing. Such individual or family shall meet all eligibility criteria required by Federal law or regulation or HUD NOFO, and any established criteria based on 578.93(b)(1), (4), (6), or (7), but shall not be required to meet any other eligibility or preference criteria of the project. The individual or family shall retain their original homeless or chronically homeless status for the transfer.

RAPID RE-HOUSING PROJECTS (RRH)

Definition

Rapid Re-Housing Projects (RRH) provide housing relocation and stabilization services and time limited rental assistance (short- or medium-term rental assistance) and supportive services to help homeless individuals or families move as quickly as possible to permanent housing and achieve stability in that housing.

Eligibility

HUD Eligibility*

Individuals and families must meet the Category 1 definition of homelessness (Literally Homeless) or Category 4 definition of homelessness (fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence, with documentation as detailed elsewhere in this document). *Please note that an additional eligibility requirement of ESG RRH is that individuals and families must have an annual income at or below 50% AMI.

CoC projects funded under the Rural Homelessness Set Aside are limited to serve counties defined as Rural in the Special NOFO.

CoC projects funded through the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP) NOFO must be dedicated to youth and young adults (singles and youth families) where the head of household is aged 24 and under at the time of program enrollment. Under YHDP, all youth must qualify as homeless under categories 1, 2, and 4, except as stated in I.C.5. and I.C.6. of Appendix A.

- Appendix A – I.C.5. discusses serving households who are homeless under other federal laws, however this is not allowed in the Balance of State CoC, nor supported in the Coordinated Community Plan (CCP).
- Appendix A – I.C.6. discusses serving households who lack 3rd party documentation or living in unsafe situations. As stipulated in I.C.6. of Appendix A, youth aged 24 and under must not be required to provide third-party documentation that they meet the homeless definition in 24 CFR 578.3 as a condition for receiving services in projects funded under the YHDP NOFO. Additionally, any youth-serving provider funded under the YHDP NOFO may serve unaccompanied youth aged 24 and under and families headed by youth aged 24 and under who are living in unsafe situations. HUD interprets “youth-serving provider” as a private nonprofit organization whose primary mission is to provide services to youth aged 24 and under and families headed by youth aged 24 and under. HUD interprets “living in unsafe situations” as having an unsafe primary nighttime residence and no safe alternative to that residence. These requirements supersede any conflicting requirements under the YHDP NOFO, this appendix, the Act, or the CoC Program rule.

CoC Requirements

Rental assistance in CoC-funded RRH projects must be equitable. One of the features of rapid rehousing is that it is flexible, allowing providers to tailor the amount of assistance to the unique needs of each participant. Therefore, the amount of assistance and the duration of assistance is client-centered and should not be the same for every program participant.

Given that projects should be prioritizing employment assistance and increasing benefits as part of the case management plan, projects should be open to accepting people without current income. Agencies must offer case management and supportive services to all participants receiving rental assistance that are designed to lead them towards long-term stable housing. Case management and related services may be offered to clients not receiving rental assistance at the agency’s discretion.

CoC Recommendations

- Agencies should have a goal of providing a 100% subsidy to participating households for no more than six months and to provide any amount of rental subsidy for no longer than twelve months total.
- Assistance for households with no income or special circumstances could be extended to 18 months. An explanation of these special circumstances along with an evaluation of household needs must be documented in the client file. Assistance for youth populations CoC-RRH can be extended up to 24 months, and decisions to extend assistance should be on a case-by-case basis.

When documenting category 4 for youth, the intake worker needs to ask only enough questions to know what is going on, and they should rely on the youth’s own statement. If the youth indicates there is a safety risk then no further documentation of the safety risk is needed – the intake worker should simply document what the youth stated.

Rapid Re-Housing Client Contribution Policy

It is the policy of Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) Projects to provide a declining rental assistance subsidy to households participating in the RRH Projects. For households with income, a percentage or amount of client contribution may be based on a reasonable percentage of either the household’s income or the monthly rent calculated pursuant to 24 CFR 578.37(a)(1)(ii)(B).

Rent Determination Procedures

Households will receive a declining subsidy for the duration of their participation in the project based on their ability to contribute to their rent.

- Rental subsidy determinations will be evaluated no less than monthly in case management meetings. Case managers will review household budget and determine what, if any, amount of rent the household is responsible for contributing based upon the household's needs and circumstances. The case manager will document the outcome of the subsidy determination in the client file.
- There are many ways to determine the percentage or amount of rent, utilities, and additional financial assistance a household can contribute. Individual projects have discretion in determining how the subsidy will be reduced based on income, the needs of the household, and what is in the best interest of the household's housing stability.

Required Documentation

Documentation must be included in the case file, and/or scanned into the HMIS client record that demonstrates eligibility as follows:

- 1) Literally Homeless (in order of preference)*
 - a. Third party verification (HMIS print-out, or written referral/certification by another housing or service provider); or
 - b. Written observation by an outreach worker; or
 - c. Certification by the individual or head of household seeking assistance stating that (s)he was living on the streets or in shelter;
 - d. For individuals exiting an institution – one of the forms of evidence above and;
 - i. Discharge paperwork or written/oral referral, or
 - ii. Written record of intake worker's due diligence to obtain above evidence and certification by individual that they exited institution
 - e. *Youth aged 24 and under that cannot provide third-party verification of homelessness cannot be disqualified from service in CoC-funded projects for lack of documentation.

In addition to the homeless verification required above, income eligibility determination documentation is also required for ESG RRH.

Documentation requirements for RRH projects funded under a NOFO that allows participants to be at imminent risk of homelessness (Category 2) are:

- 2) Imminent Risk of Homelessness (in order of preference)*
 - a. A court order resulting from an eviction action notifying the individual or family that they must leave within 14 days; **OR**
 - b. For individual and families leaving a hotel or motel – evidence that they lack the financial resources to stay; **OR**
 - c. A documented and verified written or oral statement that the individual or family will be literally homeless within 14 days; **AND**
 - d. Certification that no subsequent residence has been identified; **AND**
 - e. Self-certification or other written documentation that the individual lacks the financial resources and support necessary to obtain permanent housing.
 - f. *Youth aged 24 and under that cannot provide third-party verification of homelessness cannot be disqualified from service in CoC-funded projects for lack of documentation.

*If the provider is using anything other than a Third-Party Verification, the case file must include documentation of due diligence to obtain third party verification. Appendix V and Appendix VI provide more details on exactly what is needed in the case file.

Assessment/ Prioritization

Individuals or families may be referred from a broad range of social services including shelter and street outreach but must follow the Balance of State CoC policy for the Coordinated Entry Process as outlined in the Coordinated Entry Written Standards Policies and Procedures. Priority shall be given to extremely low-income individuals and families (at or below 30 percent AMI) and to individuals and families that have longer length of stay in shelters or on the streets.

Families already living in assisted units who qualify for an Emergency Transfer under VAWA, but who do not have a safe unit immediately available for internal transfer, shall have priority over all other applicants for Rapid Re-Housing. Such individual or family shall meet all eligibility criteria required by Federal law or regulation or HUD NOFO, and any established criteria based on 578.93(b)(1), (4), (6), or (7), but shall not be required to meet any other eligibility or preference criteria of the project. The individual or family shall retain their original homeless or chronically homeless status for the transfer.

CoC Rapid Re-Housing Projects Only

Utility Allowances (CoC funded only)

The Balance of State CoC Written Standards give individual projects discretion over the amount of rental assistance that can be provided to households, provided that the project provides a declining rental subsidy as described herein. Under certain circumstances, based on how a household's rental contribution is calculated, a project may be required to reimburse households for utilities.

If a project uses rent as a factor in determining a household's contribution, and the household is responsible for making separate utility payments that are not included in the contract rent, then rent must be calculated by adding total monthly rent to the monthly allowance for utilities established by the area's Public Housing Authority (PHA), pursuant to 24 CFR 578.37(a)(1)(ii)(B). In this scenario, households must be reimbursed for any amount that the utility allowance exceeds the household's share of rent.

Further clarifying details may be found in Notice CPD-17-11, issued on October 23, 2017. If this notice is amended, superseded, or rescinded by HUD, the most recent guidance from HUD will apply.

ESG Rapid Re-Housing Projects Only

In addition to the standards above, ESG RRH projects will be subject to the following standards.

Utilities (ESG only)

Households will receive a declining subsidy for the duration of their participation in the project based on their ability to contribute to their utilities. Please note that utility assistance is not eligible under CoC RRH projects.

- Utilities subsidy determinations will be evaluated no less than monthly in case management meetings. Case managers will review household budget and determine what, if any, amount of rent the household is responsible for contributing based upon the household's needs and circumstances. The case manager will document the outcome of the subsidy determination in the client file.

- There are many ways to determine the percentage or amount of rent, utilities, and additional financial assistance a household can contribute. Individual projects have discretion in determining how the subsidy will be reduced based on income, the needs of the household, and what is in the best interest of the household's housing stability.

Housing Stabilization and/or Relocation Services (ESG only)

The type, amount, and duration of financial assistance for housing stabilization and/or relocation services will be determined based on the needs of the household. The need for this assistance will be evaluated and documented in the client file.

JOINT TRANSITIONAL (TH) AND RAPID RE-HOUSING (RRH) PROJECTS (Joint TH-RRH Component)

Definition

Joint Transitional Housing-Rapid Rehousing (Joint TH-RRH) Component projects funded through the CoC Program contain a transitional housing (TH) and a rapid rehousing (RRH) component within a single project. Joint TH-RRH projects provide those experiencing homelessness access to low-barrier temporary housing and the support needed to quickly move into and maintain permanent housing. Total assistance must not exceed 24 months, unless it is a CoC-funded project funded under the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP) with an approved HUD special activity.

Eligibility

HUD Eligibility

Individuals and families must meet the Category 1 definition of homelessness (Literally Homeless), Category 2 definition of homelessness (Imminent Risk of Homelessness within 14 days), or Category 4 of homelessness (Fleeing/Attempting to Flee DV).

CoC projects funded under the Rural Homelessness Set Aside are limited to serve counties defined as Rural in the Special NOFO.

Please note that additional eligibility requirements of CoC projects funded through the YHDP NOFO are that Joint TH-RRH Component projects funded through the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP) must be dedicated to youth and young adults (singles and youth families) where the head of household is aged 24 and under at the time of program enrollment. Under YHDP, all youth must qualify as homeless under categories 1, 2, and 4, except as stated in I.C.5. and I.C.6. of Appendix A.

Appendix A – I.C.5. discusses serving households who are homeless under other federal laws, however this is not allowed in the Balance of State CoC, nor supported in the Coordinated Community Plan (CCP).

Appendix A – I.C.6. discusses serving households who lack 3rd party documentation or living in unsafe situations. As stipulated in I.C.6. of Appendix A, youth aged 24 and under must not be required to provide third-party documentation that they meet the homeless definition in 24 CFR 578.3 as a condition for receiving services in projects funded under the YHDP NOFO. Additionally, any youth-serving provider funded under the YHDP NOFO may serve unaccompanied youth aged 24 and under and families headed by youth aged 24 and under who are living in unsafe situations. HUD interprets “youth-serving provider” as a private nonprofit organization whose primary mission is to provide services to youth aged 24 and under and families headed by youth aged 24

and under. HUD interprets “living in unsafe situations” as having an unsafe primary nighttime residence and no safe alternative to that residence. These requirements supersede any conflicting requirements under the YHDP NOFO, this appendix, the Act, or the CoC Program rule.

CoC Requirements

Using a Housing First approach, stays in the transitional housing component of these projects should be brief and without preconditions, and participants should quickly move to permanent housing. Stays in TH are expected to be less than 90 days. Stays for youth in TH are expected to be less than 120 days. Participants cannot be required to participate in treatment or services to receive assistance. Participants will choose when they are ready to exit the transitional housing portion of the project and move to permanent housing, with providers assisting participants with this move.

Under YHDP, total assistance must not exceed 48 months (24 months in TH, 24 months in RRH). In the TH portion, program participants must have a sublease or occupancy agreement (depending on funding source) for a term of at least one month, that ends in 24 months and cannot be extended beyond 24 months. In the RRH portion, program participants must have a lease for a term of at least 12 months, which is renewable for terms of at least one month, and is terminable only for cause.

Individuals and families being served in CoC-funded Joint TH-RRH Component projects cannot be required to enter TH prior to RRH, and they should be able to move into either component type as necessary, at all times.

Rental assistance in CoC-funded RRH projects must be equitable. One of the features of rapid rehousing is that it is flexible, allowing providers to tailor the amount of assistance to the unique needs of each participant. Therefore, the amount of assistance and the duration of assistance is client-centered and should not be the same for every program participant.

CoC Recommendations

- CoC recommends a transition in place model for Joint TH-RRH Component projects where the transitional housing unit can be converted into the RRH unit, allowing program participants to transition from one component to another without having to physically move.
- Agencies should have a goal of providing a 100% subsidy to participating households for no more than six months and to provide any amount of rental subsidy for no longer than twelve months total.
- Assistance for households with no income or special circumstances could be extended to 18 months. An explanation of these special circumstances along with an evaluation of household needs must be documented in the client file. Assistance for youth populations in CoC RRH can be extended up to 24 months, and decisions to extend assistance should be on a case-by-case basis.

To be able to place participants in tenant-based housing, providers need to cultivate a landlord base that is willing to enter into a lease with the participants they are serving. Providers must continue to work with participants once they are housed so that they can achieve long-term stability.

Supportive services should continue to be offered to program participants once housed to increase long-term stability and self-sufficiency.

When documenting category 4 for youth, the intake worker needs to ask only enough questions to know what is going on, and they should rely on the youth’s own statement. If the youth indicates

there is a safety risk then no further documentation of the safety risk is needed – the intake worker should simply document what the youth stated.

Transitional Housing Component Client Contribution Policy

See *Transitional Housing Client Contribution Policy* on page 11 to determine the client contribution policy for the those residing in the TH component of a Joint TH-RRH Component project.

Rapid Re-Housing Component Client Contribution Policy

See *Rapid Re-Housing Client Contribution Policy* section to determine the client contribution policy for those residing in the RRH component of a Joint TH-RRH Component project.

Rapid Re-Housing Component Rent Determination Procedures

See *Rapid Re-Housing Rent Determination Procedures* section to determine the rent determination procedures for those residing in the RRH component of a Joint TH-RRH Component project.

Required Documentation

Documentation must be included in the case file, and/or scanned into the HMIS client record that demonstrates eligibility as follows*:

- 1) Literally Homeless (in order of preference)*
 - a. Third party verification (HMIS print-out, or written referral/certification by another housing or service provider); or
 - b. Written observation by an outreach worker; or
 - c. Certification by the individual or head of household seeking assistance stating that (s)he was living on the streets or in shelter;
 - d. For individuals exiting an institution – one of the forms of evidence above and;
 - i. Discharge paperwork or written/oral referral, or
 - ii. Written record of intake worker’s due diligence to obtain above evidence and certification by individual that they exited institution.
 - e. *Youth aged 24 and under that cannot provide third-party verification of homelessness cannot be disqualified from service in CoC-funded projects for lack of documentation.

Documentation requirements for Joint TH-RRH projects funded under a NOFO that allows participants to be at imminent risk of homelessness (Category 2) are:

- 2) Imminent Risk of Homelessness (in order of preference)*
 - a. A court order resulting from an eviction action notifying the individual or family that they must leave within 14 days; **OR**
 - b. For individual and families leaving a hotel or motel – evidence that they lack the financial resources to stay; **OR**
 - c. A documented and verified written or oral statement that the individual or family will be literally homeless within 14 days; **AND**
 - d. Certification that no subsequent residence has been identified; **AND**
 - e. Self-certification or other written documentation that the individual lacks the financial resources and support necessary to obtain permanent housing.
 - f. *Youth aged 24 and under that cannot provide third-party verification of homelessness cannot be disqualified from service in CoC-funded projects for lack of documentation.

*If the provider is using anything other than a Third-Party Verification, the case file must include documentation of due diligence to obtain third party verification. Appendix V and Appendix VI provide more details on exactly what is needed in the case file.

Assessment/ Prioritization

Individuals or families may be referred from a broad range of social services including shelter and street outreach but must follow the Balance of State CoC policy for the Coordinated Entry Process as outlined in the Coordinated Entry Written Standards Policies and Procedures. Priority shall be given to extremely low-income individuals and families (at or below 30 percent AMI) and to individuals and families that have longer length of stay in shelters or on the streets.

Families already living in assisted units who qualify for an Emergency Transfer under VAWA, but who do not have a safe unit immediately available for internal transfer, shall have priority over all other applicants for Rapid Re-Housing. Such individual or family shall meet all eligibility criteria required by Federal law or regulation or HUD NOFO, and any established criteria based on 578.93(b)(1), (4), (6), or (7), but shall not be required to meet any other eligibility or preference criteria of the project. The individual or family shall retain their original homeless or chronically homeless status for the transfer.

CoC Rapid Re-Housing Projects Only: Utility Allowances (CoC funded only)

See *CoC Rapid Re-Housing Projects Utility Allowances (CoC funded only)* on page 15, for further information regarding possible discretion allowed for utilities in RRH component projects as a part of a Joint TH-RRH Component projects.

HOMELESS PREVENTION PROJECTS

Definition

Homeless Prevention Projects provide assistance to individuals or families who are at the greatest risk of losing housing due to a legal eviction action that requires the individual or family to leave their residence no later than 14 days following the date of their application for homeless assistance.

Eligibility

HUD Eligibility

Households receiving this funding must have an income level below 30% AMI and must demonstrate that they do not have sufficient resources or support networks to prevent them from moving to an emergency shelter or other place defined under Category 1 of the homeless definition. Recipients may be in categories 2-4 under the homeless definition or meet the “at risk” definition in order to qualify for this assistance.

CoC Requirements

The expectation is to comply with the General Standards listed above.

ESG-funded Homeless Prevention projects must use the Balance of State Prevention and Diversion Screening Tool.

CoC Recommendations

Project participants receiving this assistance should receive a case management plan from the provider in order to ensure long term stability. Best practice agencies will be ones with the ability to negotiate with landlords as the first step in resolving eviction crises and that also demonstrate a plan to effectively increase household incomes for project participants. The length of stay should be based on the needs of individual households participating in the project.

- Agencies should have a goal of providing a 100% subsidy to participating households for no more than six months and to provide any amount of rental subsidy for no longer than twelve months total.

- Assistance for households with no income or special circumstances could be extended to 18 months. An explanation of these special circumstances along with an evaluation of household needs must be documented in the client file.

Prevention Client Contribution Policy

It is the policy of Prevention Projects to provide a declining rental assistance subsidy to households participating in the Prevention Projects. For households with income, a percentage or amount of client contribution can be based on a reasonable percentage of a household's income.

Rent Determination Procedures

Households will receive a declining subsidy for the duration of their participation in the project based on their ability to contribute to their rent.

- Rental subsidy determinations will be evaluated no less than monthly in case management meetings. Case managers will review household budget and determine what, if any, amount of rent the household is responsible for contributing based upon the household's needs and circumstances. The case manager will document the outcome of the subsidy determination in the client file.
- There are many ways to determine the percentage or amount of rent, utilities, and additional financial assistance a household can contribute. Individual projects have discretion in determining how the subsidy will be reduced based on income, the needs of the household, and what is in the best interest of the household's housing stability.

Utilities (ESG)

Households will receive a declining subsidy for the duration of their participation in the project based on their ability to contribute to their utilities.

- Utilities subsidy determinations will be evaluated no less than monthly in case management meetings. Case managers will review household budget and determine what, if any, amount of rent the household is responsible for contributing based upon the household's needs and circumstances. The case manager will document the outcome of the subsidy determination in the client file.
- There are many ways to determine the percentage or amount of rent, utilities, and additional financial assistance a household can contribute. Individual projects have discretion in determining how the subsidy will be reduced based on income, the needs of the household, and what is in the best interest of the household's housing stability.

Housing Stabilization and/or Relocation Services (ESG)

The type, amount, and duration of financial assistance for housing stabilization and/or relocation services will be determined based on the needs of the household. The need for this assistance will be evaluated and documented in the client file.

Required Documentation

Households receiving Homeless Prevention assistance must have a lease in the participant's name. Documentation of the pending loss of housing can include an eviction notice, the equivalent notice under applicable state law, a Notice to Quit, or a Notice to Terminate issued under state law. A court order is preferred, however, ESG Recipients may allow sub-recipients to accept other documentation as allowed by HUD.

Assessment/ Prioritization

All homeless prevention projects are required to utilize the Coordinated Entry Process as outlined in the Coordinated Entry Written Standards Policies and Procedures.

SUPPORTIVE SERVICES ONLY PROJECTS (SSO)

Definition

Supportive Services Only (SSO) projects provide services to sheltered and unsheltered homeless persons to whom the provider is not providing housing or housing assistance.

Eligibility

HUD Eligibility

Participants must meet the HUD definition of homelessness under Category 1 (Literally Homeless) or they may fall under Category 4 (Fleeing/Attempting to Flee DV).

CoC projects funded under the Rural Homelessness Set Aside are limited to serve counties defined as Rural in the Special NOFO.

CoC projects funded through the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP) NOFO must be dedicated to youth and young adults (singles and youth families) where the head of household is aged 24 and under at the time of program enrollment. Under YHDP, all youth must qualify as homeless under categories 1, 2, and 4, except as stated in I.C.5. and I.C.6. of Appendix A.

- Appendix A – I.C.5. discusses serving households who are homeless under other federal laws, however this is not allowed in the Balance of State CoC, nor supported in the Coordinated Community Plan (CCP).
- Appendix A – I.C.6. discusses serving households who lack 3rd party documentation or living in unsafe situations. As stipulated in I.C.6. of Appendix A, youth aged 24 and under must not be required to provide third-party documentation that they meet the homeless definition in 24 CFR 578.3 as a condition for receiving services in projects funded under the YHDP NOFO. Additionally, any youth-serving provider funded under the YHDP NOFO may serve unaccompanied youth aged 24 and under and families headed by youth aged 24 and under who are living in unsafe situations. HUD interprets “youth-serving provider” as a private nonprofit organization whose primary mission is to provide services to youth aged 24 and under and families headed by youth aged 24 and under. HUD interprets “living in unsafe situations” as having an unsafe primary nighttime residence and no safe alternative to that residence. These requirements supersede any conflicting requirements under the YHDP NOFO, this appendix, the Act, or the CoC Program rule.

CoC Requirements

The expectation is to comply with the General Standards listed above.

CoC Recommendations

SSO projects are expected to work with participants in order to connect them to permanent housing.

When documenting category 4 for youth, the intake worker needs to ask only enough questions to know what is going on, and they should rely on the youth’s own statement. If the youth indicates

there is a safety risk then no further documentation of the safety risk is needed – the intake worker should simply document what the youth stated.

Required Documentation

Documentation must be included in the case file, and/or scanned into the HMIS client record that demonstrates eligibility as follows:

- 1) Literally Homeless (in order of preference)*
 - a. Third party verification (HMIS print-out, or written referral/certification by another housing or service provider); or
 - b. Written observation by an outreach worker; or
 - c. Certification by the individual or head of household seeking assistance stating that (s)he was living on the streets or in shelter;
 - d. For individuals exiting an institution – one of the forms of evidence above and;
 - i. Discharge paperwork or written/oral referral, or
 - ii. Written record of intake worker’s due diligence to obtain above evidence and certification by individual that they exited institution.
 - e. *Youth aged 24 and under that cannot provide third-party verification of homelessness cannot be disqualified from service in CoC-funded projects for lack of documentation.

Documentation requirements for SSO projects funded under a NOFO that allows participants to be at imminent risk of homelessness (Category 2) are:

- 2) Imminent Risk of Homelessness (in order of preference)*
 - a. A court order resulting from an eviction action notifying the individual or family that they must leave within 14 days; **OR**
 - b. For individual and families leaving a hotel or motel – evidence that they lack the financial resources to stay; **OR**
 - c. A documented and verified written or oral statement that the individual or family will be literally homeless within 14 days; **AND**
 - d. Certification that no subsequent residence has been identified; **AND**
 - e. Self-certification or other written documentation that the individual lacks the financial resources and support necessary to obtain permanent housing.
 - f. *Youth aged 24 and under that cannot provide third-party verification of homelessness cannot be disqualified from service in CoC-funded projects for lack of documentation.

*If the provider is using anything other than a Third-Party Verification, the case file must include documentation of due diligence to obtain third party verification. Appendix V and Appendix VI provide more details on exactly what is needed in the case file.

Assessment /Prioritization

Supportive Services Projects are required to utilize the Coordinated Entry Process as outlined in the Coordinated Entry Written Standards Policies and Procedures.

PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING PROJECTS (PSH)

Definition

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) projects provide community-based housing and supportive services, without a predetermined length of stay, to assist homeless persons with a disability to live independently. The project will provide safe, affordable housing that meets participants’ needs in accordance with HUD guidelines for permanent supportive housing projects.

Eligibility

HUD Eligibility

In order to be served in a CoC-funded PSH project (individuals or family households) participants must meet the following project eligibility requirements:

- Participants must meet the applicable HUD definition of homelessness (category 1 or category 4); and
- PSH can only provide assistance to individuals with disabilities and families in which at least one adult or child has a disability.

CoC projects funded under the Rural Homelessness Set Aside are limited to serve counties defined as Rural in the Special NOFO.

CoC projects funded through the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP) NOFO must be dedicated to youth and young adults (singles and youth families) where the head of household is aged 24 and under at the time of program enrollment. Under YHDP, all youth must qualify as homeless under categories 1, 2, and 4, except as stated in I.C.5. and I.C.6. of Appendix A.

- Appendix A – I.C.5. discusses serving households who are homeless under other federal laws, however this is not allowed in the Balance of State CoC, nor supported in the Coordinated Community Plan (CCP).
- Appendix A – I.C.6. discusses serving households who lack 3rd party documentation or living in unsafe situations. As stipulated in I.C.6. of Appendix A, youth aged 24 and under must not be required to provide third-party documentation that they meet the homeless definition in 24 CFR 578.3 as a condition for receiving services in projects funded under the YHDP NOFO. Additionally, any youth-serving provider funded under the YHDP NOFO may serve unaccompanied youth aged 24 and under and families headed by youth aged 24 and under who are living in unsafe situations. HUD interprets “youth-serving provider” as a private nonprofit organization whose primary mission is to provide services to youth aged 24 and under and families headed by youth aged 24 and under. HUD interprets “living in unsafe situations” as having an unsafe primary nighttime residence and no safe alternative to that residence. These requirements supersede any conflicting requirements under the YHDP NOFO, this appendix, the Act, or the CoC Program rule.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR DedicatedPLUS Projects (Section I.B.2.b.(7) of the FY 2023 CoC Program NOFO):

A *DedicatedPLUS* project is a permanent supportive housing project where 100 percent of the beds are dedicated to serve individuals, households with children, and unaccompanied homeless youth (including pregnant and parenting youth) that at intake meet one of the following categories:

- (1) experiencing chronic homelessness as defined in 24 CFR 578.3;
- (2) residing in a transitional housing project that will be eliminated and meets the definition of chronically homeless in effect at the time in which the individual or family entered the transitional housing project;
- (3) residing in a place not meant for human habitation, emergency shelter, or safe haven and had been admitted and enrolled in a permanent housing project within the last year and were unable to maintain a housing placement and met the definition of chronic homelessness as defined at 24 CFR 578.3 prior to entering the project;

- (4) residing in transitional housing funded by a Joint TH and PH-RRH component project and who were experiencing chronic homelessness as defined at 24 CFR 578.3;
- (5) residing and has resided in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or emergency shelter for at least 12 months in the last three years, but has not done so on four separate occasions and the individual or head of household meets the definition of ‘homeless individual with a disability’; or
- (6) receiving assistance through a Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)-funded homeless assistance program and met one of the above criteria at initial intake to the VA’s homeless assistance system.

CoC Requirements

1. In providing or arranging for housing, the project considers the needs of the individual or family experiencing homelessness.
2. The project provides assistance in accessing suitable housing.
3. The project may provide assistance with moving costs.
4. The project signs occupancy agreements or leases (or subleases) with all project participants residing in housing.
5. The project enters into an occupancy agreement or lease agreement (or sublease) with project participant for a term of at least one year, which is terminable for cause. The lease must be automatically renewable upon expiration for a minimum term of one month. Assistance may be extended as stated in 24 CFR 578.79.
6. For projects where regulations require individuals and families residing in permanent supportive housing to pay occupancy charges or rent, occupancy charges and rent may not exceed those specified in 24 CFR 578.77.
7. At least 90 percent of the CoC Program-funded permanent supportive housing beds that become available through turnover must be prioritized for chronically homeless individuals and families or are in projects classified as DedicatedPLUS as defined in I.B.2.b.(7) of HUD’s 2023 CoC Program Competition NOFO. However, CoC-funded PSH projects that commit above this amount in a competition, are held to the higher amount.

In terminating assistance to a program participant, the interim rule provides that a recipient or subrecipient must provide a formal process that recognizes the due process of law. Recipients or subrecipients that are providing permanent supportive housing for hard-to-house populations of homeless persons must exercise judgment and examine all circumstances in determining whether termination is appropriate. Under the Continuum of Care Interim Rule, it was determined that a participant’s assistance should be terminated only in the most severe cases.

CoC Recommendations

When documenting category 4 for youth, the intake worker needs to ask only enough questions to know what is going on, and they should rely on the youth’s own statement. If the youth indicates there is a safety risk then no further documentation of the safety risk is needed – the intake worker should simply document what the youth stated.

Required Documentation

As defined in the HEARTH Act, eligibility for Permanent Supportive Housing is limited to categories 1 and 4 (Fleeing/Attempting to Flee DV) if they also meet the definition in Category 1. Participants must also:

- a. Enter from the street or shelter, or a transitional housing project to which they originally entered from the street or shelter (NOTE: if the project is designated for chronically

homeless, they may only enter from the street or shelter. Individuals may lose their chronically homeless designation after they are enrolled into a transitional housing project); and

- b. The head of household, or at least one member of the household, must have a disability of long duration, verified either by Social Security or a licensed professional that meets the state criteria for diagnosing and treating that condition*.

*HUD's *Sample Chronic Homelessness Documentation – 2016* guidance, which includes a list of acceptable documentation to verify disability status, can be found at: <https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/Sample-Chronic-Homelessness-Docmentation-Form-2016.docx>. A Sample Chronic Homelessness Documentation Checklist can be found at: <https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/5182/sample-chronic-homelessness-documentation-checklist/>, and additional guidance on Chronic Homelessness can be found at: <https://www.hudexchange.info/homelessness-assistance/resources-for-chronic-homelessness/>.

Documentation must be included in the case file, and/or scanned into the HMIS client record that demonstrates eligibility as follows:

- 1) Literally Homeless (in order of preference)*
 - a. Third party verification (HMIS print-out, or written referral/certification by another housing or service provider); or
 - b. Written observation by an outreach worker; or
 - c. Certification by the individual or head of household seeking assistance stating that (s)he was living on the streets or in shelter;
 - d. For individuals exiting an institution – one of the forms of evidence above and:
 - i. Discharge paperwork or written/oral referral, or
 - ii. Written record of intake worker's due diligence to obtain above evidence and certification by individual that they exited institution.
 - e. *Youth aged 24 and under that cannot provide third-party verification of homelessness cannot be disqualified from service in CoC-funded projects for lack of documentation.

Documentation requirements for PSH projects funded under a NOFO that allows participants to be at imminent risk of homelessness (Category 2) are:

- 2) Imminent Risk of Homelessness (in order of preference)*
 - a. A court order resulting from an eviction action notifying the individual or family that they must leave within 14 days; **OR**
 - b. For individual and families leaving a hotel or motel – evidence that they lack the financial resources to stay; **OR**
 - c. A documented and verified written or oral statement that the individual or family will be literally homeless within 14 days; **AND**
 - d. Certification that no subsequent residence has been identified; **AND**
 - e. Self-certification or other written documentation that the individual lacks the financial resources and support necessary to obtain permanent housing.
 - f. *Youth aged 24 and under that cannot provide third-party verification of homelessness cannot be disqualified from service in CoC-funded projects for lack of documentation.

*If the provider is using anything other than a Third-Party Verification, the case file must include documentation of due diligence to obtain third party verification. Appendix V and Appendix VI provide more details on exactly what is needed in the case file.

Assessment/Prioritization

Permanent Supportive Housing Projects are required to utilize the Coordinated Entry Process as outlined in the Coordinated Entry Written Standards Policies and Procedures.

Recipients of CoC Program-funded PSH are required to follow the order of priority when selecting participants for housing in accordance with the Georgia Balance of State CoC's written standards while also considering the goals and any identified target populations served by the project in a manner that is consistent with their current grant agreement. These standards and the order of priority is listed below, and the BoS CoC approved Permanent Supportive Housing Written Standards and Chronic Prioritization policy is located in Appendix VII of this document.

Note: Families already living in assisted units who qualify for an Emergency Transfer under VAWA, but who do not have a safe unit immediately available for internal transfer, shall have priority over all other applicants for Permanent Supportive Housing. Such individual or family shall meet all eligibility criteria required by Federal law or regulation or HUD NOFO, and any established criteria based on 578.93(b)(1), (4), (6), or (7), but shall not be required to meet any other eligibility or preference criteria of the project. The individual or family shall retain their original homeless or chronically homeless status for the transfer.

A. Order of Priority in CoC Program-funded Permanent Supportive Housing Beds Dedicated to Persons Experiencing Chronic Homelessness and Permanent Supportive Housing Prioritized for Occupancy by Persons Experiencing Chronic Homelessness.

First Priority

Chronically Homeless Individuals and Families with the Longest History of Homelessness and with the Most Severe Service Needs

Second Priority

Chronically Homeless Individuals and Families with the Longest History of Homelessness

Third Priority

Chronically Homeless Individuals and Families with the Most Severe Service Needs

Fourth Priority

All Other Chronically Homeless Individuals and Families

B. Order of Priority in Permanent Supportive Housing Beds Not Dedicated or Prioritized for Persons Experiencing Chronic Homelessness

First Priority

Homeless Individuals and Families with a Disability with Long Periods of Episodic Homelessness and Severe Service Needs

Second Priority

Homeless Individuals and Families with a Disability with Severe Service Needs

Third Priority

Homeless Individuals and Families with a Disability Coming from Places Not Meant for Human Habitation, Safe Havens, or Emergency Shelters Without Severe Service Needs

Fourth Priority

Homeless Individuals and Families with a Disability Coming from Transitional Housing

The Georgia Balance of State CoC adopts HUD's Notice CPD-16-11, *Prioritizing Persons Experiencing Chronic Homelessness and Other Vulnerable Homeless Persons in Permanent Supportive Housing* Notice issued on July 25, 2016, in that those experiencing chronic homelessness should be given priority for non-dedicated PSH beds as vacancies become available through turnover. PSH renewal projects serving specific disabled subpopulations (e.g., persons with mental illness or persons with substance abuse issues) must continue to serve those groups, as required in the current grant agreement. However, the chronically homeless within the specified subpopulation should be prioritized for entry as described below. The full notice, which includes related recordkeeping requirements can be found at: <https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/notice-cpd-16-11-prioritizing-persons-experiencing-chronic-homelessness-and-other-vulnerable-homeless-persons-in-psh.pdf>. This policy supersedes previous policy adopting Notice CPD-14-012.

Prioritization of DedicatedPLUS Projects When There Are No Eligible Households

At the point in which a vacancy occurs, if there are no eligible households identified who are ready to accept assistance, recipients should consider the following:

- Where there are no chronically homeless persons identified, Dedicated PSH beds included in DedicatedPLUS projects may fill the vacancy *either* in accordance with section III.B.1.(b)-(d) of Notice CPD-16-11 or households eligible for DedicatedPLUS as outlined in Section I.B.2.b.(7) of the FY 2023 CoC Program NOFO.
- Where there are no persons meeting the eligibility criteria for DedicatedPLUS as outlined in Section I.B.2.b.(7) of the FY 2023 CoC Program NOFO, recipients should follow the order of priority outlined in section III.B.1.(b)-(d) of Notice CPD-16-11 to fill any vacancies. At a minimum, the CoC should consider the total length of time the potential program participant has been residing in a place not meant for human habitation, emergency shelter, or safe haven and severity of service needs.
- The recipient must always continue to prioritize households that are eligible for DedicatedPLUS (and dedicated PSH, if applicable). This means that anytime there is a new vacancy, the recipient must always first seek to fill it with an eligible household even if it was most recently used to serve a household that would not otherwise be eligible due to the circumstances outlined above.

For purposes of prioritization as referenced above in Section III.B.1.(b)-(d) of Notice CPD-16-11 (referenced from Appendix VIII of this document), the required order of prioritization is as follows for DedicatedPLUS projects, when there are no eligible households:

First Priority

Homeless Individuals and Families with a Disability with Severe Service Needs

Second Priority

Homeless Individuals and Families with a Disability Coming from Places Not Meant for Human Habitation, Safe Havens, or Emergency Shelters Without Severe Service Needs

Third Priority

Homeless Individuals and Families with a Disability Coming from Transitional Housing

The overarching goal of adopting this Notice is to ensure that the homeless individuals and families with the most severe service needs within a community are prioritized in all PSH, which will also increase progress towards the Georgia Balance of State CoC's goal of ending chronic homelessness. This will also guide projects in ensuring that all CoC Program-funded PSH beds are used most effectively. HUD's Notice CPD-16-11, and this policy, revises the orders of priority related to how persons should be selected for PSH as previously established in Notice CPD-14-012 to reflect the changes to the definition of chronically homeless as defined in the Chronically Homeless final rule.

Due diligence must be exercised when conducting outreach and assessment to ensure that chronically homeless individuals and families are prioritized for assistance based on their initial length of time homeless and/or the severity of their needs in the Georgia Balance of State CoC. Consistent with HUD's expectations for recipients of dedicated permanent supportive housing (PSH) projects, recipients of DedicatedPLUS projects will be expected to exercise due diligence when conducting outreach and assessment to locate and engage eligible households. HUD and the Georgia Balance of State CoC recognize that some persons—particularly those living on the streets or in places not meant for human habitation—might require significant engagement and contacts prior to their entering housing. Recipients of CoC Program-funded PSH are not required to allow units to remain vacant indefinitely while waiting for an identified chronically homeless person to accept an offer of PSH. CoC Program-funded PSH providers are encouraged to follow a Housing First approach to maximum extent practicable, and recipients of DedicatedPLUS projects should be following a Housing First approach to the maximum extent practicable. Therefore, a person experiencing chronic homelessness should not be forced to refuse an offer of PSH if they do not want to participate in the project's services, nor should a PSH project have eligibility criteria or preconditions to entry that systematically exclude those with severe service needs. Street outreach and housing providers should continue to make attempts to engage those persons that have been resistant to accepting an offer of PSH and where the CoC has adopted these orders of priority into their written standards, these chronically homeless persons must continue to be prioritized for PSH until they are housed.

Recordkeeping Recommendations for the Orders of Priority in this Notice:

24 CFR 578.103(a)(4) of the [CoC Program Interim Rule](#) outlines documentation requirements for all recipients of dedicated and non-dedicated CoC Program-funded PSH associated with determining whether or not an individual or family is chronically homeless for the purposes of eligibility. In addition to those requirements, the BoS CoC expects that CoC recipients of CoC Program-funded PSH, will maintain evidence of implementing these priorities. Evidence of following these orders of priority may be demonstrated by:

A. Evidence of Severe Service Needs. Evidence of severe service needs is that by which the recipient is able to determine the severity of needs as defined in Appendix VI of the Written Standards using data-driven methods such as an administrative data match or through the use of a standardized assessment. The documentation should include any information pertinent to how the determination was made, such as notes associated with case-conferencing decisions.

B. Evidence that the Recipient is Following the CoC's Written Standards for Prioritizing Assistance. Recipients must follow the CoC's written standards for prioritizing assistance, as adopted by the CoC. In accordance with the CoC's adoption of written standards for prioritizing assistance, recipients must in turn document that the CoC's revised written standards have been incorporated into the recipient's intake procedures and that the recipient is following its intake procedures when accepting new project participants into the project.

C. Evidence that there are no Households Meeting Higher Order of Priority within CoC's Geographic Area.

(a) When dedicated and prioritized PSH is used to serve non-chronically homeless households, the recipient of CoC Program-funded PSH should document how it was determined that there were no chronically homeless households identified for assistance within the CoC's geographic area – or for those CoCs that implement a sub-CoC planning and housing and service delivery approach, the smaller defined geographic area within the CoC's geographic area – at the point in which a vacancy became available. This documentation should include evidence of the outreach efforts that had been undertaken to locate eligible chronically homeless households within the defined geographic area and, where chronically homeless households have been identified but have not yet accepted assistance, the documentation should specify the number of persons that are chronically homeless that meet this condition and the attempts that have been made to engage the individual or family. Where a CoC is using a single prioritized list, the recipient of PSH may refer to that list as evidence.

(b) When non-dedicated and non-prioritized PSH is used to serve an eligible individual or family that meets a lower order of priority, the recipient of CoC Program-funded PSH should document how the determination was made that there were no eligible individuals or families within the CoC's geographic area - or for those CoCs that implement a sub-CoC planning and housing and service delivery approach, the smaller defined geographic area within the CoC's geographic area - that met a higher priority. Where a CoC is using a single prioritized list, the recipient of PSH may refer to that list as evidence that there were no households identified within the CoC's geographic area that meet a higher order of priority.

(c) Documentation for DedicatedPLUS Projects: Recipients of DedicatedPLUS PSH projects must maintain records to document efforts to locate persons meeting the eligibility criteria in Section I.B.2.b.(7) of the FY 2023 CoC Program NOFO. Ideally, the CoC should have comprehensive and high-quality data on all households that are currently presenting for assistance within the CoC that is informed by a comprehensive outreach strategy. To justify serving a non-eligible household, a recipient of DedicatedPLUS projects must have documentation from the CoC that demonstrates that outreach is occurring regularly and that the CoC is making reasonable efforts to locate and identify all persons experiencing homelessness within the community.

Appendix I: HUD Definition for “Homeless” Individual or Family

HUD CRITERIA FOR DEFINING HOMELESS	Category 1	Literally Homeless	<p>(1) Individual or family who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, meaning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Has a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not meant for human habitation; ▪ Is living in a publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangements (including congregate shelters, transitional housing (only for ESG) and hotels and motels paid for by charitable organizations or by federal, state and local government programs); or ▪ Is exiting an institution where (s)he has resided for 90 days or less and who resided in an emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation immediately before entering that institution
	Category 2	Imminent Risk of Homelessness	<p>(2) Individual or family who will imminently lose their primary nighttime residence, provided that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Residence will be lost within 14 days of the date of application for homeless assistance; ▪ No subsequent residence has been identified; and ▪ The individual or family lacks the resources or support networks needed to obtain other permanent housing
	Category 3	Homeless under other Federal statutes	<p>(3) Unaccompanied youth under 25 years of age, or families with children and youth, who do not otherwise qualify as homeless under this definition, but who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are defined as homeless under the other listed federal statutes; • Have not had a lease, ownership interest, or occupancy agreement in permanent housing during the 60 days prior to the homeless assistance application; • Have experienced persistent instability as measured by two moves or more during in the preceding 60 days; <u>and</u> • Can be expected to continue in such status for an extended period of time due to special needs or barriers
	Category 4	Fleeing/ Attempting to Flee DV	<p>(4) Any individual or family who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ is experiencing trauma or a lack of safety related to, or fleeing or attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or other dangerous, traumatic, or life-threatening conditions related to the violence against the individual or a family member in the individual’s or family’s current housing situation, including where the health and safety of children are jeopardized; ▪ Has no other safe residence; and ▪ Lacks the resources to obtain other safe permanent housing*

*The update to the Category 4 definition is based on guidance from the Violence Against Women Act Reauthorization Act of 2022: Overview of Applicability to HUD Programs found at: <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2023-01-04/pdf/2022-28073.pdf>. The page 7 section, VAWA 2022: Section 605 of VAWA 2022 amended section 103(b) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act... allows that ESG and CoC recipients may implement the new definition prior to HUD rulemaking, provided that ESG recipients and CoCs update the relevant written standards and policies as needed to reflect the new statutory criteria. The Category 4 definition is updated in the Balance of State CoC Written Standards prior to HUD Rulemaking to allow this. Please note that further updates may be needed once HUD guidance is released.

Appendix II: HUD Definition for “At Risk of Homelessness”:

HUD DEFINITION FOR AT-RISK OF HOMELESSNESS	Category 1	Individuals and Families	<p>An individual or family who:</p> <p>(i) Has an annual income below 30% of median family income for the area; AND</p> <p>(ii) Does not have sufficient resources or support networks, e.g. family, friends, faith-based or other social networks, immediately available to prevent them from moving to an emergency shelter or another place defined in Category 1 of the “homeless” definition; AND</p> <p>(iii) Meets one of the following conditions:</p> <p>A. Has moved because of economic reasons 2 or more times during the 60 days immediately preceding their application for assistance; OR</p> <p>B. Is living in the home of another because of economic hardship; OR</p> <p>C. Has been notified in writing that their right to occupy their current housing or living situation will be terminated within 21 days of the date of application for assistance; OR</p> <p>D. Lives in a hotel or motel and the cost of the hotel or motel stay is not covered by any federal, State, or local government programs for low-income assistance: OR</p> <p>E. Lives in a single-room occupancy or efficiency apartment unit in which there resides more than 2 persons or lives in a larger housing unit in which there reside more than 1.5 persons per room; OR</p> <p>F. Is exiting a publicly funded institution, or system of care; OR</p> <p>G. Otherwise lives in housing that has characteristics associated with instability and an increased risk of homelessness as identified in the recipient’s approved Consolidated Plan.</p>
	Category 2	Unaccompanied Children and Youth	<p>A child or youth who does not qualify as homeless under HUD’s “homeless” definition but qualifies as homeless under another federal statute as outlined in the CoC Interim Rule at 578.3.</p>
	Category 3	Families with Children and Youth	<p>A child or youth who does not qualify as “homeless” under HUD’s homeless definition but does qualify as “homeless” under section 725(2) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, and the parent(s) or guardian(s) of that child or youth if living with her or him.</p>

Appendix III: Eligibility by Component (CoC Program)

ELIGIBILITY BY COMPONENT (CoC Program-funded Projects)	Supportive Services	<p>Individuals and Families defined as Homeless under the following categories are eligible for assistance in SSO projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Category 1 – Literally Homeless • Category 2 – Imminent Risk of Homeless • Category 3* – Homeless Under Other Federal Statutes (N/A BoS CoC*) • Category 4 – Fleeing/Attempting to Flee DV
	Rapid Re- housing	<p>Individuals defined as Homeless under the following categories are eligible for assistance in RRH projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Category 1 – Literally Homeless • Category 4 – Fleeing/Attempting to Flee DV <p>ESG-funded RRH projects have the following additional limitations on eligibility:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must only serve individuals and families that have an annual income at or <u>below</u> 50% of AMI
	Transitional Housing	<p>Individuals and Families defined as Homeless under the following categories are eligible for assistance in TH projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Category 1 – Literally Homeless • Category 2 – Imminent Risk of Homeless • Category 3* – Homeless Under Other Federal Statutes (N/A BoS CoC*) • Category 4 – Fleeing/Attempting to Flee DV
	Permanent Supportive Housing	<p>Individuals and families defined as Homeless under the following categories are eligible for assistance in PSH projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Category 1 – Literally Homeless • Category 4 – Fleeing/Attempting to Flee DV <p>PSH projects have the following additional NOFO limitations on eligibility within Category 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals and Families coming from TH must have originally come from the streets or emergency shelter • Individuals and Families must also have an individual family member with a disability <p>Projects that are dedicated chronically homeless projects, including those that were originally funded as Samaritan Bonus Initiative Projects must continue to dedicate the same number of beds for chronically homeless persons.</p>

* For Category 3, projects must be located within a CoC that has received HUD approval to serve this category. Category 3 is not applicable for Balance of State CoC-funded programs, and more information on this limitation can be found at: <https://www.hudexchange.info/homelessness-assistance/coc-esg-virtual-binders/coc-esg-homeless-eligibility/four-categories/category-3/>.

Appendix IV: Eligibility by Category (Emergency Solutions Grant Program)

ELIGIBILITY BY COMPONENT (Emergency Solutions Grants Program)	Street Outreach	<p>Individuals defined as Homeless under the following categories are eligible for assistance in SO:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Category 1 – Literally Homeless • Category 4 – Fleeing/Attempting to Flee DV <p>SO projects have the following additional limitations on eligibility within Category 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals and families must be living on the streets (or other places not meant for human habitation) and be unwilling or unable to access services in emergency shelter
	Emergency Shelter	<p>Individuals and Families defined as Homeless under the following categories are eligible for assistance in ES projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Category 1 – Literally Homeless • Category 2 – Imminent Risk of Homeless • Category 3 – Homeless Under Other Federal Statutes • Category 4 – Fleeing/Attempting to Flee DV
	Rapid Re- housing	<p>Individuals defined as Homeless under the following categories are eligible for assistance in RRH projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Category 1 – Literally Homeless • Category 4 – Fleeing/Attempting to Flee DV <p>ESG-funded RRH projects have the following additional limitations on eligibility:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must only serve individuals and families that have an annual income at or <u>below</u> 50% of AMI
	Homelessness Prevention	<p>Individuals and Families defined as Homeless under the following categories are eligible for assistance in HP projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Category 2 – Imminent Risk of Homeless • Category 3 – Homeless Under Other Federal Statutes • Category 4 – Fleeing/Attempting to Flee DV <p>Individuals and Families who are defined as At Risk of Homelessness are eligible for assistance in HP projects.</p> <p>HP projects have the following additional limitations on eligibility with homeless and at risk of homeless:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must only serve individuals and families that have an annual income <u>below</u> 30% of AMI

Appendix V: Eligibility Documentation Requirements for ESG and CoC Program-funded Projects

As set forth in the HEARTH Act, there are four categories of eligibility: 1) Literally Homeless, 2) Imminent Risk of Homelessness, 3) Homeless Under Other Federal Statutes (subject to limitation in the BoS CoC), and 4) Fleeing/Attempting to Flee Domestic Violence. Projects located within the Georgia Balance of State Continuum of Care jurisdiction are limited to serving categories 1, 2, and 4 due to the shortage of resources for those priority populations and excessive demand. Category two is further limited to those who will be literally homeless within 14 days, aligning eligibility with the Emergency Solutions Grant. Documentation for those at risk of homelessness may also be accepted as allowed under Category 1: Risk Factor (C) of the At Risk of Homelessness definition as allowed by HUD.

Documentation must be included in the case file, and/or scanned into the HMIS client record that demonstrates eligibility as noted in the table on the following page:

ELIGIBILITY DOCUMENTATION/RECORDKEEPING REQUIREMENTS

<p>Category 1</p>	<p>Literally Homeless</p>	<p>a) Third party verification (HMIS print-out, or written referral/certification by another housing or service provider); OR b) Written observation by an outreach worker; OR c) Certification by the individual or head of household seeking assistance stating that (s)he was living on the streets or in shelter; d) For individuals exiting an institution – one of the forms of evidence above <u>and</u>; i) Discharge paperwork <u>or</u> written/oral referral, <u>or</u> ii) Written record of intake worker’s due diligence to obtain above evidence <u>and</u> certification by individual that they exited the institution</p> <p>If the provider is using anything other than Third Party Verification, the case file must include documentation of due diligence to obtain third party verification.</p>
<p>Category 1: Risk Factor (C)</p>	<p>Category 1: Risk Factor (C) of the At-Risk of Homelessness</p>	<p>Eligibility documentation for Category 1: Risk Factor (C) of the At-Risk of Homelessness definition does not need to be equivalent to a court-ordered eviction action. Acceptable documentation must substantiate that a household’s right to occupy housing will be terminated within 21 days, not necessarily that the household will be required to leave the unit within 21 days. In order to sufficiently document that the criteria for Category 1C have been met, other documentation, such as an eviction notice prepared by the landlord or a demand notice, must effectively terminate a household’s right to occupy the unit within 21 days. If the documentation provides a way for the tenant to remedy the situation and avoid eviction, e.g., paying the balance, the applicant must lack the ability to meet the terms of avoiding eviction in order to be eligible for assistance.</p>
<p>Category 2</p>	<p>Imminent Risk of Homelessness</p>	<p>a. A court order resulting from an eviction action notifying the individual or family that they must leave within 14 days; OR b. For individual and families leaving a hotel or motel – evidence that they lack the financial resources to stay; OR c. A documented and verified written or oral statement that the individual or family will be literally homeless within 14 days; AND d. Certification that no subsequent residence has been identified; AND e. Self-certification or other written documentation that the individual lacks the financial resources and support necessary to obtain permanent housing.</p>
<p>Category 3</p>	<p>Homeless under other Federal statutes</p>	<p>CoC-funded projects - N/A (Ineligible) ESG-funded projects (ONLY shelter or prevention IF allowed):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Certification by the nonprofit or state or local government that the individual or head of household seeking assistance met the criteria of homelessness under another federal statute; AND ii. Certification of no PH in the last 60 days; AND iii. Certification by the individual or head of household, and any available supporting documentation, that (s)he has moved two or more times in the last 60 days; AND iv. Documentation of special needs or 2 or more barriers

	<p>Category 4</p>	<p>Fleeing/ Attempting to Flee DV</p>	<p>For victim service providers: i. 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. Statement must be documented by a self-certification or a certification by the intake worker.</p> <p>For non-victim service providers: ii. 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 iii. Certification by the individual or head of household that no subsequent residence has been identified; AND iv. Self-certification, or other written documentation, that the individual or family lacks the financial resources and support networks to obtain other permanent housing.</p>
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Appendix VI: Determining Homeless Status of Youth

This guide uses hypothetical scenarios to help providers understand how youth meet HUD's [definition of homelessness](#) and what documentation is needed to establish homeless status for youth. The definition of homelessness is not specific to youth or any age group (with the exception of Category 3 for families and youth defined as homeless under other federal statutes); yet, many communities have had difficulty determining how youth meet HUD's definition of homelessness and what is required in terms of documenting homeless status. This guide assists providers in understanding the definition of homelessness found in the Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) and Continuum of Care (CoC) Programs so that youth are not turned away in error from the housing and services that they need.

In addition to determining and documenting homeless status according to HUD, providers must also determine whether participants meet specific project eligibility criteria. This guide is not intended to assist with eligibility determination beyond the definition of homelessness.

This guide can be found on the HUD Exchange at: <https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/4783/determining-homeless-status-of-youth/>.



DETERMINING HOMELESS STATUS OF YOUTH

This guide is intended to assist intake workers help determine and document homeless status for youth using the definition of homelessness found in the Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) and Continuum of Care (CoC) Programs so that youth are not turned away from the housing and services that they need in error. Although the [HUD definition of homelessness](#), except for Category 3 (families and youth defined as homeless under other federal statutes), is not specific to youth or any age group, many communities have had difficulty determining how youth meet HUD’s definition of homelessness and what is required in terms of documenting homeless status. The examples in this guide are hypothetical scenarios intended to help providers understand HUD’s homeless definition and what documentation is needed. While the scenarios specifically reference youth, the information may be used to determine homeless status for people of all ages seeking assistance. HUD’s homeless assistance programs do not prohibit providers from providing assistance to youth who meet the criteria in HUD’s definition of homelessness, whether they are unaccompanied children under 18 or youth age 18-24. However, organizations serving unaccompanied children under the age of 18 should be aware that there may be state and local laws or regulations that can affect program design or eligibility for these youth.

HUD and its federal partners recognize that, as communities build more [coordinated and comprehensive responses](#) to ending youth homelessness, they will likely need to construct a menu of appropriate services and housing options for youth that are funded through a variety of public and private, and federal, state and local agencies. HUD’s homeless assistance resources should be a part of that menu but likely will not be the only resources or definitions that a community needs to consider. Nevertheless, for HUD’s CoC and ESG Program funded projects, intake workers will need to verify homeless status according to HUD’s definition.

Verifying homeless status is only the first step, though. A provider must also verify that a youth meets specific project eligibility criteria. Different types of ESG and CoC Program funded projects have different eligibility criteria that are defined in regulations and annual funding announcements made by HUD. Although a youth may be determined to be homeless under a particular Category of HUD’s homeless definition, it does not mean that the youth is eligible for all CoC or ESG Program funded projects or that HUD funded homeless assistance projects are the most appropriate type of assistance for these homeless youth. HUD is developing additional technical assistance materials to assist providers in determining eligibility for HUD’s homeless assistance projects. This guide is intended to assist providers in understanding how to determine and document homeless status according to HUD. However, in order to effectively match homeless youth to the appropriate resources, each local homeless housing and service project must provide the CoC with their detailed eligibility criteria.

YOUTH HOUSING CRISIS SCENARIOS

ALEXIS

Alexis, 23, had been living with her boyfriend but they broke-up and she could not afford her own place and had no other friends or family willing to let her stay with them. A friend’s father offered her a room in his house in exchange for sex and Alexis moved in since she had nowhere else to stay and could not afford her own apartment. Alexis doesn’t want to stay there anymore but she has nowhere else to stay, little money, and is afraid she will have to sleep under a bridge if she moves out.

Is Alexis homeless according to HUD’s definition? Yes, under [Category 4](#). She has been trading sex for a place to stay and she will lose the place if she refuses to have sex with her friend’s father. She has no other housing options or resources to secure her own housing. On the other hand, she wasn’t homeless when she was with her boyfriend because he wasn’t requiring her to have sex with him to stay at his place and she felt safe.



David, 19, came out to his parents a couple of months ago. His mother was supportive but his father was angry and has been trying to get David to change his mind about his sexual orientation and is drinking more. His father has never hit him but David worried that things could get worse and his father could get violent. A few times, when his father was really upset, David drove around all night to get out of the house. Two weeks ago it was so bad at home he went to his friend's house, but now his friend says David has to leave this week because he will get in trouble with his landlord. David only works sporadically and has nowhere else to stay. He wants help but is embarrassed about going to a homeless service provider and doesn't want to ask his friend for a letter saying he can't stay there anymore because it could get his friend in trouble.

Is David homeless according to HUD's definition? Yes, under [Category 2](#) and under [Category 4](#). He is homeless under Category 2 because he has been staying with friends and has to leave in less than 14 days with no safe alternative housing or resources to secure housing. His parent's house would not be considered other available housing since David states that it is not safe for him to live there due to the possibility of violence by his father. He is also homeless under Category 4 since he was fleeing his home because of his concern that his father would be violent and because his home wasn't a safe or supportive environment.

Does David have to ask his friend for a letter? If the intake worker is qualifying David under Category 2, then no, David only needs to state that his friend will no longer let him stay there. It is the intake worker's responsibility to attempt to obtain written or oral verification from the friend, but David may have to help the intake worker contact his friend (e.g., provide a telephone number or address). If the intake worker is not able to obtain written or oral verification from his friend, then David may provide written self-certification that his statement is true and the intake worker must document their attempts to obtain the higher level of documentation. The intake worker should not attempt to contact David's family if David believes this would jeopardize his safety.

Jordan, 18, had an argument with his mother a month ago because she wouldn't let him drink or smoke in the house. He left and has stayed with different friends a week at a time since then. Now school has started and his friends' parents will no longer allow Jordan to stay with them. His mother is willing to allow him to come back home.

Is Jordan homeless according to HUD's definition? No. He is currently staying with friends and has a safe place to return to with his mother. They may need family counseling or mediation to help them have a better relationship so Jordan will return home and won't leave again until he is ready.

DOCUMENTING THE YOUTH'S PRIOR LIVING SITUATION

- Youth are not responsible for obtaining their own documentation. Instead, intake workers are responsible for documenting the youth's homeless status by verifying the information provided by the youth starting at the initial interview. Using contact information or documents provided by the youth, the intake worker should obtain the information indicated in the chart below.
- If at any point the youth does not want someone to be contacted because he or she fears for their safety – the intake worker SHOULD NOT contact the person and should document the youth's feelings and statements in the case file.
- If the intake worker cannot obtain a higher level of documentation (e.g., a letter from a third-party) the youth can self-certify and the intake worker should document their effort to obtain a higher level of documentation, including notes about why they were not able to.
- If the intake worker is able to obtain documentation at any point during the youth's participation in the project, then the information should be added to the case file to back up intake documentation.
- When documenting category 4, the intake worker needs to ask only enough questions to know what is going on – they should rely on the youth's own statement about his or her feelings and concerns. If the youth indicates there is a safety risk then no further documentation of the safety risk is needed – the intake worker should simply document what the youth stated.



DETERMINING HOMELESS STATUS OF YOUTH QUICK GUIDE

Category	 Living situation	Types of Documentation <i>(responsibility of intake worker to obtain the highest level of documentation possible in each situation)</i>
Category 1 Literal Homelessness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shelter including emergency shelter, transitional housing, or hotel or motel paid by government or charity Street or other place not meant for human habitation (ex. car, garage, park, abandoned building) An institution (ex. jail, hospital, juvenile detention) that the youth is exiting and where youth was resident for 90 days or less AND the youth resided in emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation immediately prior to entering that institution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Third party documentation, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> HMIS or victim services provider database printed record Written statement by housing or services provider such as homeless liaison, street outreach worker, or shelter provider, or Intake worker direct observation recorded in the file, or Certification of homelessness by youth AND documentation of intake worker's attempts to verify information, or (If exiting institution) Discharge paperwork or a written or oral statement from staff of the institution with beginning and end dates of the time the youth spent in the institution OR certification by youth that they exited institution AND documentation of intake worker's attempts to verify information. Also documentation of shelter or place not meant for human habitation prior to entering institution. <p>NOTE: A youth asking for emergency shelter or street outreach can self-certify their homelessness. This could be a sign-in sheet for shelter with a certification on top that the people signing in are homeless. No further documentation or attempts to verify are required to access emergency shelter.</p>
Category 2 Imminent Risk of Homelessness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In own housing, but being evicted within 14 days A hotel or motel paid for by the youth, family or friends where the youth cannot stay for more than 14 days (often due to lack of ability to continue paying) With family or friends and being asked to leave within 14 days <p>Additionally, the youth must have no safe alternative housing, resources or support networks to maintain or obtain permanent housing.</p>	<p>Documentation that youth will lose their housing within 14 days:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notice of eviction or equivalent legal document, or Proof of inability to continue to pay for hotel or motel, or Statement by youth that they cannot continue to stay at the place they have been AND written or oral verification from owner or renter of housing obtained by intake worker OR documentation of intake worker's attempts to verify information; and <p>Documentation that the youth has no safe alternative housing, no financial or other resources, and no family or other support networks. Youth can self-certify this.</p>
Category 3 Homeless Under other Federal Statutes	<p>Youth who do not qualify as homeless under the other 3 Categories but who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are homeless under other federal statutes including the Runaway & Homeless Youth Act Have not had their own place with a lease, ownership interest or occupancy agreement in the last 60 days Have moved two or more times in the last 60 days Can be expected to have continued housing instability because of a disability, substance use addiction, history of domestic violence or child abuse, or two or more barriers to employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Certification of homeless status by the non-profit, or state or local government entity, responsible for administering homeless assistance under other federal statutes, and Certification by the youth that they have not had a lease or other agreement for housing in the last 60 days with written documentation (e.g., from an outreach worker or homeless liaison) OR documentation of intake worker's attempts to verify information, and Certification by the youth that they have had two or more moves in the last 60 days with written documentation OR documentation of intake worker's attempts to verify information, and Documentation of special needs (e.g., copy of SSI check, third party verification, direct observation) or at least two barriers to employment <p>NOTE: HUD must approve CoC Program funded projects to serve youth under Category 3. ESG funded projects do not require HUD approval.</p>
Category 4 Fleeing Domestic Violence	<p>Youth fleeing or attempting to flee their housing or the place they are staying because of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or other dangerous or life-threatening conditions related to violence that has taken place in the house or has made them afraid to return to the house, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trading sex for housing Trafficking Physical abuse Violence (or perceived threat of violence) because of the youth's sexual orientation <p>Additionally, the youth must have no safe, alternative housing, resources or support networks to maintain or obtain permanent housing.</p>	<p>For providers that are not victim service providers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statement by youth that they are fleeing because of domestic or other violence AND <u>If the safety of the youth is not jeopardized</u>, verification of the statement through written observation by the intake worker or staff at other organizations including law enforcement, housing or service provider, social worker, homeless liaison or legal assistance provider youth has sought assistance from OR <u>documentation of intake worker's attempts to verify information and certification of the statement by the youth or intake worker</u> <p>For victim service providers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statement by youth that they are fleeing domestic or other violence AND Certification of the statement by the youth or intake worker <p>All providers must obtain a youth's self-certification that the youth has no safe alternative housing, no financial or other resources, and no family or other support networks. The intake worker should obtain any available documentation or statements supporting the youth's certification.</p>

NOTE: Additional guidance on documenting homeless status can be found at [Criteria and Recordkeeping Requirements for Definition of Homeless – HUD Exchange](#). Youth who are not determined to be homeless under one of the Categories above may be considered [at-risk of homelessness](#) and eligible for homelessness prevention services funded through ESG.

Appendix VII: Permanent Supportive Housing Written Standards & Chronic Prioritization (Approved as updated 5/22/24)

PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING PROJECTS (PSH)

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) projects provide community-based housing and supportive services, without a predetermined length of stay, to assist homeless persons with a disability to live independently.

STANDARD:

The project will provide safe, affordable housing that meets participants' needs in accordance with HUD guidelines for permanent supportive housing projects.

SERVICE PROVISION CRITERIA:

1. In providing or arranging for housing, the project considers the needs of the individual or family experiencing homelessness.
2. The project provides assistance in accessing suitable housing.
3. The project may provide assistance with moving costs.
4. The project signs occupancy agreements or leases (or subleases) with all project participants residing in housing.
5. The project enters into an occupancy agreement or lease agreement (or sublease) with project participant for a term of at least one year, which is terminable for cause. The lease must be automatically renewable upon expiration for a minimum term of one month. Assistance may be extended as stated in 24 CFR 578.79.
6. For projects where regulations require individuals and families residing in permanent supportive housing to pay occupancy charges or rent, occupancy charges and rent may not exceed those specified in 24 CFR 578.77.
7. At least 90 percent of the CoC Program-funded permanent supportive housing beds that become available through turnover must be prioritized for chronically homeless individuals and families, or are in projects classified as DedicatedPLUS as defined in I.B.2.b.(7) of HUD's 2023 CoC Program Competition NOFO. However, CoC-funded PSH projects that commit above this amount in a competition, are held to the higher amount.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

In order to be served in a CoC-funded PSH project (individuals or family households) participants must meet the following program eligibility requirements:

- Participants must meet the applicable HUD definition of homelessness (category 1 or category 4); and
- PSH can only provide assistance to individuals with disabilities and families in which at least one adult or child has a disability.

CoC projects funded under the Rural Homelessness Set Aside are limited to serve counties defined as Rural in the Special NOFO.

CoC projects funded through the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP) NOFO must be dedicated to youth and young adults (singles and youth families) where the head of household is aged 24 and under at the time of program enrollment. Under YHDP, all youth must qualify as homeless under categories 1, 2, and 4, except as stated in I.C.5. and I.C.6. of Appendix A.

- Appendix A – I.C.5. discusses serving households who are homeless under other federal laws, however this is not allowed in the Balance of State CoC, nor supported in the Coordinated Community Plan (CCP).
- Appendix A – I.C.6. discusses serving households who lack 3rd party documentation or living in unsafe situations. As stipulated in I.C.6. of Appendix A, youth aged 24 and under must not be required to provide third-party documentation that they meet the homeless definition in 24 CFR 578.3 as a condition for receiving services in projects funded under the YHDP NOFO. Additionally, any youth-serving provider funded under the YHDP NOFO may serve unaccompanied youth aged 24 and under and families headed by youth aged 24 and under who are living in unsafe situations. HUD interprets “youth-serving provider” as a private nonprofit organization whose primary mission is to provide services to youth aged 24 and under and families headed by youth aged 24 and under. HUD interprets “living in unsafe situations” as having an unsafe primary nighttime residence and no safe alternative to that residence. These requirements supersede any conflicting requirements under the YHDP NOFO, this appendix, the Act, or the CoC Program rule.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR DedicatedPLUS Projects (Section I.B.2.b.(7) of the FY 2023 CoC Program NOFO):

A *DedicatedPLUS* project is a permanent supportive housing project where 100 percent of the beds are dedicated to serve individuals with disabilities and families in which one adult or child has a disability, including unaccompanied homeless youth (including pregnant and parenting youth) that at intake are:

- (1) experiencing chronic homelessness as defined in 24 CFR 578.3;
- (2) residing in a transitional housing project that will be eliminated and meets the definition of chronically homeless in effect at the time in which the individual or family entered the transitional housing project;
- (3) residing in a place not meant for human habitation, emergency shelter, or safe haven; but the individuals or families experiencing chronic homelessness as defined at 24 CFR 578.3 had been admitted and enrolled in a permanent housing project within the last year and were unable to maintain a housing placement;
- (4) residing in transitional housing funded by a Joint TH and PH-RRH component project and who were experiencing chronic homelessness as defined at 24 CFR 578.3 prior to entering the project;
- (5) residing and has resided in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or emergency shelter for at least 12 months in the last three years, but has not done so on four separate occasions; or
- (6) receiving assistance through a Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)-funded homeless assistance program and met one of the above criteria at initial intake to the VA's homeless assistance system.

Priority is given to chronically homeless individuals and families as defined by HUD, where a family with an adult head of household (or if there is no adult in the family, a minor head of household) who meets all of the criteria in paragraph (a) or (b) of the chronically homeless definition as described on page 6 of this appendix, including a family whose composition has fluctuated while the head of household has been homeless. Please note that to meet the criteria set forth in the chronically homeless definition, in addition to meeting criteria around literal homelessness and length of time homeless, the statutory definition also requires that the head of household has a diagnosable disability as determined in the final rule.

Recipients that are providing permanent supportive housing for hard-to-house populations of homeless persons must exercise judgment and examine all circumstances in determining whether termination is appropriate. Under the Continuum of Care Interim Rule, it was determined that a participant’s assistance should be terminated only in the most severe cases.

The Georgia Balance of State CoC adopts HUD’s Notice CPD-16-11, *Prioritizing Persons Experiencing Chronic Homelessness and Other Vulnerable Homeless Persons in Permanent Supportive Housing* Notice issued on July 25, 2016, in that those experiencing chronic homelessness should be given priority for non-dedicated PSH beds as vacancies become available through turnover. PSH renewal projects serving specific disabled subpopulations (e.g., persons with mental illness or persons with substance abuse issues) must continue to serve those groups, as required in the current grant agreement. However, the chronically homeless within the specified subpopulation should be prioritized for entry as described below. The full notice, which includes related recordkeeping requirements can be found at: <https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/notice-cpd-16-11-prioritizing-persons-experiencing-chronic-homelessness-and-other-vulnerable-homeless-persons-in-psh.pdf>. As updated in HUD’s 2018 CoC Program Competition NOFO, at least 90 percent of the CoC program-funded permanent supportive housing beds that become available through turnover must be prioritized for chronically homeless individuals and families or are in projects classified as DedicatedPLUS as defined in I.B.2.b.(7). This policy update is being made to policy adopting Notice CPD-16-11.

The overarching goal of adopting this Notice is to ensure that the homeless individuals and families with the most severe service needs within a community are prioritized in all PSH, which will also increase progress towards the Georgia Balance of State CoC’s goal of ending chronic homelessness. This will also guide projects in ensuring that all CoC Program-funded PSH beds are used most effectively. HUD’s Notice CPD-16-11, and this policy, revises the orders of priority related to how persons should be selected for PSH as previously established in Notice CPD-14-012 to reflect the changes to the definition of chronically homeless as defined in the Chronically Homeless final rule.

Recipients of CoC Program-funded PSH are required to follow the order of priority when selecting participants for housing in accordance with the Georgia Balance of State CoC’s written standards while also considering the goals and any identified target populations served by the project, in a manner consistent with their current grant agreement.

Due diligence must be exercised when conducting outreach and assessment to ensure that chronically homeless individuals and families are prioritized for assistance based on their total length of time homeless and/or the severity of their needs in the Georgia Balance of State CoC. Consistent with HUD's expectations for recipients of dedicated permanent supportive housing (PSH) projects, recipients of DedicatedPLUS projects will be expected to exercise due diligence when conducting outreach and assessment to locate and engage eligible households as outlined in Section I.B.2.b.(7) of the FY 2023 CoC Program NOFO. HUD and the Georgia Balance of State CoC recognize that some persons—particularly those living on the streets or in places not meant for human habitation—might require significant engagement and contacts prior to their entering housing. Recipients of CoC Program-funded PSH are not required to allow units to remain vacant indefinitely while waiting for an identified chronically homeless person to accept an offer of PSH. CoC Program-funded PSH providers are encouraged to follow a Housing First approach to maximum extent practicable, and recipients of DedicatedPLUS projects should be following a Housing First approach to the maximum extent practicable. Therefore, a person experiencing chronic homelessness should not be forced to refuse an offer of PSH if they do not want to participate in the project’s services, nor should a PSH project have eligibility criteria or preconditions to entry that systematically exclude those with severe service needs. Street outreach and housing providers should continue to make attempts to engage those persons that have been resistant to accepting an offer of PSH and where the CoC has adopted these orders of priority into their written standards, these chronically homeless persons must continue to be prioritized for PSH until they are housed.

PRIORITIZATION of CHRONICALLY HOMELESS

Order of Priority in CoC Program-funded Permanent Supportive Housing

As a reminder, recipients of CoC Program-funded PSH are required to prioritize otherwise eligible households in a nondiscriminatory manner. Project implementation, including any prioritization policies, must be implemented consistent with the nondiscrimination provisions of the Federal civil rights laws, including, but not limited to the Fair Housing Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, and Title II or III of the Americans with Disabilities Act, as applicable. For example, while it is acceptable to prioritize based on level of need for the type of assistance being offered, prioritizing based on specific disabilities would not be consistent with fair housing requirements or program regulations.

Note: Families already living in assisted units who qualify for an Emergency Transfer under VAWA, but who do not have a safe unit immediately available for internal transfer, shall have priority over all other applicants for Permanent Supportive Housing. Such individual or family shall meet all eligibility criteria required by Federal law or regulation or HUD NOFO, and any established criteria based on 578.93(b)(1), (4), (6), or (7), but shall not be required to meet any other eligibility or preference criteria of the project. The individual or family shall retain their original homeless or chronically homeless status for the transfer.

A. Prioritizing Chronically Homeless Persons in CoC Program-funded Permanent Supportive Housing Beds Dedicated or Prioritized for Occupancy by Persons Experiencing Chronic.

First Priority:

Chronically Homeless Individuals and Families with the Longest History of Homelessness and with the Most Severe Service Needs.

A chronically homeless individual or head of household as defined in 24 CFR Parts 91 and 578, for whom both of the following are true:

1. The chronically homeless individual or head of household of a family has been homeless and living in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter for at least 12 months either continuously or on at least four separate occasions in the last 3 years, where the cumulative total length of the four occasions equals at least 12 months; and
2. The CoC or CoC Program recipient has identified the chronically homeless individual or head of household, who meets all of the criteria in paragraph (1) of the definition for chronically homeless, of the family as having severe service needs (see Section I.D.3. of this Notice for definition of severe service needs).

Second Priority:

Chronically Homeless Individuals and Families with the Longest History of Homelessness.

A chronically homeless individual or head of household, as defined in 24 CFR Parts 91 and 578, for which both of the following are true:

1. The chronically homeless individual or head of household of a family has been homeless and living in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter for at least 12 months either continuously or on at least four separate occasions in the last 3 years, where the cumulative total length of the four occasions equals at least 12 months; and,
2. The CoC or CoC program recipient has **not** identified the chronically homeless individual or the head of household, who meets all of the criteria in paragraph (1) of the definition for chronically homeless, of the family as having severe service needs.

Third Priority:

Chronically Homeless Individuals and Families with the Most Severe Service Needs.

A chronically homeless individual or head of household as defined in 24 CFR Parts 91 and 578, for whom both of the following are true:

1. The chronically homeless individual or head of household of a family has been homeless and living or residing in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter on at least four separate occasions in the last 3 years, where the total length of those separate occasions equals less than 12 months; and
2. The CoC or CoC program recipient has identified the chronically homeless individual or the head of household, who meets all of the criteria in paragraph (1) of the definition for chronically homeless, of the family as having severe service needs.

Fourth Priority:

All Other Chronically Homeless Individuals and Families.

A chronically homeless individual or head of household as defined in 24 CFR Parts 91 and 578, for whom both of the following are true:

1. The chronically homeless individual or head of household of a family has been homeless and living in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter for at least 12 months either continuously or on at least four separate occasions in the last 3 years, where the cumulative total length the four occasions is **less than** 12 months; and
2. The CoC or CoC program recipient has **not** identified the chronically homeless individual or the head of household, who meets all of the criteria in paragraph (1) of the definition for chronically homeless, of the family as having severe service needs.

Where a CoC or a recipient of CoC Program-funded PSH beds that are dedicated or prioritized is not able to identify chronically homeless individuals and families as defined in 24 CFR Parts 91 and 578 within the CoC, the order of priority in the section below (*B. Order of Priority in Permanent Supportive Housing Beds Not Dedicated or Prioritized for Persons Experiencing Chronic Homelessness*) may be followed.

B. Prioritizing Chronically Homeless Persons in CoC Program-funded Permanent Supportive Housing Beds Not Dedicated or Not Prioritized for Occupancy by Persons Experiencing Chronic Homelessness

First Priority:

Homeless Individuals and Families with a Disability with Long Periods of Episodic Homelessness and Severe Service Needs.

An individual or family that is eligible for CoC Program-funded PSH who has experienced fewer than four occasions where they have been living or residing in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter but where the cumulative time homeless is at least 12 months **and** has been identified as having severe service needs.

Second Priority:

Homeless Individuals and Families with a Disability Severe Service Needs.

An individual or family that is eligible for CoC Program-funded PSH who is residing in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter and has been identified as having severe service needs. The length of time in which households have been homeless should also be considered when prioritizing households that meet this order of priority, but there is not a minimum length of time required.

Third Priority:

Homeless Individuals and Families with a Disability Coming from Places Not Meant for Human Habitation, Safe Havens, or Emergency Shelters Without Severe Service Needs.

An individual or family that is eligible for CoC Program-funded PSH who is residing in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or an emergency shelter where the individual or family has not been identified as having severe service needs. The length of time in which households have been homeless should be considered when prioritizing households that meet this order of priority, but there is not a minimum length of time required.

Fourth Priority:

Homeless Individuals and Families with a Disability Coming from Transitional Housing.

An individual or family that is eligible for CoC Program-funded PSH who is currently residing in a transitional housing project, where prior to residing in the transitional housing had lived in a place not meant for human habitation, in an emergency shelter, or safe haven. This priority also includes individuals and families residing in transitional housing who were fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking and prior to residing in that transitional housing project even if they did not live in a place not meant for human habitation, an emergency shelter, or a safe haven prior to entry in the transitional housing.

Prioritization of DedicatedPLUS Projects When There Are No Eligible Households

At the point in which a vacancy occurs, if there are no eligible households identified who are ready to accept assistance, recipients should consider the following:

- Where there are no chronically homeless persons identified, Dedicated PSH beds included in DedicatedPLUS projects may fill the vacancy *either* in accordance with section III.B.1.(b)-(d) of Notice CPD-16-11 or households eligible for DedicatedPLUS as outlined in Section I.B.2.b.(7) of the FY 2023 CoC Program NOFO.
- Where there are no persons meeting the eligibility criteria for DedicatedPLUS as outlined in Section I.B.2.b.(7) of the FY 2023 CoC Program NOFO, recipients should follow the order of priority outlined in section III.B.1.(b)-(d) of Notice CPD-16-11 to fill any vacancies. At a minimum, the CoC should consider the total length of time the potential program participant has been residing in a place not meant for human habitation, emergency shelter, or safe haven and severity of service needs.
- The recipient must always continue to prioritize households that are eligible for DedicatedPLUS (and dedicated PSH, if applicable). This means that anytime there is a new vacancy, the recipient must always first seek to fill it with an eligible household even if it was most recently used to serve a household that would not otherwise be eligible due to the circumstances outlined above.

For purposes of prioritization as referenced above in Section III.B.1.(b)-(d) of Notice CPD-16-11 (referenced from Appendix VIII of this document), the required order of prioritization as follows for DedicatedPLUS projects, when there are no eligible households:

First Priority

Homeless Individuals and Families with a Disability Severe Service Needs.

An individual or family that is eligible for CoC Program-funded PSH who is residing in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter and has been identified as having severe service needs. The length of time in which households have been homeless should also be considered when prioritizing households that meet this order of priority, but there is not a minimum length of time required.

Second Priority

Homeless Individuals and Families with a Disability Coming from Places Not Meant for Human Habitation, Safe Havens, or Emergency Shelters Without Severe Service Needs.

An individual or family that is eligible for CoC Program-funded PSH who is residing in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or an emergency shelter where the individual or family has not been identified as having severe service needs. The length of time in which households have been homeless should be considered when prioritizing households that meet this order of priority, but there is not a minimum length of time required.

Third Priority

Homeless Individuals and Families with a Disability Coming from Transitional Housing.

An individual or family that is eligible for CoC Program-funded PSH who is currently residing in a transitional housing project, where prior to residing in the transitional housing had lived in a place not meant for human habitation, in an emergency shelter, or safe haven. This priority also includes individuals and families residing in transitional housing who were fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking and prior to residing in that transitional housing project even if they did not live in a place not meant for human habitation, an emergency shelter, or a safe haven prior to entry in the transitional housing.

PROCEDURE:

Permanent Supportive Housing Projects will be required to utilize the Coordinated Entry Process as outlined in the Coordinated Entry Written Standards Policies and Procedures.

Key Terms:

Homeless means (To be eligible for permanent supportive housing, people must meet the federal criteria under category [1] or [4] of the “homeless” definition in 24 CFR 578.3):

- 1) An individual or family who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, meaning:
 - i) An individual or family with a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground;
 - ii) An individual or family living in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangements (including congregate shelters, transitional housing, and hotels and motels paid for by charitable organizations or by federal, state, or local government programs for low-income individuals); or
 - iii) An individual who is exiting an institution where he or she resided for 90 days or less and who resided in an emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation immediately before entering that institution

Disabling Condition (Disability) means:

- A person shall be considered to have a disabling condition if he or she has a condition that:
 - Is expected to be long-continuing or of indefinite duration;
 - Substantially impedes the individual’s ability to live independently;
 - Could be improved by the provision of more suitable housing conditions; and
 - Can be diagnosed as one or more of the following conditions: substance abuse disorder, serious mental illness, developmental disability (as defined in section 102 of the Developmental Disabilities Assistance Bill of Rights Act of 2000 (42 U.S.C. 15002)), post-traumatic stress disorder, cognitive impairments resulting from brain injury, or chronic physical illness or disability (page 53, CoC Interim Rule).

- A person will also be considered to have a disability if he or she has acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) or any conditions arising from the etiologic agent for acquired immunodeficiency syndrome, including infection with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).

Chronically Homeless means:

- A “homeless individual with a disability,” as defined in section 401(9) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11360(9)), who:
 - Lives in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter; and
 - Has been homeless and living as described in paragraph (a)(i) continuously for at least 12 months or on at least four separate occasions in the last 3 years, as long as the combined occasions equal at least 12 months and each break in homelessness separating the occasions included at least 7 consecutive nights of not living as described in paragraph (a)(i). Stays in institutional care facilities for fewer than 90 days will not constitute as a break in homelessness, but rather such stays 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 an institutional care facility;
- An individual who has been residing in an institutional care facility, including a jail, substance abuse or mental health treatment facility, hospital, or other similar facility, for fewer than 90 days and met all of the criteria in paragraph (a) of this definition, before entering that facility; or
- A family with an adult head of household (or if there is no adult in the family, a minor head of household) who meets all of the criteria in paragraph (a) or (b) of this definition described above, including a family whose composition has fluctuated while the head of household has been homeless.

HUD’s *Sample Chronic Homelessness Documentation – 2016* guidance, which includes a list of acceptable documentation to verify disability status, can be found at: <https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/Sample-Chronic-Homelessness-Documentation-Form-2016.docx>. A Sample Chronic Homelessness Documentation Checklist can be found at: <https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/5182/sample-chronic-homelessness-documentation-checklist/>, and additional guidance on Chronic Homelessness can be found at: <https://www.hudexchange.info/homelessness-assistance/resources-for-chronic-homelessness/>.

Housing First means:

Housing First is a model of housing assistance that prioritizes rapid placement and stabilization in permanent housing that does not have service participation requirements or preconditions for entry (such as sobriety or a minimum income threshold). HUD encourages all recipients of CoC Program-funded PSH to follow a Housing First approach to the maximum extent practicable.

Any CoC-funded recipient/subrecipient that indicated that they would follow a Housing First approach in a CoC Project Application must continue to do so in subsequent years, as the CoC score for that CoC Program Competition was affected by the extent in which project applications indicated that they would follow this approach and this requirement will be incorporated into the recipient’s HUD grant agreement.

Severity of Service Needs means (as defined in HUD Notice CPD-16-11, these PSH written standards refer to persons who have been identified as having the most severe service needs):

- (a) For the purpose of these standards, this means an individual for whom at least one of the following is true:
- i. History of high utilization of crisis services, which include but are not limited to, emergency rooms, jails, and psychiatric facilities; and/or

ii. Significant health or behavioral health challenges, substance use disorders, or functional impairments which require a significant level of support in order to maintain permanent housing.

iii. For youth and victims of domestic violence, high risk of continued trauma or high risk of harm or exposure to very dangerous living situations.

iv. When applicable CoCs and recipients of CoC Program-funded PSH may use an alternate criteria used by Medicaid departments to identify high-need, high cost beneficiaries.

(b) Severe service needs as defined in paragraphs i. - iv. above should be identified and verified through data-driven methods such as an administrative data match or through the use of a standardized assessment tool and process and should be documented in a project participant's case file. The determination must not be based on a specific diagnosis or disability type, but only on the severity of needs of the individual. The determination cannot be made based on any factors that would result in a violation of any nondiscrimination and equal opportunity requirements, see C.F.R. § 5.105(a).

Recordkeeping Recommendations for the Orders of Priority in this Notice:

24 CFR 578.103(a)(4) of the [CoC Program Interim Rule](#) outlines documentation requirements for all recipients of dedicated and non-dedicated CoC Program-funded PSH associated with determining whether or not an individual or family is chronically homeless for the purposes of eligibility. In addition to those requirements, the BoS CoC expects that CoC recipients of CoC Program-funded PSH, will maintain evidence of implementing these priorities. Evidence of following these orders of priority may be demonstrated by:

A. Evidence of Severe Service Needs. Evidence of severe service needs is that by which the recipient is able to determine the severity of needs as defined in this section of the Written Standards using data-driven methods such as an administrative data match or through the use of a standardized assessment. The documentation should include any information pertinent to how the determination was made, such as notes associated with case-conferencing decisions.

B. Evidence that the Recipient is Following the CoC's Written Standards for Prioritizing Assistance. Recipients must follow the CoC's written standards for prioritizing assistance, as adopted by the CoC. In accordance with the CoC's adoption of written standards for prioritizing assistance, recipients must in turn document that the CoC's revised written standards have been incorporated into the recipient's intake procedures and that the recipient is following its intake procedures when accepting new project participants into the project.

C. Evidence that there are no Households Meeting Higher Order of Priority within CoC's Geographic Area.

(a) When dedicated and prioritized PSH is used to serve non-chronically homeless households, the recipient of CoC Program-funded PSH should document how it was determined that there were no chronically homeless households identified for assistance within the CoC's geographic area – or for those CoCs that implement a sub-CoC planning and housing and service delivery approach, the smaller defined geographic area within the CoC's geographic area – at the point in which a vacancy became available. This documentation should include evidence of the outreach efforts that had been undertaken to locate eligible chronically homeless households within the defined geographic area and, where chronically homeless households have been identified but have not yet accepted assistance, the documentation should specify the number of persons that are chronically homeless that meet this condition and the attempts that have been made to engage the individual or family. Where a CoC is using a single prioritized list, the recipient of PSH may refer to that list as evidence.

(b) When non-dedicated and non-prioritized PSH is used to serve an eligible individual or family that meets a lower order of priority, the recipient of CoC Program-funded PSH should document how the determination was made that there were no eligible individuals or families within the CoC's geographic area - or for those CoCs that implement a sub-CoC planning and housing and service delivery approach, the smaller defined geographic area within the CoC's geographic area - that met a higher priority. Where a CoC is using a single prioritized list, the recipient of PSH may refer to that list as evidence that there were no households identified within the CoC's geographic area that meet a higher order of priority.

(c) Documentation for DedicatedPLUS Projects: Recipients of DedicatedPLUS PSH projects must maintain records to document efforts to locate persons meeting the eligibility criteria in Section I.B.2.b.(7) of the FY 2023 CoC Program NOFO. Ideally, the CoC should have comprehensive and high-quality data on all households that are currently presenting for assistance within the CoC that is informed by a comprehensive outreach strategy. To justify serving a non-eligible household, a recipient of DedicatedPLUS projects must have documentation from the CoC that demonstrates that outreach is occurring regularly and that the CoC is making reasonable efforts to locate and identify all persons experiencing homelessness within the community.

Appendix VIII: Recordkeeping Requirements Documenting “Chronic Homelessness”

RECORDKEEPING REQUIREMENTS TO DOCUMENT CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS	Documenting time spent living in a place not meant for human habitation, an emergency shelter, or a safe haven	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Third party verification (HMIS print-out, written observation by an outreach worker of the conditions where the individual was living, or written referral/certification by another housing or service provider) should be obtained for at least 9 of the required 12 month homeless period; b) Up to 3 months of homelessness may be documented through self-certification; c) A single encounter with a service provider in a month is sufficient to consider the household homeless for the entire month unless there is evidence of a break; d) If third party documentation cannot be obtained, a written record of the intake worker’s due diligence to obtain it, the worker’s documentation of the living situation, and the individual’s self-certification may suffice; e) Up to 25% of the participants served during the project’s operating year may self-certify for the full 12 months but this should be limited to rare and extreme cases and the intake worker must document their due diligence in obtaining other documentation and why it was not received.
	Documenting time spent in institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Discharge paperwork or written or oral referral from a social worker, case manager, or other appropriate official stating the beginning and ending dates of the individual’s stay in the facility; OR b) Where third party verification is not attainable, the written record of the intake worker’s due diligence to obtain it and the individual’s self-certification that he or she is exiting an institutional care facility where they resided less than 90 days.
	Documenting breaks in homelessness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Third party verification; OR b) Self-reporting by the individual seeking assistance. It is acceptable for all breaks to be documented through self-reporting.
	Documenting the existence of a disability	<p>This must be third party, and includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Written verification from a professional licensed by the State to diagnose and treat the disability and certification that the disability expected to be long-continuing or of indefinite duration and substantially impedes the individual’s ability to live independently; OR b) Written verification from SSA; OR c) The receipt of a disability check; OR d) Intake staff recorded observation of a disability that is confirmed and accompanied by evidence outlined in a-c above within 45 days.

Recipients and subrecipients of CoC Program funds are required to maintain and follow written intake procedures to ensure compliance with the “chronically homeless” definition as described in the final rule at:

<https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/4847/hearth-defining-chronically-homeless-final-rule/>

More information on Recordkeeping Requirements can be found at: <https://www.hudexchange.info/homelessness-assistance/coc-esg-virtual-binders/coc-esg-homeless-eligibility/definition-of-chronic-homelessness/recordkeeping-requirements/>.

Appendix VIII: HUD CPD-16-11 Notice Prioritizing Persons Experiencing Chronic Homelessness and Other Vulnerable Homeless Persons in Permanent Supportive Housing



Special Attention of:

All Secretary's
Representatives

Notice: CPD-16-11

Issued: July 25, 2016

Expires: This Notice is effective until it is amended, superseded, or rescinded

Issued:

All Regional Directors for
CPD

Cross Reference: 24 CFR Parts 578 and
42 U.S.C. 11381, *et seq.*

Expires:

All CPD Division Directors
Continuums of Care (CoC)
Recipients of the Continuum of Care (CoC)
Program

Subject: Notice on Prioritizing Persons Experiencing Chronic Homelessness and Other Vulnerable Homeless Persons in Permanent Supportive Housing

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I. Purpose

This Notice supersedes Notice CPD-14-012 and provides guidance to Continuums of Care (CoC) and recipients of Continuum of Care (CoC) Program (24 CFR part 578) funding for permanent supportive housing (PSH) regarding the order in which eligible households should be served in **all** CoC Program-funded PSH. This Notice reflects the new definition of chronically homeless as defined in CoC Program interim rule as amended by the Final Rule on Defining “Chronically Homeless” (herein referred to as the Definition of Chronically Homeless final rule) and updates the orders of priority that were established under the prior Notice. CoCs that previously adopted the orders of priority established in Notice CPD-14-012, which this Notice supersedes, and who received points for having done so in the FY2015 CoC Program Competition are encouraged to update their written standards to reflect the updates to the orders of priority as established in this Notice. CoCs that have not previously adopted the orders of priority established in Notice CPD-14-012 are also encouraged to incorporate the orders of priority included in this Notice into their written standards

A. Background

In June 2010, the Obama Administration released *Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness (Opening Doors)*, in which HUD and its federal partners set goals to end Veteran and chronic homelessness by 2015, and end family and youth homelessness by 2020. Although progress has been made there is still a long way to go. In 2015, the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness extended the goal timeline for achieving the goal of ending chronic homelessness nationally from 2015 to 2017. In 2015, there were still 83,170 individuals and 13,105 persons in families with children that were identified as chronically homeless in the United States. To end chronic homelessness, it is critical that CoCs ensure that limited resources awarded through the CoC Program Competition are being used in the most effective manner and that households that are most in need of assistance are being prioritized.

Since 2005, HUD has encouraged CoCs to create new PSH dedicated for use by persons experiencing chronic homelessness (herein referred to as dedicated PSH). As a result, the number of dedicated PSH beds funded through the CoC Program for persons experiencing chronic homelessness has increased from 24,760 in 2007 to 59,329 in 2015. This increase has contributed to a 30.6 percent decrease in the number of chronically homeless persons reported in the Point-in-Time Count between 2007 and 2015. Despite the overall increase in the number of dedicated PSH beds, this only represents 31.6 percent of all CoC Program-funded PSH beds.

To ensure that all PSH beds funded through the CoC Program are used as strategically and effectively as possible, PSH needs to be targeted to serve persons with the highest needs and greatest barriers towards obtaining and maintaining housing on their own—persons experiencing chronic homelessness. HUD’s experience has shown that many communities and recipients of CoC Program-funded PSH continue to serve persons on a “first-come, first-serve” basis or based on tenant selection processes that screen-in those who are most likely to succeed while screening out those with the highest level of need. These approaches to tenant

selection have not been effective in reducing chronic homelessness, despite the increase in the number of PSH beds nationally.

B. Goals of this Notice

The overarching goal of this Notice is to ensure that those individuals and families who have spent the longest time in places not meant for human habitation, in emergency shelters, or in safe havens and who have the most severe service needs within a community are prioritized for PSH. By ensuring that persons with the longest histories of homelessness and most severe service needs are prioritized for PSH, progress towards the Obama Administration's goal of ending chronic homelessness will increase. In order to guide CoCs in ensuring that all CoC Program-funded PSH beds are used most effectively, this Notice revises the orders of priority related to how persons should be selected for PSH as previously established in Notice CPD-14-012 to reflect the changes to the definition of chronically homeless as defined in the Definition of Chronically Homeless final rule. CoCs are strongly encouraged to adopt and incorporate them into the CoC's written standards and coordinated entry process.

HUD seeks to achieve two goals through this Notice:

1. Establish a recommended order of priority for dedicated and prioritized PSH which CoCs are encouraged to adopt in order to ensure that those persons with the longest histories residing in places not meant for human habitation, in emergency shelters, and in safe havens and with the most severe service needs are given first priority.
2. Establish a recommended order of priority for PSH that is not dedicated or prioritized for chronic homelessness in order to ensure that those persons who do not yet meet the definition of chronic homelessness but have the longest histories of homelessness and the most severe service needs, and are therefore the most at risk of becoming chronically homeless, are prioritized.

C. Applicability

The guidance in this Notice is provided to all CoCs and all recipients and subrecipients of CoC Program funds—the latter two groups referred to collectively as recipients of CoC Program-funded PSH. CoCs are strongly encouraged to incorporate the order of priority described in this Notice into their written standards, which CoCs are required to develop per 24 CFR 578.7(a)(9), for their CoC Program-funded PSH. Recipients of CoC Program funds are required to follow the written standards for prioritizing assistance established by the CoC (see 24 CFR 578.23(c)(10)); therefore, if the CoC adopts these recommended orders of priority for their PSH, all recipients of CoC Program-funded PSH will be required to follow them as required by their grant agreement. CoCs that adopted the orders of priority established in Notice CPD-14-012, which this Notice supersedes, and who received points for having done so in the most recent CoC Program Competition are strongly encouraged to update their written standards to reflect the updates to the orders of priority as established in this Notice. Lastly, where a CoC has chosen to not adopt HUD's recommended orders of priority into their written standards, recipients of CoC Program-funded PSH are encouraged to follow these standards for selecting participants into their programs as long as it is not inconsistent with the CoC's written standards.

D. Key Terms

1. **Housing First.** A model of housing assistance that prioritizes rapid placement and stabilization in permanent housing that does not have service participation requirements or preconditions for entry (such as sobriety or a minimum income threshold). HUD encourages all recipients of CoC Program-funded PSH to follow a Housing First approach to the maximum extent practicable.
2. **Chronically Homeless.** The definition of “chronically homeless”, as stated in Definition of Chronically Homeless final rule is:
 - (a) A “homeless individual with a disability,” as defined in section 401(9) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11360(9)), who:
 - i. lives in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter; and
 - ii. Has been homeless and living as described in paragraph (a)(i) continuously for at least 12 months or on at least four separate occasions in the last 3 years, as long as the combined occasions equal at least 12 months and each break in homelessness separating the occasions included at least 7 consecutive nights of not living as described in paragraph (a)(i). Stays in institutional care facilities for fewer than 90 days will not constitute as a break in homelessness, but rather such stays 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 an institutional care facility;
 - (b) An individual who has been residing in an institutional care facility, including a jail, substance abuse or mental health treatment facility, hospital, or other similar facility, for fewer than 90 days and met all of the criteria in paragraph (a) of this definition, before entering the facility;
 - (c) A family with an adult head of household (or if there is no adult in the family, a minor head of household) who meets all of the criteria in paragraph (a) or (b) of this definition (as described in Section I.D.2.(a) of this Notice), including a family whose composition has fluctuated while the head of household has been homeless.
3. **Severity of Service Needs.** This Notice refers to persons who have been identified as having the most severe service needs.
 - (a) For the purposes of this Notice, this means an individual for whom at least one of the following is true:
 - i. History of high utilization of crisis services, which include but are not limited to, emergency rooms, jails, and psychiatric facilities; and/or

- ii. Significant health or behavioral health challenges, substance use disorders, or functional impairments which require a significant level of support in order to maintain permanent housing.
- iii. For youth and victims of domestic violence, high risk of continued trauma or high risk of harm or exposure to very dangerous living situations.
- iv. When applicable CoCs and recipients of CoC Program-funded PSH may use an alternate criteria used by Medicaid departments to identify high-need, high cost beneficiaries.

(b) Severe service needs as defined in paragraphs i.-iv. above should be identified and verified through data-driven methods such as an administrative data match or through the use of a standardized assessment tool and process and should be documented in a program participant's case file. The determination must not be based on a specific diagnosis or disability type, but only on the severity of needs of the individual. The determination cannot be made based on any factors that would result in a violation of any nondiscrimination and equal opportunity requirements, see 24 C.F.R. § 5.105(a).

II. Dedication and Prioritization of Permanent Supportive Housing Strategies to Increase Number of PSH Beds Available for Chronically Homeless Persons

A. Increase the number of CoC Program-funded PSH beds that are dedicated to persons experiencing chronic homelessness.

Dedicated PSH beds are those which are required through the project's grant agreement to only be used to house persons experiencing chronic homelessness unless there are no persons within the CoC that meet that criteria. If there are no persons within the CoC's geographic area that meet the definition of chronically homeless at a point in which a dedicated PSH bed is vacant, the recipient may then follow the order of priority for non-dedicated PSH established in this Notice, if it has been adopted into the CoC's written standards. The bed will continue to be a dedicated bed, however, so when that bed becomes vacant again it must be used to house a chronically homeless person unless there are still no persons who meet that criterion within the CoC's geographic area at that time. These PSH beds are also reported as "CH Beds" on a CoC's Housing Inventory Count (HIC).

B. Prioritize non-dedicated PSH beds for use by persons experiencing chronic homelessness.

Prioritization means implementing an admissions preference for chronically homeless persons for CoC Program-funded PSH beds. During the CoC Program competition project applicants for CoC Program-funded PSH indicate the number of non-dedicated beds that will be prioritized for use by persons experiencing chronic homelessness during the operating year of that grant, when awarded. These projects are then required to prioritize chronically homeless persons in their non-dedicated CoC Program-funded PSH beds for the applicable operating year as the project application is incorporated into the

grant agreement. All recipients of non-dedicated CoC Program-funded PSH are encouraged to change the designation of their PSH to dedicated, however, at a minimum are encouraged to prioritize the chronically homeless as beds become vacant to the maximum extent practicable, until there are no persons within the CoC's geographic area who meet that criteria. Projects located in CoCs where a sub-CoC approach to housing and service delivery has been implemented, which may also be reflected in a sub-CoC coordinated entry process, need only to prioritize assistance within their specified area. For example, if a Balance of State CoC has chosen to divide the CoC into six distinct regions for purposes of planning and housing and service delivery, each region would only be expected to prioritize assistance within its specified geographic area.¹

The number of non-dedicated beds designated as being prioritized for the chronically homeless may be increased at any time during the operating year and may occur without an amendment to the grant agreement.

III. Order of Priority in CoC Program-funded Permanent Supportive Housing

The definition of chronically homeless included in the final rule on “Defining Chronically Homeless”, which was published on December 4, 2015 and went into effect on January 15, 2016, requires an individual or head of household to have a disability and to have been living in a place not meant for human habitation, in an emergency shelter, or in a safe haven for at least 12 months either continuously or cumulatively over a period of at least 4 occasions in the last 3 years. HUD encourages all CoCs adopt into their written standards the following orders of priority for all CoC Program-funded PSH. CoCs that adopted the orders of priority established in Notice CPD-14-012, which this Notice supersedes, and who received points for having done so in the most recent CoC Program Competition are strongly encouraged to update their written standards to reflect the updates to the orders of priority as established in this Notice. Where a CoC has chosen to not incorporate HUD's recommended orders of priority into their written standards, recipients of CoC Program-funded PSH are encouraged to follow these standards for selecting participants into their programs as long as it is not inconsistent with the CoC's written standards.

As a reminder, recipients of CoC Program-funded PSH are required to prioritize otherwise eligible households in a nondiscriminatory manner. Program implementation, including any prioritization policies, must be implemented consistent with the nondiscrimination provisions of the Federal civil rights laws, including, but not limited to the Fair Housing Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, and Title II or III of the Americans with Disabilities Act, as applicable. For example, while it is acceptable to prioritize based on level of need for the type of assistance being offered, prioritizing based on specific disabilities would not be consistent with fair housing requirements or program regulations.

¹ For the State of Louisiana grant originally awarded pursuant to “Department of Housing and Urban Development—Permanent Supportive Housing” in chapter 6 of title III of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008 (Public Law 110–252; 122 Stat. 2351), projects located within the geographic area of a CoC that is not the CoC through which the State is awarded the grant may prioritize assistance within that geographic area instead of within the geographic area of the CoC through which the State is awarded the grant.

A. Prioritizing Chronically Homeless Persons in CoC Program-funded Permanent Supportive Housing Beds Dedicated or Prioritized for Occupancy by Persons Experiencing Chronic Homelessness

1. CoCs are strongly encouraged to revise their written standards to include an order of priority, determined by the CoC, for CoC Program-funded PSH that is dedicated or prioritized for persons experiencing chronic homelessness that is based on the length of time in which an individual or family has resided in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or an emergency shelter and the severity of the individual's or family's service needs. Recipients of CoC Program-funded PSH that is dedicated or prioritized for persons experiencing chronic homelessness would be required to follow that order of priority when selecting participants for housing, in a manner consistent with their current grant agreement.
2. Where there are no chronically homeless individuals and families within the CoC's geographic area, CoCs and recipients of CoC Program-funded PSH are encouraged to follow the order of priority in Section III.B. of this Notice. For projects located in CoC's where a sub-CoC approach to housing and service delivery has been implemented, which may also be reflected in a sub-CoC coordinated entry process, need only to prioritize assistance within their specified sub-CoC area.²
3. Recipients of CoC Program-funded PSH should follow the order of priority above while also considering the goals and any identified target populations served by the project. For example, a CoC Program-funded PSH project that is permitted to target homeless persons with a serious mental illness should follow the order of priority under Section III.A.1. of this Notice to the extent in which persons with serious mental illness meet the criteria. In this example, if there were no persons with a serious mental illness that also met the criteria of chronically homeless within the CoC's geographic area, the recipient should follow the order of priority under Section III.B for persons with a serious mental illness.
4. Recipients must exercise due diligence when conducting outreach and assessment to ensure that chronically homeless individuals and families are prioritized for assistance based on their total length of time homeless and/or the severity of their needs. HUD recognizes that some persons—particularly those living on the streets or in places not meant for human habitation—might require significant engagement and contacts prior to their entering housing and recipients of CoC Program-funded PSH are not required to allow units to remain vacant indefinitely while waiting for an identified chronically homeless person to accept an offer of PSH. CoC Program-funded PSH providers are encouraged to follow a Housing First approach to the maximum extent practicable. Therefore, a person experiencing chronic homelessness should not be forced to refuse an offer of PSH if they do not want to participate in the project's services, nor should a PSH

² For the State of Louisiana grant originally awarded pursuant to “Department of Housing and Urban Development—Permanent Supportive Housing” in chapter 6 of title III of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008 (Public Law 110–252; 122 Stat. 2351), projects located within the geographic area of a CoC that is not the CoC through which the State is awarded the grant may prioritize assistance within that geographic area instead of within the geographic area of the CoC through which the State is awarded the grant.

project have eligibility criteria or preconditions to entry that systematically exclude those with severe service needs. Street outreach providers should continue to make attempts to engage those persons that have been resistant to accepting an offer of PSH and where the CoC has adopted these orders of priority into their written standards, these chronically homeless persons must continue to be prioritized for PSH until they are housed.

B. Prioritizing Chronically Homeless Persons in CoC Program-funded Permanent Supportive Housing Beds Not Dedicated or Not Prioritized for Occupancy by Persons Experiencing Chronic Homelessness

1. CoCs are strongly encouraged to revise their written standards to include the following order of priority for non-dedicated and non-prioritized PSH beds. If adopted into the CoCs written standards, recipients of CoC Program-funded PSH that is not dedicated or prioritized for the chronically homeless would be required to follow this order of priority when selecting participants for housing, in a manner consistent with their current grant agreement.

(a) First Priority—Homeless Individuals and Families with a Disability with Long Periods of Episodic Homelessness and Severe Service Needs

An individual or family that is eligible for CoC Program-funded PSH who has experienced fewer than four occasions where they have been living or residing in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter but where the cumulative time homeless is at least 12 months **and** has been identified as having severe service needs.

(b) Second Priority—Homeless Individuals and Families with a Disability with Severe Service Needs.

An individual or family that is eligible for CoC Program-funded PSH who is residing in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter and has been identified as having severe service needs. The length of time in which households have been homeless should also be considered when prioritizing households that meet this order of priority, but there is not a minimum length of time required.

(c) Third Priority—Homeless Individuals and Families with a Disability Coming from Places Not Meant for Human Habitation, Safe Haven, or Emergency Shelter Without Severe Service Needs.

An individual or family that is eligible for CoC Program-funded PSH who is residing in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or an emergency shelter where the individual or family has not been identified as having severe service needs. The length of time in which households have been homeless should be considered when prioritizing households that meet this order of priority, but there is not a minimum length of time required.

(d) Fourth Priority—Homeless Individuals and Families with a Disability Coming from Transitional Housing.

An individual or family that is eligible for CoC Program-funded PSH who is currently residing in a transitional housing project, where prior to residing in the transitional housing had lived in a place not meant for human habitation, in an emergency shelter, or safe haven. This priority also includes individuals and families residing in transitional housing who were fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking and prior to residing in that transitional housing project even if they did not live in a place not meant for human habitation, an emergency shelter, or a safe haven prior to entry in the transitional housing.

2. Recipients of CoC Program-funded PSH should follow the order of priority above, as adopted by the CoC, while also considering the goals and any identified target populations served by the project. For example, non-dedicated or non-prioritized CoC Program-funded PSH that is permitted to target youth experiencing homelessness should follow the order of priority under Section III.B.1. of this Notice, as adopted by the CoC, to the extent in which youth meet the stated criteria.
3. Recipients must exercise due diligence when conducting outreach and assessment to ensure that persons are prioritized for assistance based on their length of time homeless and the severity of their needs following the order of priority described in this Notice, and as adopted by the CoC. HUD recognizes that some persons—particularly those living on the streets or in places not meant for human habitation—might require significant engagement and contacts prior to their entering housing and recipients are not required to keep units vacant indefinitely while waiting for an identified eligible individual or family to accept an offer of PSH (see [FAQ 1895](#)). Recipients of CoC Program-funded PSH are encouraged to follow a Housing First approach to the maximum extent practicable. Street outreach providers should continue to make attempts to engage those persons that have been resistant to accepting an offer of PSH and where the CoC has adopted these orders of priority into their written standards, these individuals and families must continue to be prioritized until they are housed.

IV. Using Coordinated Entry and a Standardized Assessment Process to Determine Eligibility and Establish a Prioritized Waiting List

A. Coordinated Entry Requirement

Provisions at 24 CFR 578.7(a)(8) requires that each CoC, in consultation with recipients of Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) program funds within the CoC's geographic area, establish and operate either a centralized or coordinated assessment system (referred to in this Notice as coordinated entry or coordinated entry process) that provides an initial, comprehensive assessment of the needs of individuals and families for housing and services. CoCs that adopt the order of priority in Section III of this Notice into the CoC's written standards are strongly encouraged to use a coordinated entry process to ensure that there is a single prioritized list for all CoC Program-funded PSH within the CoC. The [Coordinated Entry Policy Brief](#), provides recommended criteria for a quality coordinated entry process and standardized assessment tool and process. Under no circumstances shall the order of priority be based upon diagnosis or disability type,

but instead on the length of time an individual or family has been experiencing homelessness and the severity of needs of an individual or family.

B. Written Standards for Creation of a Single Prioritized List for PSH

CoCs are also encouraged to include in their policies and procedures governing their coordinated entry system a requirement that all CoC Program-funded PSH accept referrals only through a single prioritized list that is created through the CoCs coordinated entry process, which should also be informed by the CoCs street outreach. Adopting this into the CoC's policies and procedures for coordinated entry would further ensure that CoC Program-funded PSH is being used most effectively, which is one of the goals in this Notice. The single prioritized list should be updated frequently to reflect the most up-to-date and real-time data as possible.

C. Standardized Assessment Tool Requirement

CoCs must utilize a standardized assessment tool, in accordance with 24 CFR 578.3, or process. The [Coordinated Entry Policy Brief](#), provides recommended criteria for a quality coordinated entry process and standardized assessment tool.

D. Nondiscrimination Requirements

CoCs and recipients of CoC Program-funded PSH must continue to comply with the nondiscrimination provisions of Federal civil rights laws, including, but not limited to, the Fair Housing Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, and Titles II or III of the Americans with Disabilities Act, as applicable. See 24 C.F.R. § 5.105(a).

V. Recordkeeping Recommendations for CoCs that have Adopted the Orders of Priority in this Notice

24 CFR 578.103(a)(4) outlines documentation requirements for all recipients of dedicated and non-dedicated CoC Program-funded PSH associated with determining whether or not an individual or family is chronically homeless for the purposes of eligibility. In addition to those requirements, HUD expects that where CoCs have adopted the orders of priority in Section III. of this Notice into their written standards. The CoC, as well as recipients of CoC Program-funded PSH, will maintain evidence of implementing these priorities. Evidence of following these orders of priority may be demonstrated by:

- A. Evidence of Severe Service Needs.** Evidence of severe service needs is that by which the recipient is able to determine the severity of needs as defined in Section I.D.3. of this Notice using data-driven methods such as an administrative data match or through the use of a standardized assessment. The documentation should include any information pertinent to how the determination was made, such as notes associated with case-conferencing decisions.
- B. Evidence that the Recipient is Following the CoC's Written Standards for Prioritizing Assistance.** Recipients must follow the CoC's written standards for prioritizing assistance, as adopted by the CoC. In accordance with the CoC's adoption of

written standards for prioritizing assistance, recipients must in turn document that the CoC's revised written standards have been incorporated into the recipient's intake procedures and that the recipient is following its intake procedures when accepting new program participants into the project.

C. Evidence that there are no Households Meeting Higher Order of Priority within CoC's Geographic Area.

- (a) When dedicated and prioritized PSH is used to serve non-chronically homeless households, the recipient of CoC Program-funded PSH should document how it was determined that there were no chronically homeless households identified for assistance within the CoC's geographic area – or for those CoCs that implement a sub-CoC³ planning and housing and service delivery approach, the smaller defined geographic area within the CoC's geographic area – at the point in which a vacancy became available. This documentation should include evidence of the outreach efforts that had been undertaken to locate eligible chronically homeless households within the defined geographic area and, where chronically homeless households have been identified but have not yet accepted assistance, the documentation should specify the number of persons that are chronically homeless that meet this condition and the attempts that have been made to engage the individual or family. Where a CoC is using a single prioritized list, the recipient of PSH may refer to that list as evidence.
- (b) When non-dedicated and non-prioritized PSH is used to serve an eligible individual or family that meets a lower order of priority, the recipient of CoC Program-funded PSH should document how the determination was made that there were no eligible individuals or families within the CoC's geographic area - or for those CoCs that implement a sub-CoC planning and housing and service delivery approach, the smaller defined geographic area within the CoC's geographic area - that met a higher priority. Where a CoC is using a single prioritized list, the recipient of PSH may refer to that list as evidence that there were no households identified within the CoC's geographic area that meet a higher order of priority.

VI. Questions Regarding this Notice

Questions regarding this notice should be submitted to HUD Exchange Ask A Question (AAQ) Portal at: <https://www.hudexchange.info/get-assistance/my-question/>.

³ For the State of Louisiana grant originally awarded pursuant to “Department of Housing and Urban Development—Permanent Supportive Housing” in chapter 6 of title III of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008 (Public Law 110–252; 122 Stat. 2351), projects located within the geographic area of a CoC that is not the CoC through which the State is awarded the grant may prioritize assistance within that geographic area instead of within the geographic area of the CoC through which the State is awarded the grant.