

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) Transitional Housing (TH) Policies and Procedures

PSH/TH REFERRAL POLICY:

- Referrals are generated by a direct phone call from homeless, area agencies, walk in, or In-House referral. The Family Advocate will contact a referral to determine if an initial appointment is scheduled. Appointments are based on funding availability.

PROCEDURE:

- Check voice mail messages daily to determine those applying for assistance.
- Walk ins who are not enrolled participants will complete a prescreen form to determine their application for assistance.

INTAKE POLICY:

- Family Advocate will complete a CSBG/Prescreen for each client seeking assistance.
- Interviews and Intake appointments will be only be scheduled when there is an opening in the TH or PSH program.
- Staff will utilize HUD's Homeless Definition to determine Literally Homeless.
- Priority for enrollment for HomeNet will be given to chronically homeless participants.
- Staff will use the Housing First Model when enrolling a participant into the HomeNet Program
 - *Housing First is an approach that centers on providing homeless people with housing quickly and then providing services as needed. There is an immediate and primary focus on helping individuals and families to quickly access and sustain permanent housing.*
 - Participants will not be screened based on criminal history, past evictions, employment or mental health.
 - Participant will sign an authorization to obtain a background check. Family Advocate will submit authorization with payment and a background will be provided to Family Advocate. FA will determine a case management plan with participant based on background check. Any safety concerns will be shared with supervisor. Information obtained will not exclude any participant from enrollment into the HomeNet Program.

To be eligible for the TH/PSH program, participants must:

- Participate in an initial intake appointment with a Family Advocate; and
- Provide required documentation:
 - Last 30 days of income
 - Social Security Card and Photo ID
 - Disability Documentation (as needed)
 - Documentation of homeless status
 - Assist Family Advocate in housing search

PROCEDURE:

- Participants are encouraged to complete the intake and enrollment process within 30 days
- All household members over 18 should supply income and sign Intake paperwork
 - Family Advocate will schedule a time to meet with participant to complete an Intake file including:
 - Pre/Screen and CSBG
 - Disclosure Statement
 - Consent and Release of Information
 - Proof of Homelessness
 - HMIS Release
 - Participation Agreement
 - Housing Counseling Form
 - Participant Bill of Rights

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- Participant will provide current documentation:
 - Last 30 days of income or self declaration of income when appropriate
 - Social Security Card and Photo ID
 - Homeless Verification form area agency
- Disability Verification: (PSH Only)
 - Participant will be given a Disability Verification to return to Family Advocate or;
 - Obtain fax or mailing address to send Disability Verification to appropriate licensed professional or Medical Doctor

HOUSING SEARCH AND PLACEMENT:

- Family Advocate will work with area landlords to generate a base of landlords that are interested in working with the HomeNet program. Family Advocates will keep an updated list of contact information for each County.
- Family Advocate will provide participant with a list of potential landlords to contact.
- Family Advocate will explain the Fair Market Rent (FMR) and Utility Allowances for the County to participants and landlords.
 - Inform Participant to contact Family Advocate with any potential landlord options so FMR can be determined.
 - Family Advocate will speak to the potential landlord to explain the HomeNet program and their interest in working with the participant. Family Advocate will give potential landlord an HQS Inspection checklist prior to ordering an inspection on the unit.
 - Determine Fair Market Rent (FMR) using the current rate by County and size of unit, and the current Utility Allowance for the type and size of unit.
- When all eligibility paperwork is obtained and a unit has been identified that meets FMR, Family Advocate should send an inspection request to Housing and Energy.
- When the unit passes inspection, Family Advocate will schedule a time to meet with the participant and the landlord to sign the Memorandum of Understanding, Property Owner Verification and W9. Family Advocate will obtain a copy of the lease for the participant file.
- Family Advocate will inform participant that they will be responsible for all utilities not included in the rent
- Enrollment date is based on the date that the participant signs the lease with the Landlord and has given the Family Advocate all eligibility documentation.
 - Homeless documentation must be current within 30 days of enrollment.

PAYMENT POLICY:

- The purpose of the payment policy is to ensure financial accountability. Initial Payments can take up to 30 days.

PROCEDURE:

- Complete applicable forms listed on the "Intake, Enrollment, Exit" and "Case Management" file coversheets.
- Completed files will be sent to supervisor for approval. Completed files are due to supervisor within 7 days of signing the Intent to Pay.
- A copy of the Intent to Pay will be sent to the Landlord with the payment. If a landlord requests an Intent to Pay, one should only be given after the file has been approved by a supervisor.
- Initial payment will be calculated by the Family Advocate from the lease and property owner verification. A check will be sent directly to the landlord with the first pro-rated month, a full following month and security deposit.
 - *Example:* A participant moves in to a unit and signs the lease and MOU on April 12. A check will be sent to the landlord that includes the pro-rated amount for April, full rent for May and security deposit.

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RENT DETERMINATION POLICY:

- Participants must pay 30% of their gross income toward their rent. Participants that refuse or do not comply with this policy will pay full rent until income is obtained.

PROCEDURE:

- Family Advocate will obtain income verification from each adult member of the household.
- Family Advocate will use a "Rental Calculation" excel worksheet to determine the rent participant will pay based on rent for unit, participant income, family size, disability, FMR and Utility Allowance.
 - *Example:* A participant moves into the unit and is enrolled on April 12. The initial payment included pro-rated amount for April and full rent for May. When calculating June rent, Family Advocate will obtain the full month of April income to determine June rental fee.
- Payment packet is due by the 5th of the month.
 - Paperwork needed: Rental Calculation Worksheet (using income, FMR and Utility Allowance) and supporting income

ONGOING RENTAL PAYMENT POLICY:

- Family Advocate will work with participants to keep updated on the employment status and income of the participants. Caseload Memo (ongoing payments and changes) are due the 5th of each month. If the 5th of the month falls on a weekend, caseload memo is due on the 1st Monday following the 5th of the month.

PROCEDURE:

- Family Advocate will use the "Case Load Memo" to signify any changes in ongoing rental payments.
 - Red: Exit from program
 - Yellow: Change pending
 - Green: New payment or payment change (include payment packet)
- Family Advocate will make a payment packet for any changes to ongoing rental payments.
 - Rental Calculation Worksheet
 - Supporting Income

ANNUAL REVIEW:

- All participants in the TH and PSH programs are required to provide income annually in January. Family Advocates will obtain income verification from each adult member of the household and an update on non-cash benefits the family receives.
 - Documentation needed for Annual review:
 - Rental Calculation
 - Supporting Income
 - HMIS Interim Review (Annual)
 - HMIS Release
 - Consent and Release of Information

CASE MANAGEMENT POLICY:

- Family Advocates will be trained in Motivational Interviewing techniques. *Motivational Interviewing is a method that works on facilitating and engaging intrinsic motivation within the client in order to change behavior. MI is a goal-oriented, client-centered counseling style for eliciting behavior change by helping clients to explore and resolve ambivalence.*

PROCEDURE:

- Initial Home Visit
 - Appropriate time should be scheduled to meet with the participant and complete the HomeNet Initial Home Visit Checklist. The initial home visit should be scheduled within the first month of the participant's enrollment into the HomeNet program.

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- Family Advocate will set up a schedule of home visits with participants. Home Visits should be as consistent as possible and participants should be given notice of home visit schedule and cancellations.
- Participants are encouraged to meet with Family Advocate a minimum of 1 visit per month. The frequency and length of home visits are determined by the needs of each participant.
- Family Advocates will encourage participants to set and complete goals. Goals are not a requirement of the program. Participant should set attainable goals and Family Advocate will follow up with participants at each home visit. Documentation of goal follow up will be completed and available to supervisor for review within 3 business days.
- Family Advocate will document home visit with each participant. Documentation method will be developed with the Family Advocate and supervisor. All documentation will be completed and available to supervisor for review within 3 business days.
- Warning letters will be given to participants with landlord complaints and lease violations. The Family Advocate will develop action steps with the participant in order for them to continue to be eligible for the HomeNet program. Participants will be exited from the program when they receive three warning letters.
- Family Advocate will use participant background check to determine the location of home visits/contact with the participant. Family Advocate may not use background check to determine eligibility for the HomeNet program.
- Any concerns with safety or participant issues will be brought to the attention of a supervisor.

EXIT POLICY :

- FA will determine an exit date with the participant based upon the participant successfully moving toward self-sufficiency and their ability to maintain their housing status.
- FA will also determine if the participant will be exited by termination. This will occur if the participant is absent from the home for more than 30 days, or does not comply with the lease.

PROCEDURE:

- FA will meet with participant prior to exiting the program to develop a plan.
- In the case of a termination, FA will attempt to contact the participant three times before terminating from the program.
- Exit form will be completed and exit status will be entered into HMIS within three days of program exit.

REPORTING POLICY AND PROCEDURE:

- At enrollment, interim reviews and exit, data entry staff will enter participant data into HMIS within three business days of the enrollment or exit.
- FA's will complete MIS reports monthly on all programs to ensure comprehensive services are being provided and program outcomes are being met.
- FA's will report successes, challenges and concerns monthly at staff meetings.
- Annual Progress Reports will be completed at the end of each year.

DENIAL OF SERVICE POLICY AND PROCEDURE:

- Any individual who would like to make a formal complaint or who is denied assistance by WSOS has the right to appeal. Participants will be given the "Appeal for Denial of Assistance" form to complete and submit to the WSOS Offices.
- The WSOS Human Resource Specialist serves in an impartial capacity to review the details of the denial of assistance, including the appellant's file, and the appeal documentation. The Human Resource Specialist will review the appeal within seven business days of the receipt of the appeal and will respond directly to the participant with the decision.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY AND PROCEDURE:

- All applications for a staff member's relative or friend must be completed and approved by the Support Services Coordinator. The definition of a family member is as follows: "mother, father, stepfather, stepmother, husband, wife, brother, sister, children, stepchildren, guardian, ward, grandparents, grandchildren or corresponding relatives of the spouse". Relatives such as aunts, cousins, etc. do not need approval. If the applicant is a relative or friend of the Support Services Coordinator, the Family Development Director will complete and approve the application.
- Payments on behalf of any applicant who has a Landlord that is a relative or friend (as described above) will not be approved. Payments on behalf of any applicant who has a Landlord that is a WSOS employee will not be approved.

- Policy and Procedure updated June 19, 2014