

Ohio Balance of State Continuum of Care Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Updated Guidance Available

Purpose of this Listserv Message

This message informs CoC members of the availability of guidance documents related to COVID-19 preparedness.

Target Audience

All homeless assistance projects in the Ohio BoSCoC.

COVID-19 Planning and Response Guidance for Ohio BoSCoC Providers

The Ohio BoSCoC team has updated the following resources to the Ohio BoSCoC webpage at <https://cohho.org/boscoc/covid19/>

- Ohio BoSCoC COVID-19 Guidance for Homeless System Providers
- FAQ for COVID-19 Preparedness for Ohio BoSCoC Homeless Assistance Providers

The documents identified above were updated with the following information.

Clarification on Home Visits in Scattered-Site Projects

Ohio BoSCoC wanted to clarify that while we continue to strongly encourage all home-based and in-person case management for currently housed clients to be suspended and replaced with phone-based (or other similar) case management, we also strongly encourage RRH and PSH projects, in particular, to continue to intake new clients and move them into housing units as quickly as possible. Serving new RRH and PSH clients is critical to helping reduce concentrations in shelters and other congregate facilities.

Providers should use their judgment and review available guidance to determine how best to adjust operating procedures to help keep clients and staff as safe as possible.

HUD Updates on Unit Inspections

A CoC Program funded PSH provider in the Ohio BoSCoC recently submitted a question to HUD about potential changes to unit inspection requirements for clients of CoC and ESG programs. The provider's questions and HUD's response are below.

Question: "...With the State of Ohio being placed on a Stay-in-Home order I am curious if initial inspections and annual inspections were currently required? The local health department is extremely overworked currently with phone calls, emails and questions from local business owners and citizens."

*HUD Response: "HUD supports reasonable adjustments to operating procedures based on the enhanced risks to households experiencing homelessness. These members of the community are at enhanced risk for infection and more likely to have severe symptoms. Simple adjustments that support the community to reduce risks of infection **may** be implemented."*

*HUD is working on additional guidance regarding requirements for inspections. Please stay tuned for guidance and ensure you have access to up-to-date information from HUD via the **ESG and CoC listservs**. In the meantime, the health and safety of program participants, staff, and the public are the priority. Please follow the guidance of your local public health authorities, even if it means you are postponing inspections."*

CoC staff encourage RRH, TH, and PSH projects to coordinate with their local public health offices to determine if they recommend postponing unit inspections.

ODSA Guidance on Paying for Hotels/Motels

ODSA has communicated that agencies receiving emergency shelter grants through HCRP may use their **current** grant funds to provide temporary housing in motels when there is not space available in their shelter. Normally, assistance should continue just until there is room available at the shelter. Under current circumstances, however, clients should be able to stay in the motel indefinitely if they need to be isolated or quarantined, are a member of a medically vulnerable/older population, or if the use of the motel is meant to assist in deconcentrating the shelter space to provide sufficient social distancing.

Please note, HCRP-HP and RRH resources cannot be used for hotel/motel stays as outlined above.

All guidance related to COVID-19 preparedness can be found at <https://cohhio.org/boscoc/covid19/>.

Questions can be directed to Erica Mulryan, COHHIO, at ericamulryan@cohhio.org.