



**San Bernardino County  
Homeless Partnership  
Rapid Re-Housing  
Program Standards, Practices &  
Model Guidelines**

Interagency Council on Homelessness  
Ad Hoc Committee on Rapid Re-Housing

Adopted – January 23, 2019

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF RAPID RE-HOUSING

*Rapid Re-Housing: Creating Programs That Work; National Alliance to End Homelessness. July 2009*

The San Bernardino County Homeless Partnership recognizes and seeks to embody the following nationally recognized basic principles in the implementation of Rapid Re-Housing initiatives within our community:

- People move directly from homelessness to housing. There are no required intermediate programs that delay their move to housing.
- The key to successful re-housing is understanding the individual's barriers to getting and keeping housing—then finding ways to eliminate or compensate for those barriers.
- Rapid Re-Housing provides the minimal amount of assistance—amount and length—needed to obtain and retain housing.
- Households are empowered to make their own choices and to respond to the consequences of those decisions. Rapid Re-Housing does not guarantee risk-free housing and some households will fail. But services are voluntary. Choices are “consumer” driven.
- The focus is housing; household problems that are not directly related to housing are addressed only if and when the client chooses.
- This focus on housing does not mean that programs offering time-limited rental assistance have no expectations of the household. Effort or progress towards increasing income enough to remain housed without the rental assistance or obtaining a long-term subsidy is a reasonable program requirement.
- Mainstream resources are a critical part of stability for everyone living in a community. Rapid Re-Housing helps households connect to the supportive, community-based resources they will use long after Rapid Re-Housing services are ended.
- Landlords are a Rapid Re-Housing program's most valued resource. If the Rapid Re-Housing program cannot meet the reasonable expectations of landlords, many clients will not be re-housed. Programs that adopt an adversarial attitude towards landlords are much less likely to succeed.
- The most appropriate housing situation may involve moving in with family members who can provide financial or other support or other alternative options.

In summary, Rapid Re-Housing is a successful community strategy for ending homelessness. The intent is to minimize the length of time an individual or family remains in the limbo of homelessness and to help the household quickly re-establish stability. In the safety and predictability of permanent housing, they are encouraged to choose how, when and where they will address other life problems or goals using mainstream resources. Rapid Re-Housing resolves the crisis of homelessness; the rest is up to the individual or family—and their community support system

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## **I. Rapid Re-Housing: A System wide Response to Solving Homelessness in San Bernardino County**

Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) is a time-limited intervention designed to help individuals and families quickly exit homelessness, return to housing in the community, and not become homeless again in the near term. The three core components of rapid re-housing are housing identification, move-in and rent assistance, and RRH case management and services.

Rapid Re-Housing is a primary solution for ending homelessness. It has been demonstrated to be effective in getting people experiencing homelessness into permanent housing and keeping them there. By connecting people with a home, they are in a better position to address other challenges that may have led to their homelessness, such as obtaining employment or addressing behavioral health issues.

Rapid re-housing is a Housing First intervention meaning that the primary focus is moving households into housing quickly without preconditions. As such, the primary focus of assessments and assistance should be on resolving the current housing crisis by focusing on the circumstances of the crisis, the household's barriers to obtaining and maintaining housing, and the reasons they are unable to solve their housing crisis without the program's help.

Rapid re-housing places a priority on moving a family or individual experiencing homelessness into permanent housing as quickly as possible, ideally within 30 days of a client becoming homeless and entering a program. Although the duration of financial assistance may vary, many programs find that, on average, four to six months of financial assistance is sufficient to stably re-house a participating household.

Rapid Re-Housing is geared to resolve the crisis of homelessness by minimizing the length of time an individual or family remains in the limbo of homelessness and helping the household quickly re-establish housing stability. The household may continue to be extremely low-income and severely rent-burdened and yet be able to pay the rent and follow the terms of the lease. While they have not yet achieved all their life goals or solved all their problems, they have successfully exited from homelessness and the housing crisis is over.

Rapid re-housing can help to make the homelessness system work more efficiently. As such, communities should maximize the number of households they can serve by aligning RRH programs and resources with the local homeless assistance system's coordinated entry and outreach efforts and by not screening out households. The misperception that rapid re-housing is a resource that sets people up to fail can be challenged by the research and by community reports of low returns to homelessness.

The benefits of the model extend beyond the direct impact on the individual household itself. They improve the effectiveness of the entire community's homeless system by increasing the number of people served and reducing the demand for shelter and other temporary solutions.

## A. Purpose of this Document

This “living document” is intended to serve as a guide for service providers, system leaders, local funders and other stakeholder partners involved in providing and supporting Rapid Re-Housing services and activities in San Bernardino County through the San Bernardino County Homeless Partnership (SBCHP).

As our local homeless response system continues to evolve and strengthen its ability to make homelessness rare, brief, and one-time, there is an increased need for system-wide alignment around common goals and outcomes, program models and activities, and performance standards and expectations.

The purpose of these guidelines are to define a systemic approach to implementing rapid re-housing interventions and to promote a unified understanding among our local service providers of the core elements and standardized practices for delivering rapid re-housing services, ultimately helping RRH programs and the SBC CoC system as a whole serve a greater number of households successfully.

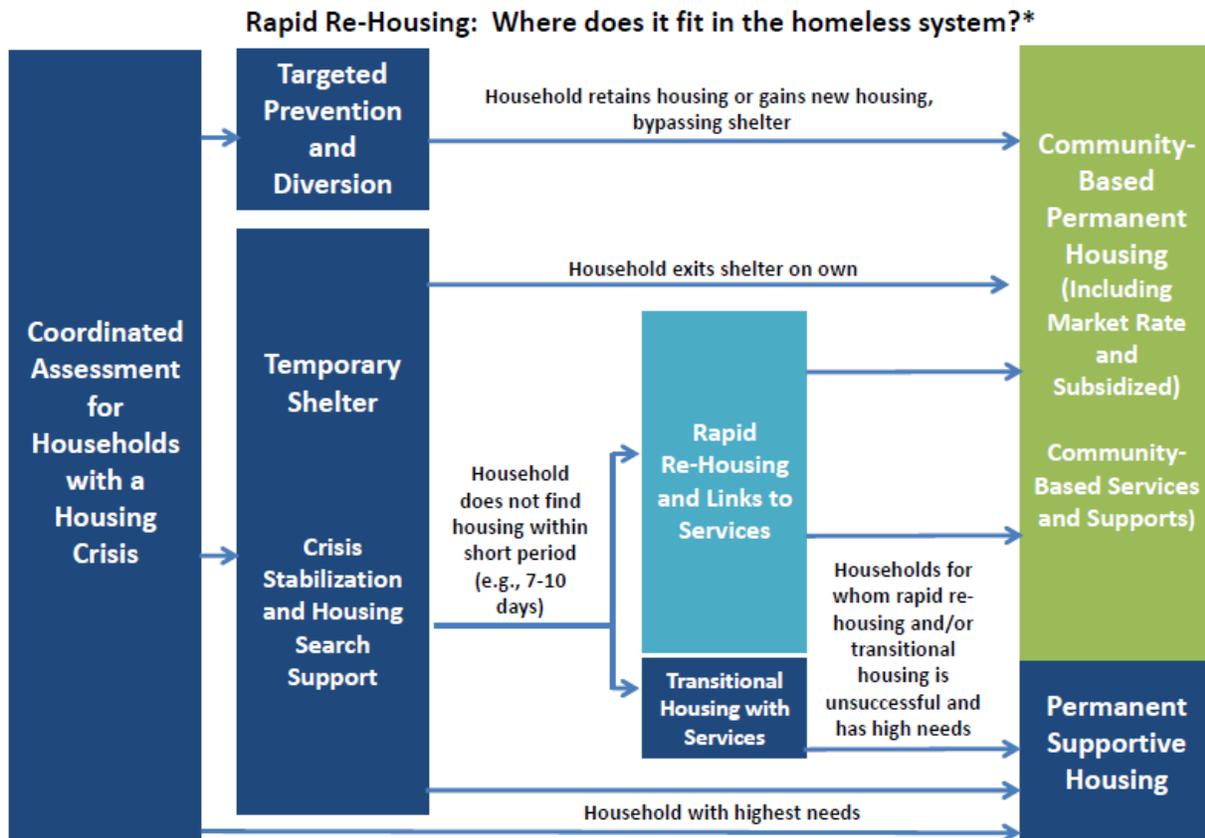
The standards and practices outlined in this document are based on what is currently considered best and promising practice by the National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH), the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs (VA), the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH), and a variety of federal technical assistance experts, and nationally recognized, high-performing rapid re-housing providers. Primary sources of the information used in developing these guidelines include the *NAEH Rapid Re-Housing Toolkit and RRH Performance Benchmarks and Program Standards*, the *Seattle-King County Rapid Re-Housing Model Guidelines*, the *SBC CES Housing Search and Stabilization Guidelines* as well as contributions from national Technical Assistance advisor Katharine Gale.

*RRH programs participating in the SBCHP coordinated system of homeless services will be expected to adhere to the RRH model outlined in this document.* Fidelity to this model will help ensure that all clients enrolled in RRH services have similar experiences and opportunities to attain housing regardless of which service provider they work with. Compliance with this model will also facilitate system-wide evaluation and comparisons across programs.

## B. Role of Rapid Re-Housing within the Homeless Services System

Rapid re-housing has become an increasingly important tool in communities’ responses to homelessness. The model has shown success on the individual level – helping households exit and not return to homelessness - and has helped communities across the country decrease the number of people experiencing homelessness and amount of time households spend homeless.

Rapid re-housing has an important role in the homeless services system including reducing the amount of time a household experiences homelessness by focusing on quickly resolving their homeless experience; increasing access to permanent housing for a greater number of households; and alleviating the pressure on more supportive services provided for those who would otherwise be unable to maintain permanent housing.



\* Framework adapted Family Connection: Building Systems to End Family Homelessness. Available at: [https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset\\_library/Final\\_Family\\_Connections.pdf](https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset_library/Final_Family_Connections.pdf)

Beyond ending homelessness for individual households, rapid re-housing plays a key role in a system-wide response to ending homelessness overall. To do so effectively and efficiently, RRH programs must coordinate with the broader homeless system, not screen out large portions of the homeless population, and have a commitment to a Housing First approach.

### ***Principles of System-wide Rapid Re-housing***

- Rapid re-housing is not a “program”; it is a critical system-wide intervention to end homelessness. The purpose of the whole system is to RE-HOUSE people RAPIDLY.
- In order to identify, engage, and assist as many households experiencing homelessness as possible, RRH programs should coordinate and fully participate with the broader homeless assistance system.
- Rapid re-housing is an intervention designed for and flexible enough to serve anyone not able to exit homelessness on their own.
- Rapid re-housing programs should not attempt to screen out households based on a score on an assessment tool or criteria that are assumed, but not shown, to predict successful outcomes, such as a minimum income threshold, employment, absence of a criminal history, evidence of “motivation,” etc.
- Rapid re-housing participants should have all the rights and responsibilities of typical tenants and should sign a standard lease agreement.

## C. Who Are the Participants and Stakeholders?

### 1. Families and Individuals Experiencing or at Imminent Risk of Homelessness

**Rapid Re-Housing can be effective for a wide range of people who experience homelessness.** No research has yet been able to identify or predict characteristics that are associated with success or failure in an RRH program. Thus, RRH programs should cast a wide net and target most individuals and families experiencing homelessness in our community.

While originally aimed primarily at people experiencing homelessness due to short-term financial crises, programs across the country have begun to assist individuals and families who are traditionally perceived as more difficult to serve. This includes people with limited or no income, survivors of domestic violence, and those with substance abuse issues.

Thus, communities should seek to have sufficient resources to offer RRH to anyone who is homeless and cannot otherwise exit homelessness quickly, either on their own or through some other form of permanent housing assistance such as permanent supportive housing.

### 2. Rapid Re-Housing Service Providers

The SBCHP shall seek to engage a wide range of public and private entities in a systemic, coordinated approach to delivering the core component services and resources essential to facilitating rapid re-housing success for households experiencing or at risk of becoming homeless in San Bernardino County.

All public and private agencies administering and/or receiving federal, state or local government funding to provide rapid re-housing service interventions shall participate in the collaborative structure facilitated through the SBC CoC Coordinated Entry System (CES). This includes, but is not limited to all RRH programs funded through the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), as well as other government funded RRH initiatives such as the VA SSVF, and the state funded CalWORKS Housing Support Program (HSP) and Family Stabilization Program (FSP), etc.

### 3. Integrated Mainstream Service Partners

Strong connection to internal and external system partners, services, and mainstream agency benefits and networks is a central component of programs, practices and policies aimed at preventing and ending homelessness through rapid re-housing interventions.

Establishing partnerships with a range of public systems and community-based providers is vital to enhancing systemic rapid re-housing policy and implementation to ensure that all participants have streamlined access to employment, training, and supportive services that can help them succeed with time-limited RRH interventions and promote longer term housing stability.

Doing so requires that diverse stakeholders engage in cross-system collaboration, coordination and leveraging of existing resources and work together to share capacity, knowledge, and resources to help ensure that there are clear pathways for RRH participants to achieve quality employment and economic opportunity and longer term housing stability.

In order to establish clear pathways to economic opportunity, quality employment, and essential supportive services, the SBCHP shall seek to establish collaborative partnership agreements with a variety of public and private entities to facilitate systemic linkage and streamlined access to mainstream resources and community-based services critical to facilitating longer-term housing stability for RRH participating households. These shall include but are not limited to:

- **SB County Workforce Development Department (WDD)** – establish cross system collaboration and coordination between the SBC CoC and the Workforce Development Department to facilitate systemic, streamlined access for RRH participants to “Work First Strategies” and other employment development initiatives available through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA)
- **SB County Transitional Assistance Department (TAD)** – formalize cross system collaboration and coordination on housing stabilization case management planning to facilitate systemic linkage between RRH program providers and TAD self-sufficiency support programs and resources.
- **Housing Authority of the County of San Bernardino (HACSB)** – integrate rapid re-housing and progressive engagement principles and practices into HACSB Moving-to-Work initiatives including the Term-Limited and Streamlined Lease Assistance programs and No Child Left Unsheltered as well as seek opportunities to create set-aside “backstop vouchers” for RRH participating households who demonstrate a clear need for longer-term housing support.

## CORE COMPONENTS OF RAPID RE-HOUSING

The core components for rapid re-housing were developed by the National Alliance to End Homelessness in collaboration with, and endorsed by, the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH), the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

While a household that is rapidly rehoused is not required to utilize all three core components, in order to meet the national program standards, rapid re-housing programs must offer program participants all three core components: housing identification, move-in and rent assistance, and rapid re-housing case management and services. The core components can be provided by a single agency or in partnership with other agencies and still meet these program standards.



Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) ends homelessness for families and individuals.

### **FIND** LANDLORDS & APARTMENTS

Help people quickly find housing within one month or less.

### **HELP PAY** FOR HOUSING

Help people pay for housing short term; longer-term help an option.

### **CONNECT** TO JOBS & SERVICES

Help access services so people can stay in housing.

The **Core Components** of Rapid Re-Housing help people **find** housing fast, help **pay** for housing, and **connect** to jobs and services.

### 1. Housing Identification

Housing Identification is the first core component of rapid re-housing, the goal of which is to find housing for program participants quickly. Activities under this core component include recruiting landlords with units in the communities and neighborhoods where program participants want to live and negotiating with landlords to help program participants to access housing.

#### *Principles of Housing Identification*

- *Within the limits of the participant's income, a rapid re-housing program should have the ability to help households access units that are desirable and sustainable—those that are in neighborhoods where they want to live in, that have access to transportation, are close to employment, and that are safe.*
- *Housing identification efforts should be designed and implemented to actively recruit and retain landlords and housing managers willing to rent to program participants who may otherwise fail to pass typical tenant screening criteria.*

- *Critical to the formation of landlord-program relationship is the recognition of the landlord as a vital partner. The RRH provider must be responsive to landlords to preserve and develop those partnerships for the purposes of future housing placements.*

## **2. Rent and Move-In Assistance**

Rent and Move-In Assistance is the second core component of rapid re-housing, the goal of which is to provide short-term help to households so they can pay for housing. Activities under this core component include paying for security deposits, move-in expenses, rent, and utilities.

### ***Principles of Rent and Move-in Assistance***

- *Rent and move-in assistance should be flexible and tailored to the varying and changing needs of a household while providing the assistance necessary for households to move immediately out of homelessness and to stabilize in permanent housing.*
- *A rapid re-housing program should make efforts to maximize the number of households it is able to serve by providing households with the financial assistance in a progressive manner, providing only the assistance necessary to stabilize in permanent housing.*

## **3. Rapid Re-housing Case Management and Services**

Rapid re-housing case management and services is the third core component of rapid re-housing. The goals of rapid re-housing case management is to help participants obtain and move into permanent housing, support participants to stabilize in housing, and connect them to community and mainstream services and supports if needed.

### ***Principles of Case Management and Services***

- *Rapid re-housing case management should be client-driven. Case managers should actively engage participants in voluntary case management and service participation by creating an environment in which the participant is driving the case planning and goal-setting based on what they want from the program and services, rather than on what the case manager decides they need to do to be successful.*
- *Rapid re-housing case management should be flexible in intensity—offering only essential assistance until or unless the participant demonstrates the need for or requests additional help. The intensity and duration of case management is based on the needs of individual households and may lessen or increase over time.*
- *Rapid re-housing case management uses a strengths-based approach to empower clients. Case managers identify the inherent strengths of a person or family instead of diagnoses or deficits, then build on those strengths to empower the household to succeed.*
- *Rapid re-housing program case management reflects the short-term nature of the rapid rehousing assistance. It focuses on housing retention and helping a household build a support network outside of the program. It connects the participant with community resources and service options, such as legal services, health care, vocational assistance, transportation, child care, and other forms of assistance, that continue beyond participation in the rapid re-housing program.*

## II. Rapid Re-housing Program Model in San Bernardino County

Rapid re-housing is an intervention designed to help households quickly exit homelessness, return to housing in the community, and not become homeless again in the near term.

The SBCHP encourages all RRH providers to deliver rapid re-housing service interventions following the *progressive engagement model* (see page 10). *Progressive engagement* is a system strategy to provide most or all people with just enough RRH assistance at system entry to help them exit from homelessness while reserving more intensive resources for people who are most in need of longer-term supports. The level of case management and financial assistance provided to all RRH participating households in the SBC CoC should be based on progressive engagement with the minimum amount of services provided before increasing support to meet the household's needs.

Rapid Re-Housing programs can vary in length of time, and may be limited to a single payment for deposit and first month's rent or as long as 18-24 months of subsidy and support. While some RRH programs may provide up to 24 months of rental assistance, the SBC CoC system-wide goal shall be for households participating in RRH programs to achieve housing stability within a 12-month timeframe.

**The SBCHP shall seek to engage a broad range of public and private funding and service partners** in order to have sufficient resources to offer rapid re-housing service interventions to anyone who is homeless and cannot otherwise exit homelessness quickly, either on their own or through some other form of longer-term rent subsidy or permanent housing assistance programs. RRH funding and service partners shall be plugged in to scaled levels of engagement coordinated through the SBC Coordinated Entry System.

Levels of RRH Assistance in the SBC CoC	
<b>Level 1</b>	Housing identification and/or one-time assistance with security deposit and/or move-in costs
<b>Level 2</b>	Housing identification, short-term rental subsidy for 1–3 months, service navigation and direct connections
<b>Level 3</b>	Housing identification, medium-term rental subsidy for up to 12 months, housing stabilization case management
<b>Level 4</b>	Housing identification, longer-term tenant-based or project-based rental subsidy with wrap around supportive services

In some cases, households with more severe barriers to housing may require Critical Time Interventions or other more service-intense resources instead of progressive engagement. RRH participating households determined to require more than 12 months of rental assistance, (at initial assessment or at any point during RRH program participation) shall be prioritized within the CES for longer term options, such as housing voucher programs and subsidized housing units, and connected to the appropriate options as they become available.

## A. Accessing Rapid Re-housing Services

All referrals for rapid re-housing services in San Bernardino County will flow through the SBCHP Coordinated Entry System (CES).

Families and individuals experiencing or at imminent risk of becoming homeless shall complete a CES screening and assessment process where they will be scored and prioritized for available housing services and resources. Households receiving an assessment score prioritizing them for Rapid Re-housing services will be matched to the available services and resources most appropriate to addressing their immediate housing need.

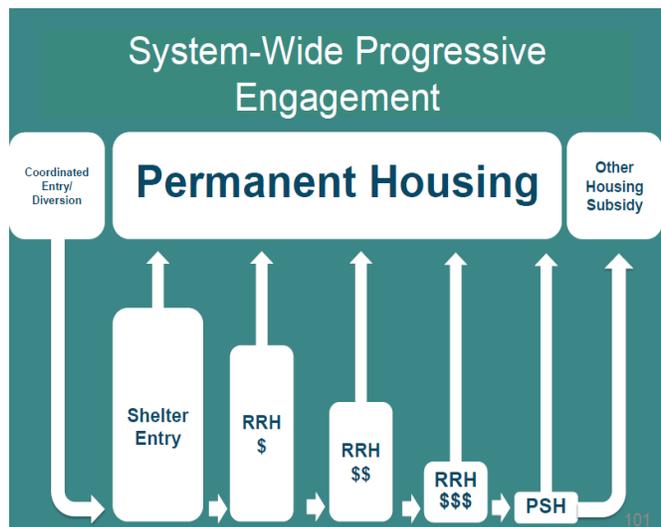
Once assigned by the CES to a RRH program, the receiving program shall conduct their standard eligibility and enrollment process, including documentation of homeless status, and immediately begin case management services. Verification of homelessness is needed prior to receiving financial assistance.

The RRH provider shall also complete the Universal Housing Needs and Tenancy Barriers Assessment in order to initiate the coordinated housing search process. Verification of homelessness and the Universal Housing Needs and Tenancy Barriers Assessment must be uploaded to the participant household's HMIS file to complete the RRH enrollment process.

- ✓ Attachment A. Documenting Homeless Status
- ✓ Attachment B. Universal Housing Needs and Tenancy Barrier Assessment

In some cases, households identified as eligible and prioritized for permanent supportive housing (PSH) shall be offered a PSH option, if available, but may be referred to a rapid re-housing intervention as an initial step toward addressing their immediate housing crisis and establishing housing stability if a PSH option is not available. Under these circumstances, the household eligibility and prioritization for PSH shall be fully documented prior to assignment to a RRH program and they shall retain their eligibility for PSH options should it become necessary and a slot becomes available.

Using a progressive engagement approach, RRH supports are increased only when there is evidence that the program participant is going to need greater assistance on any particular element of their life or housing stability. While intensity can increase, it should also decrease as the person begins to exercise greater independence and personal advocacy.



## THE PROGRESSIVE ENGAGEMENT APPROACH TO RAPID RE-HOUSING

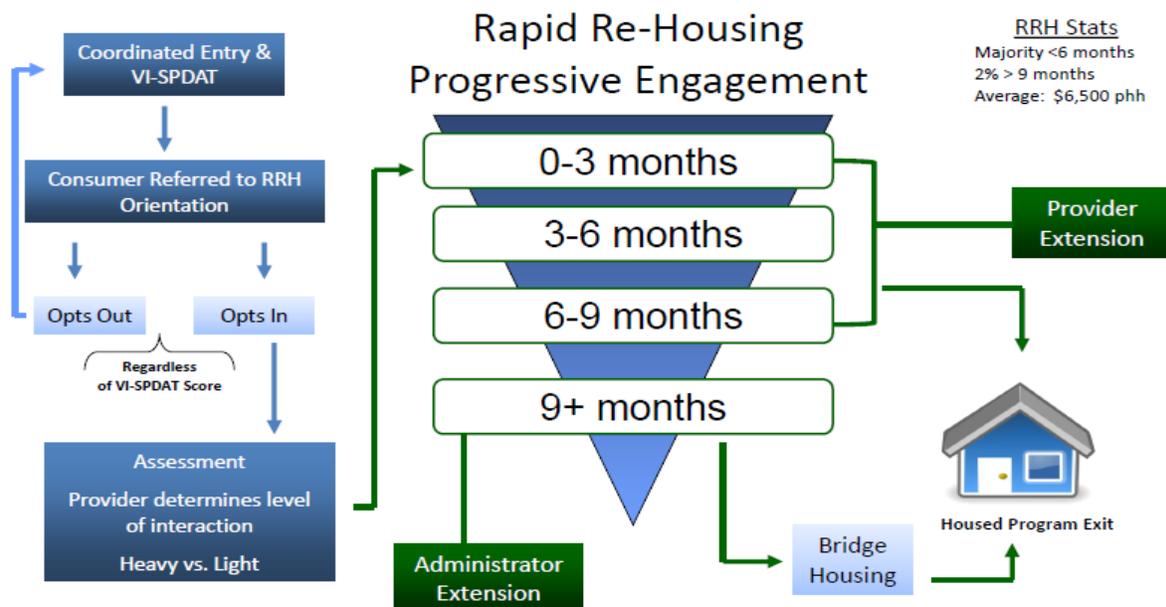
**Progressive Engagement** is an approach to helping households end their homelessness as rapidly as possible, despite barriers, with minimal financial and support resources. More supports are offered to those households who struggle to stabilize and cannot maintain their housing without assistance.

**Progressive Engagement** is a nationally recognized best practice in addressing homelessness, which provides customized levels of assistance to families and preserves the most expensive interventions for households with the most severe barriers to housing success. Progressive Engagement refers to a strategy of starting with a small amount of assistance for a large group of people and then adding more assistance as needed to enable service delivery systems to effectively target limited resources.

In this approach, participants are initially offered “light-touch” assistance, including help creating a reasonable housing placement/stabilization plan, housing information and search assistance, and limited financial assistance for arrears, first month’s rent, and/or security deposit. Programs using Progressive Engagement regularly re-assess housing barriers and seek to close cases as soon as housing retention barriers are resolved.

Assistance is provided on an “as-needed basis” to keep a participant housed and, within funding constraints, programs offer more intensive support, additional rental assistance, or step-up referrals and help to access community-based assistance. This is a paradigm shift to providing services/case management to households experiencing homelessness and therefore, staff may need to be re-trained to be able to successfully make this change.

### Example – Sacramento, CA



Literally homeless at program entry. Re-assessed every three months, and if household income is 30% of Area Median Income or higher, the household is exited from the program.

## **B. Housing Identification and Placement**

The goal of housing identification is to quickly locate affordable housing options for the household experiencing homelessness based on their unique needs, preferences and financial resources. Through the CES, the SBCHP has established a twofold coordinated housing identification and placement component which separates the landlord engagement and case management functions of the housing search process.

### **1. Housing Identification - Landlord Recruitment & Retention**

The SBCHP shall designate a lead “housing search” agency responsible for identifying and recruiting landlords throughout the county and encourage them to rent to households dealing with homelessness and receiving assistance from CES participating programs. Responsibilities include:

- Recruit and maintain relationships with rental property owners and operators and establish a centralized countywide inventory of landlord partners and properties
- Coordinate with RRH providers to assist participant households to identify and select among a variety of housing options.
- Help facilitate the rental application process and negotiate applicant screening concessions and rental lease terms with prospective landlords.
- Administer landlord incentives and facilitate landlord-tenant dispute resolution and/or loss mitigation interventions as appropriate.

One of the primary activities under housing identification is the recruitment of landlords to make the process of housing participants as rapid as possible. Constant landlord recruitment and support is essential to program participants having rapid access to permanent housing from the moment they enter the program.

The more partnerships developed with landlords, the more opportunities RRH program participants have to rapidly obtain permanent housing. Over time, as landlords experience the benefits of a partnership with the SBCHP programs, they may give preference to program participants or even be willing to occasionally consider some reduction in rent or negotiate other terms of the lease that would help program participants obtain and sustain the unit.

The designated lead agency shall create and maintain a centralized, shared database of all property owners and operators that agree to rent to SBCHP program participants. This countywide inventory of landlord partners shall be contributed to and available for use by all RRH provider partners to help match households to appropriate housing.

## 2. Housing Search and Placement

RRH provider partners shall coordinate with the designated housing search agency to assist participants to locate and secure suitable, appropriate housing that meets the household's unique needs, preferences, barriers and financial resources. Responsibilities include:

- Assess participants housing needs and address immediate barriers to obtaining stable housing (such as credit history, legal documents, transportation challenges, etc.)
- Work with participants to develop and pursue their housing search strategy including identifying rental options, arrange viewing of available units, help with transportation issues, assistance with submitting applications and signing lease agreements.
- Provide tenant counseling including education on talking with landlords, understanding rental applications and lease agreements, securing utilities and understanding tenant right and responsibilities and “good neighbor” practices.
- Support households with moving arrangements and securing household furnishings and goods as needed.

The choice of a place to call home is very subjective and personal – where to live, with whom, the size of the apartment, the rent – and should be driven by the participant. RRH program staff can help with these decisions by helping participants consider their available and appropriate housing options. When possible, it is recommended to provide at least two to three housing options to a participant.

RRH program staff can use the following Housing Search Checklist as a guide when helping match participants to housing options:

<i>HOUSING SEARCH CHECKLIST</i>		EXAMPLE
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>How much Income Is available for rent?</b> <i>(This may require projecting income and developing a tentative monthly budget. Unless the housing is subsidized or shared, rent will almost certainly be more than 50 percent of income.)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Are there safety concerns that limit housing options?</b> <i>(For example, the search may need to avoid certain neighborhoods or be limited to buildings with secure entry. This is particularly important for domestic violence survivors and people who are trying to escape past associations with illegal activities.)</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Who will live in the housing?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Should housing be close to specific supports including family, friends, faith community, child care, children's current school district, employment, or healthcare provider?</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>What is the minimum number of bedrooms needed?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>What means of transportation will the participant be using and how does this affect the housing search?</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Should the housing allow pets?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Does the housing need to be close to a certain school or job site?</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Are there any local options for subsidized housing?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Is shared housing an option?</b>	

Most landlords will want critical background information on an applicant for housing. Accordingly, RRH programs must have information on a participant's Tenant Screening Barriers before beginning the housing search. Information about Tenant Screening Barriers enables the program to make the best housing match with the appropriate landlord or to know when the program may have to offer additional incentives (such as a double security deposit) to overcome landlord resistance, or to take other steps to address or remediate the barriers.

### **3. Housing Inspections**

When a family or individual identifies a rental housing option, case managers must conduct a housing inspection prior to move-in and financial assistance is provided. Refer to the program funding requirements to determine whether a Housing Quality Standards or Housing Habitability Standards form should be used.

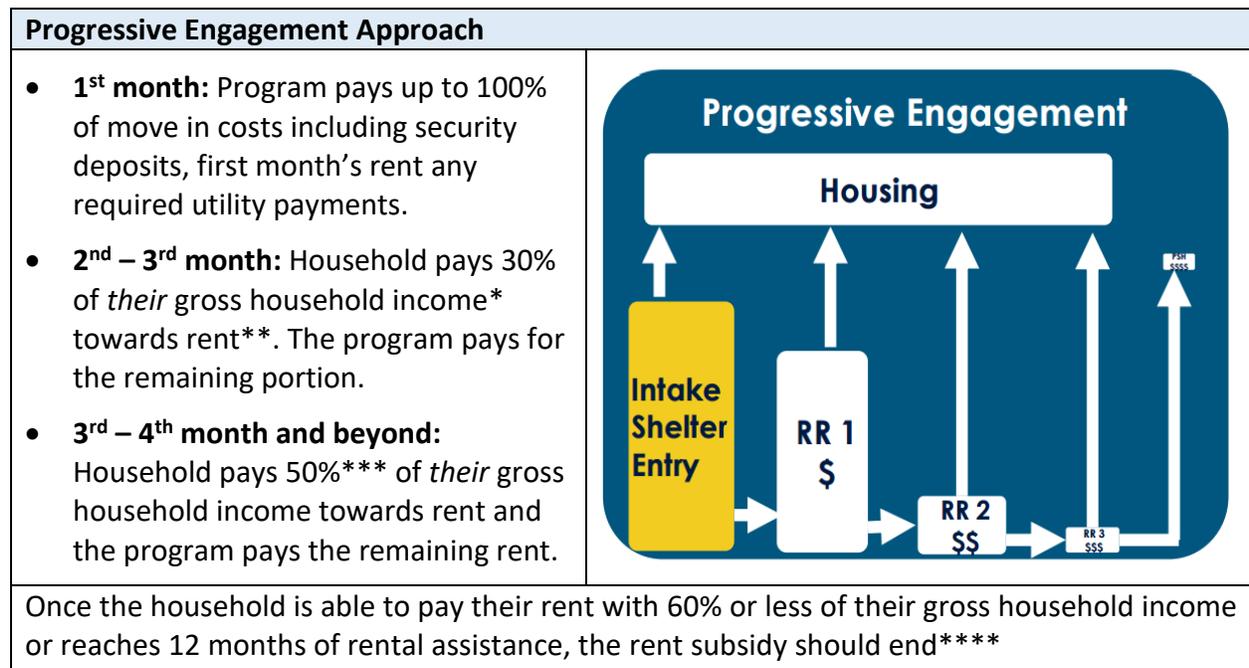
## C. Rent and Move-in Assistance

The goal of RRH financial assistance is to provide short-term support to households so they can quickly obtain housing. Allowable financial assistance may include paying for security deposits, move-in expenses, rental arrears, rent, and utilities.

Financial assistance should be based on the progressive engagement principle of offering the minimum amount of assistance necessary for households to move out of homelessness and stabilize in permanent housing. The role of the case manager is to prepare households for the end of the financial assistance by leveraging resources or working with them to increase household income. Programs should begin by assuming that households, even those with zero income or other barriers, will succeed with a minimal subsidy and support rather than a long subsidy, and extend services and support if/when necessary. (See section D. 2)

### 1. Rental Financial Assistance Calculation

The SBCHP encourages all RRH program providers to apply a progressive engagement approach to determine the rent subsidy amount and household contribution for each participating household using the following example as a guideline.



*\*For households entering the program with \$0 income, contributions toward rent should begin as soon as possible after income has been secured.*

*\*\* "Rent" includes rent and the cost of utilities (if utilities are not included in the rent, a utility allowance schedule should be used for calculating the rental subsidy).*

*\*\*\* Based on local housing affordability data showing that the majority of low-income households in the region currently pay more than 50% of household income toward rent.*

*\*\*\*\*Refer to Section II. C. 4. Rental Assistance over 12 months*

## 2. Communication with Landlords

To help landlord partners understand the program and to set appropriate expectations, RRH providers should provide a letter or document to the landlord outlining the details of their program. To help facilitate landlord-tenant-provider communications all parties should sign a Landlord-Tenant-Case Manager Communications Agreement.

Critical to the formation of the landlord-program relationship is the recognition of the landlord as a vital partner. The RRH provider must be responsive to landlords to preserve and develop those partnerships for the purposes of future housing placements. Promoting good landlord relations include:

- Ensuring the timely provision of all move-in costs and monthly rent payments.
  - Ensuring that participants understand their tenant rights and responsibilities, pay their portion of the rent directly to the landlord on-time each month, and comply with all other provisions of their rental agreement and good tenant standards.
  - Provide property owner/manager with a minimum of 30 days written notice of any changes in the amount and/or the on-going provision of tenant-based rental assistance.
  - Provide timely response to any client stabilization issues and/or landlord-tenant concerns that may arise during the 12-months following initial housing placement.
- ✓ Attachment C. Landlord-Tenant-Case Management Communication Agreement

## 3. Assessment and Re-Assessment of Housing Needs

Each participating household's service needs must be re-assessed regularly to establish continued eligibility for and amount of continued financial assistance. Re-assessment must be completed at least every three months.

If a household is not housed within 60 days of program enrollment, the case manager and household shall review the household's housing stability plan and address any barriers to achieving the goals. If progress is not occurring, the case manager should initiate a conversation around expectations and limitations of the RRH program.

Once housed, the re-assessment must include at least the following components:

- length of rental financial assistance period to date;
- documentation of household income as a percentage of Area Median Income (AMI);
- percent of income being paid toward rent ratio;
- progress on housing stability and income goals;
- any recent changes in circumstance that will impact income or ability to work; and
- any gaps in resources or support networks inhibiting the household's ability to retain housing while paying 60% of income towards rent without financial assistance.

#### 4. Rental Assistance over 12 Months

While some RRH programs may provide up to 24 months of rental assistance, the system-wide goal shall be for households participating in RRH programs to achieve housing stability within a 12 month timeframe.

If a determination is made that a participating household may require rental financial assistance exceeding 12 months, the RRH provider shall submit a request to the CES to conduct a system-level re-evaluation of the participant housing status and vulnerability to determine whether a longer term subsidy and/or more intensive services will be necessary for the household to achieve housing stability and the best options available to continue serving the household. Options may include a subsidized housing unit or tenant-based voucher or a continuation of RRH rental assistance with the same or a different RRH provider if allowed by the funding source.

#### 5. Ending Financial Assistance

Providers may cease providing financial assistance for the following reasons:

- the household is no longer in need of or interested in receiving services;
- the household is able to pay 60% or less of their gross income toward rent;
- the household has utilized the maximum level of financial assistance allowed by the funding source and/or written agency policy;
- there is no (zero) communication in at least 30 days from the household after multiple provider attempts to contact; or
- after re-assessment and attempts to reset expectations of the program by reviewing the housing stability plan, the household is not making progress toward housing goals.

Participating households and their landlords must receive at least 30 days written notice of any changes to and/or before ending rental financial assistance.

The case can remain open and case management may continue for up to 60 days after financial assistance ends, if appropriate or requested by the household. Providers may wish to keep a household enrolled in their program for up to 60 days after their last financial assistance payment, if appropriate or requested by the household, in case circumstances arise that require further case management or additional financial assistance. This is recommended for cases where it is not clear that the household will remain stable, especially for PSH eligible participants to ensure they don't lose their eligibility.

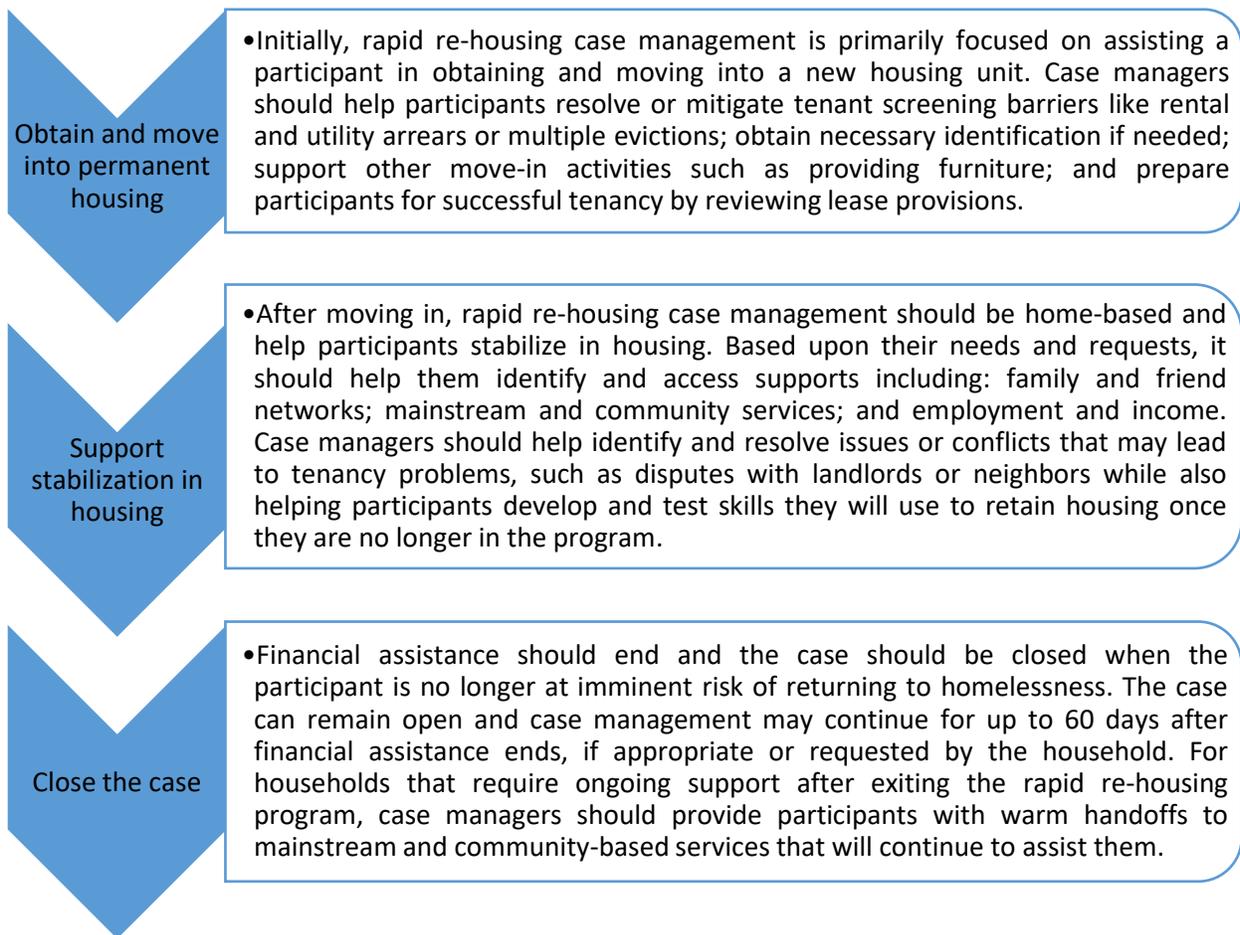
## D. Case Management and Services

The goals of RRH case management are to help households obtain and move into permanent housing, to support households to stabilize in housing, and to connect them to community and mainstream services and supports that can enable them to build on their strengths and meet their needs.

Rapid re-housing is a short-term crisis intervention with the primary goal of helping families and individuals resolve their housing crisis in a short period of time. As such, the intent of rapid re-housing case management is not to build a long-term services relationship, but instead to assist a household in accessing and stabilizing in a housing unit as quickly as possible.

Therefore, case management is focused on navigating barriers to tenancy and helping participants to build a support system. It does the latter by identifying and connecting them with community supports, including services and mainstream resources as well as family and friend networks so they have support to work through issues that may have contributed to their original housing instability.

RRH Case Management can be described in three phases:



## 1. Focus on Resolving the Housing Crisis

One of the primary goals of RRH is to resolve housing crises in a short period of time. The role of a case manager is different in an RRH program than in other types of programs because of the short-term and housing-focused goals of the program. RRH case management requires knowledge and skill sets that are highly specialized and focused on ending a participant's housing crisis in a short period of time.

Resolving the housing crisis requires that case managers place a primary focus on housing-focused activities. The case manager in an RRH program is a specialist in all things related to obtaining and retaining housing. This requires both knowledge and skills, including:

- Knowledge of the types of housing available in the local community, including eligibility requirements and processes, costs, amenities, and services.
- A working knowledge of landlord-tenant rights and responsibilities, and the ability to assess and provide information to participants on tenancy requirements.
- A working knowledge of a wide range of community resources and the ability to assist participants in accessing the resources they will need to secure and retain housing.
- Familiarity with strategies that participants can use to prevent or resolve future housing crises.

RRH case managers should be proactive and prepared to inform participants about services and resources that are available in the community, including those that will help the household stabilize within its new home and improve its economic and overall well-being. This may include connections to employment services, education and recreational programs, quality child care and child development programs, as well as health and behavioral health resources.

Staff should increase supports as needed to help program participants. In instances when households' situations are more complex and they need longer-term supports to retain their housing, a program must be able to connect households to appropriate community and mainstream services available to enable longer-term assistance.

Before services begin, case managers must explain the nature, scope and objectives of the RRH program, including the role of case management, the time-limited nature of the rental assistance, and the objective for achieving housing stability and self-sufficiency within a short period of time, in order to set clear expectations upfront.

## 2. Housing Stability Plan

A housing stability plan is an individualized service plan that is housing-focused and client-driven. Housing stability plans are based on housing needs and preferences as identified by the participating household, and are used to facilitate housing-focused case management with the

goal of obtaining and maintaining housing stability. Engagement in services should be voluntary but must be encouraged and build on the strengths and resources of each household.

Case managers are encouraged to review the Housing Stability Plan with each household on a regular basis to assess progress. This tool may be used for progressive engagement to determine if additional supports are needed to attain the housing goals.

<b>HOUSING STABILITY PLAN</b>	
A Housing Plan is a road map for obtaining and maintaining permanent housing. The case manager and participant discuss and define the end goals, break each into specific action steps to be taken by the case manager and the participant, and set dates for reviewing progress and updating the Housing Plan. The Housing Stability Plan should be	
<b>PARTICIPANT-DRIVEN</b>	The RRH participant’s goals and priorities drive the Housing Plan. The case manager provides critical information to help the participant make choices and supports the person’s decisions to the extent possible.
<b>HOUSING-FOCUSED</b>	The overarching purpose of the Housing Plan is to obtain permanent housing and to sustain permanent housing. Goals that are not related to getting and keeping housing are deferred unless they are a very high priority for the participant.
<b>REASONABLE</b>	A participant experiencing a housing crisis may feel overwhelmed with too many goals. What is “reasonable” in terms of making progress will be different for each person and can change over time. Housing Plans should reflect this and be flexible and changeable.
<b>S.M.A.R.T.</b>	Housing Plan goals are SMART—Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Timely—and include action steps specific to each goal and specify who is responsible for each step—staff or participant. Action steps include a target date for achievement. Plans also identify when a progress review and update will occur and are revised as needed.
<b>SHORT-TERM</b>	Action steps are those that can be taken in a relatively short period of time. This allows the case manager and participant to continually reassess progress and address remaining barriers.
<b>PROGRESSIVE</b>	The Plan is reviewed and updated frequently. Exit planning should start early in the process of case management so people are not caught off guard when the subsidy is about to end.

✓ Attachment D. Sample Housing Stability Plan

### 3. Assessing Sustainable Housing Options and Maximizing Income for Rent

Housing options are the types of housing a household wants and what rental amount can be reasonably sustained after the RRH program ends. This will inform the housing search process. Case managers must discuss with their participant’s, in an open, realistic and nonjudgmental way

- The participant household’s current or probable income and how much is available for rent.
- The type, location, and size of housing the participant household would prefer and how their choices match their income, tenant screening barriers, and any relevant eligibility factors.

When considering current and potential income, staff should be aware of the person’s income history, the local job market, and the eligibility and amount of any income supports for which the household qualifies. Most RRH participants will have to rely on increasing their income from employment or public benefits to cover rent, so an essential part of the initial assessment should examine what can be done to increase resources from those sources. For those entering the program with little to no income, the participant and case manager must create estimates of likely employment earnings and/or income supports. Include any income that may come from things outside of traditional employment.

When calculating rents a participant can pay, it is important to recognize that unless the participant is able to obtain a permanent rent subsidy (e.g., Housing Choice Voucher or “Section 8”) or a subsidized housing unit, it is likely that housing costs will exceed the standard “affordability” limit of 30 percent of income. Participant will most likely be spending more than 50 percent of their income on housing. When assessing, staff should ask: What is the most the household can pay for housing, considering all other necessary costs and likely income?

<b>Housing Affordability Metrics in San Bernardino County</b>					
Unit type	2019 HUD FMR Rent	50% rent-income	Hourly wage	3x income to rent	Hourly wage
studio	\$826	\$1,652	\$9.53	\$2,478	\$14.30
1 bedroom	\$986	\$1,972	\$11.38	\$2,958	\$17.06
2 bedroom	\$1,232	\$2,464	\$14.21	\$3,696	\$21.32
3 bedroom	\$1,747	\$3,494	\$20.16	\$5,241	\$30.24
4 bedroom	\$2,132	\$4,264	\$24.60	\$6,396	\$36.90

- ✓ Attachment E. Housing/Rent affordability chart

Constructing a simple, tentative income and spending plan (budget) will help suggest the target range for rent. It is unlikely that a participant household will be able to spend only 30 percent of their income on rent in unsubsidized housing. In San Bernardino County, the majority of low-income households spend more than 50 percent of their income on housing.

Whether or not enhancing income is a goal, managing spending can improve the household's ability to pay the rent. Case managers can help their participants' budget spending by:

- Developing an honest and realistic household budget.
- Assisting them to apply for mainstream benefit resources such as food supports (Cal Fresh), utility subsidies, free lifeline cellphones, etc.
- Identifying free or reduced-cost goods and services (food pantries, clothing shelves, subsidized child care, etc.)
- Connecting the participant to an accredited consumer credit counselor for debt consolidation or interest rate negotiation to reduce monthly debt payments.

#### 4. Connection to Community Services and Supports

Once the individual or family has moved into housing, the case manager's primary focus shifts to housing stability. Housing stability is defined as the ability to pay the rent and comply with the terms/requirements of the lease. Goals and action steps in the Housing Plan reflect this emphasis.

Case managers employ multiple strategies and referrals to assist their participants with housing stability and offer various direct assistance and linkages to community-based supports. Many housing plan goals can best be achieved by linking the participant or household to a community resource, such as a job search program or public assistance benefits office.



RRH case managers should be prepared to inform participants about services and resources that

are available in the community, including those that will help the household stabilize within its new home and improve its economic and overall well-being. This may include connections to quality child care and child development programs, employment services, education and recreational programs, as well as health and behavioral health resources.

Case managers must be very proactive and go far beyond simply offering contact information for referrals and should provide a warm hand-off to other supports whenever possible. RRH case managers should help participants prepare eligibility documentation, assure they can obtain an appointment, and follow up with the participant and service provider to mediate or offer support.

## 5. Closing the Case

There is no bright line to indicate when a person’s housing crisis is resolved. The household may continue to be extremely low-income and severely rent-burdened and yet be able to pay the rent and follow the terms of the lease.

While they have not yet achieved all their life goals or solved all their problems, they have successfully exited from homelessness and the housing crisis is over. As they continue to stabilize, their capacity to make and carry out plans for future goals will improve.

The decision to conclude assistance requires the evaluation of a number of factors. It should not be based upon arbitrary deadlines or spending limits. Instead, the case manager should look for indicators that the housing is not at imminent risk due to rental or lease compliance issues or an inability to receive essential community resources.

<b>When is it Time to Complete Services?</b>		
	<i>Indicators for Case Closure</i>	<i>Indicators for Continued Assistance</i>
<b>INCOME</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Income from all sources is sufficient to pay rent</li> <li>Can share housing within limits of current income</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cannot pay rent for next month or two</li> <li>No income source available</li> </ul>
<b>LEASE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In compliance, landlord satisfied</li> <li>Landlord willing to accept loss of programmatic support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Currently in violation of lease or subject of serious complaints</li> <li>Landlord accepted client only if longer-term support provided</li> </ul>
<b>LINKAGES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Connected to resources providing needed assistance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No other resources are willing/able to provide assistance</li> </ul>
<b>CHOICE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participant wants to complete services/exit program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participant wants (and needs) additional assistance</li> </ul>

## 6. No Contact Procedures

Case managers will check-in with the participating household **at least once a month** while enrolled in the program. No matter which stage the household is in the program, it is always the **responsibility of the case manager to make contact with the household**. All possible ways or methods to contacting the household must be explored. A final attempt to contact must be in writing, allowing at least five days to respond.

If there is **no contact after 30 days** of multiple attempts to reach the household, **the case manager should exit the household from the program**. If the household calls after that period

and is still experiencing homelessness, the case manager may help them reconnect with Coordinated Entry.

If the case manager has not been able to have a robust check-in with the household for more than 30 days, but has had contact with the household and they are still in need of services, the case manager should continue to work with the household on their housing goals. If a household still needs and wants services, but missed appointments or communication is not regular, the case manager should initiate a discussion to reset the program expectations by reviewing housing stability plan and the expectations for re-assessment.

The goal is to minimize or eliminate any exits for “non-compliance” or “lack of participation” especially if the homeless situation has not yet been resolved. Instead, the goal is to be clear about the scope of RRH and to determine if it will meet the needs of the household, then continue to work with the household until they are permanently housed or otherwise resolve the housing crisis.

### III. HMIS and Data Collection Requirements

Rapid re-housing providers are required to enter data into the SBCHP Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). Prompt and accurate data collection assists the homeless system to determine which services and programs clients are utilizing, evaluating the impact of RRH services, and make system improvements.

Providers must enter all HUD required data elements for each household enrolled in RRH. Please refer to the SBCHP HMIS Policies and Procedures for more details.

In addition, RRH providers must upload verification of homeless status and the Universal Housing Needs and Tenancy Barriers Assessment to the participant household's HMIS file to complete the RRH enrollment process.

Data Element	Definition
Program Entry Date	This is the date the case manager and household first meet and complete the intake and enrollment process.
Date of Move-in	This is the date the household moves into rental housing leased in their name and begins receiving rent assistance. This date should fall after the Program Entry Date.*
Program Exit Date	This is the date the household stopped receiving financial and case management services. This date should fall after the Date of Move-In (or on the Date of Move-In if the household is only receiving move-in assistance and no ongoing rental assistance). **
Exit Destination	This should reflect where the household is staying immediately after they finish participating in the program. So if the client is staying in the unit with no other subsidy, exit destination should be "Rental by client, no ongoing subsidy."

\* If the household self-resolves their homeless situation or moves into housing without receiving assistance through RRH, do NOT enter a Date of Move-In. The Date of Move-In should only be used for clients who find and move into a unit and receive assistance (financial and/or case management) through the RRH program.

\*\* Providers may wish to keep a household enrolled for up to 60 days after their last financial assistance payment, in case circumstances arise that require further case management or financial assistance. Providers may keep the household enrolled and, if the household does not contact the provider for 60 days after the last payment, may back-date the Exit Date to the date of the last payment or case management meeting.

## IV. Rapid Re-housing Performance Benchmarks

Ultimately the effectiveness of a rapid re-housing program is determined based on a program's ability to accomplish the model's three primary goals:

- Reduce the length of time program participants spend homeless;
- Exit households to permanent housing; and
- Limit returns to homelessness within a year of program exit.

### **Performance Benchmark #1: Reduce the Length of Time Program Participants Spend Homeless:**

The first goal of rapid re-housing is to reduce the amount of time individuals and families spend homeless. The primary opportunity for a rapid re-housing program to impact how much time a household spends homeless is the speed with which it is able to identify and help households to access appropriate housing options. Activities that contribute to good performance on this outcome are recruiting landlords to have access to units, finding units that are in the communities and neighborhoods that program participants want to live in, and negotiating with landlords to help program participants to access housing.

***To meet this performance benchmark, households served by RRH programs should move into permanent housing in an average of 30 days or less.***

### **Performance Benchmark #2: Permanent Housing Success Rates:**

The second goal of a rapid re-housing program is to exit households to permanent housing in the community with or without a subsidy. A rapid re-housing program can impact permanent housing success through the combination of an appropriate housing placement, financial assistance, and effective case management and services.

***To meet this performance benchmark, at least 80 percent of households that exit a rapid re-housing program should exit to permanent housing.***

### **Performance Benchmark #3: Returns to Homelessness:**

The third goal of a rapid re-housing program is to reduce the number of households returning to homelessness following soon after an exit from a rapid re-housing program. The primary opportunities for a rapid re-housing program to impact the success of a household in remaining housed is through the combination of securing appropriate housing and effective case management and services

***To meet this performance benchmark, at least 85 percent of households that exit a rapid re-housing program to permanent housing should not become homeless again within a year.***

All of these performance outcomes can be measured using data collected through the community's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) and Coordinated Entry System (CES).

## V. Ongoing Training and Learning Opportunities

The San Bernardino County Homeless Partnership (SBCHP) is committed to providing on-going training and learning opportunities for service providers and stakeholders to support the improvement, expansion and standardization of rapid re-housing practices within the SBC CoC.

This shall include sponsoring in-service education and training activities, and providing on-going access to information on national best practice program models, tools and resources. The SBCHP shall also support collective staff development activities, such as the NAEH Rapid Re-housing Learning Collaborative model, for RRH program staff to come together to problem-solve, share best practices, learn from peers, and connect with funders and/or evaluators.

## VI. References and Resources

The standards and practices outlined in this document are based on what is currently considered best and promising practice by the National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH), the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs (VA), the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH), and a variety of federal technical assistance experts, and nationally recognized, high-performing rapid re-housing providers.

Primary sources of the information used in developing these guidelines include the *NAEH Rapid Re-Housing Toolkit and RRH Performance Benchmarks and Program Standards*, the *Seattle-King County Rapid Re-Housing Model Guidelines*, the *SBC CES Housing Search and Stabilization Guidelines* as well as contributions from national Technical Assistance advisor Katharine Gale.

The National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH) is a leading national voice on the issue of homelessness that accomplishes its mission through research and education, policy analysis and advocacy, and capacity building.

The ***National Alliance's Rapid Re-Housing Toolkit*** is intended to help current and potential RRH providers design and operate effective RRH programs and offers a comprehensive array of information and resources, along with live web links to sample service tools and instruments, and community examples of best practice models from across the nation. As RRH practice continues to evolve, the toolkit will be updated. Below is a direct link to the RRH Toolkit.

**[National Alliance to End Homelessness Rapid Re-Housing Toolkit](#)**

## VII. Definition of Terms

Additional terms and definitions to be added.

**Case Management:** Housing-focused case management focuses on immediate efforts to attain housing, using the minimum assistance needed to address each household's immediate housing crisis. Staff works with each household to identify and refer households to other resources in the community (e.g., mainstream services, benefit services, food assistance programs, childcare resources, etc.) to support ongoing housing stability. Services are voluntary, housing-focused, person-centered and are provided at the level needed by each household. See also: Progressive Engagement.

**Critical Time Intervention (CTI):** "Critical Time Intervention is a time-limited evidence-based practice that mobilizes support for society's most vulnerable individuals during periods of transition. It facilitates community integration and continuity of care by ensuring that a person has enduring ties to their community and support systems during these critical periods. CTI has been applied in many communities with veterans, people with mental illness, people who have been homeless or in prison, and many other groups. The model has been widely used on four continents. CTI typically lasts for nine months. Services are divided in to three, three-month phases."

**Entries from Homelessness:** Measures the degree to which programs are serving people who are literally homeless, including a place not meant for human habitation, or in an emergency shelter. The measure is calculated in HMIS based on responses to 'immediate prior living situation.'

**Exits to Permanent Housing:** Measures the percentage of households who exit the program into a form of permanent housing (including supportive housing, stable/long term rental housing, subsidized housing, or market rate housing). The exit destination reflects whether a household is stably housed after leaving the RRH program; self-resolving will still be considered an exit to permanent housing.

**Housing First:** "A Housing First orientation means that the program is organized around helping people secure a place to live, without preconditions. While gaining income, self-sufficiency, and improved health are all desirable goals, they are not prerequisites to people being housed. In a system organized around Housing First principles, shelter and housing programs have minimal entry barriers and do not require clients to participate in services or gain skills/income as a condition of receiving housing assistance."

**Housing Location:** Activities related to engaging with and recruiting landlords, property management companies, and housing developers to increase access to permanent housing for homeless and other vulnerable individuals and families. This may include incentives and supports made available to participating landlords and property managers who agree to reduce screening criteria for households with barriers to permanent housing.

**Lengths of Stay:** Measured as the number of days from program enrollment to program exit. For RRH programs, this is defined as the time from initial intake to the end of all RRH services (financial subsidy and case management).

**Progressive Engagement:** “Services start with the least intensive service and amount of subsidy i.e. a “light touch”, and progress to greater service intensity only when necessary. The need for additional support is determined by an assessment of the individual or family’s experience, self-reporting, and the impact of the initial intervention. Client choice, to the extent feasible, drives the housing options and services offered. Participation in services is voluntary.” Progressive engagement fundamentals include:

- Voluntary and flexible participation by household
- Critical thinking and problem solving shared between the family and provider
- Starts with a little bit of support, based on what the household identifies they need
- Connections made to community resources
- Builds on family resiliency and strengths
- Focused goal: to quickly resolve the immediate crisis of homelessness

**Return to Homelessness:** Measures the percentage of households who have exited the program to a permanent housing situation and are subsequently served by another homeless intervention (i.e., emergency shelter, transitional housing, or rapid re-housing) in HMIS within six months.

## Attachment A

### **Documenting Homeless Status & Eligibility**

HUD requires that each client file contain documentation of homeless status and other program eligibility. Listed below are the approved documentation requirements.

#### **HOMELESS STATUS:**

1. Third Party: Preferred method of documentation. This step must be attempted first.
  - a. Oral or written verification from a third party verifying current homeless status of client.
  - b. The documentation must include reference to type of homelessness to determine which HUD Category the person meets.
  - c. Third party source can be: case manager, outreach worker, landlord evicting person, or family/friend kicking person out.
  - d. Written verification can include: HMIS report, written letter or other already available documentation.
2. Intake observation: Allowable after unsuccessfully attempting Third Party documentation.
  - a. Homeless program staff self-verifies status based on observation, program record or HMIS record.
  - b. Documentation must be written, include information related to type of homelessness, and include how staff first attempted to obtain Third Party verification.
3. Self-certification: Allowable only after unsuccessfully attempting third party or intake observation.
  - a. Letter written and signed by client briefly explaining homelessness and that they have no resources or safe place to stay.

#### Additional guidance for documenting homeless status for HUD:

1. Intake workers are responsible for obtaining the evidence of homeless status, not client.
2. An intake worker should NOT contact anyone for documentation that the person feels would jeopardize his or her safety.
3. Self-certification from the person that they meet homeless criteria of HUD Category can be accepted in most instances, but Third Party and Intake Observation must first be attempted and documented.
4. When documenting homeless status using Category 4, the intake worker needs to ask only enough questions to understand what is happening.

## **ELIGIBILITY:**

Once homeless status has been verified and documented, the intake worker is then required to document all other eligibility requirements including: CoC preference, program type, agency specific, or funder eligibility criteria. The following are example of additional eligibility criteria: DV, age, disability, length of homelessness, chronic homeless, disability, income or Veteran status. Documentation must be in writing and in most cases come from a third party source.

1. Domestic Violence Status: This is one of two criteria where self-report is acceptable. Take special effort not to re-traumatize client when obtaining either self-report or third party documentation.
  - a. Verbal or written verification from DV provider, law enforcement, outreach staff, medical provider.
  - b. Self-report: Only document basic information that household meets criteria.
2. Age: Youth and Elderly criteria ONLY
  - a. Birth certificate
  - b. YOUTH only: Parental, school, or social services written or verbal certification
3. Disability Status:
  - a. Medical or Mental Health professional certifies disability status. Ideally this would include a written letter from provider, but could include intake worker case notes detailing date, time, care facility, and name of provider who verified disability.
  - b. Social Security award letter or pay stub.
4. Long-term Homeless Status:
  - a. Provide list of each distinct episode of homelessness including: length of time, dates, and location of homelessness.
    - i. Length of time homeless – provide exact or estimated # of days or months homeless.
    - ii. Dates – provide exact or estimated year and month of homeless episode
    - iii. Location – provide exact or estimated place where episode occurred (Site/program, city, state).
  - b. Ideally this should be certified by Third party or HMIS, but self-report is acceptable if documentation includes attempts to verify via HMIS or third party.
5. Chronic Homeless Status:
  - a. Proof of Disability Status AND proof of long-term homeless status.
6. Income Status:
  - a. Written or verbal certification from Social Services.
  - b. Tax statement.
  - c. Pay stub (employment or child support).
  - d. Written or verbal certification from employer.
7. Veteran Status:
  - a. VA provides proof of Veteran status, either honorable or dishonorable.
  - b. Client shows written proof of enlistment, payment or discharge (DD214 Discharge Certificate, pay stub, etc.)

**San Bernardino County Homeless Partnership**  
**CES Universal Housing Needs & Tenancy Barriers Assessment**

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_ Participant HMIS ID # \_\_\_\_\_  
 Partner Agency \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_  
 Case Worker/Contact Person \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_  
 Has participant enrolled in your program? Yes / No Date of enrollment \_\_\_\_\_  
**Permanent Housing Program Type:**  
 \_\_\_ a. CoC PSH      \_\_\_ b. CoC RRH      \_\_\_ c. ESG RRH      \_\_\_ d. HUD VASH  
 \_\_\_ e. VA SSVF      \_\_\_ f. CalWorks HSP      \_\_\_ g. CalWorks FSP      \_\_\_ h. other \_\_\_\_\_

**Participant Household Information:** HoH Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_  
 Head of Household Full Name \_\_\_\_\_ HoH Gender M F T  
 Contact Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_  
 Household status: \_\_\_ single adult      \_\_\_ 2 or more adults/no children      \_\_\_ family w/children under 18  
 Household size: \_\_\_ # of adults      \_\_\_ # of children under 18      Ages of children \_\_\_\_\_  
 Full name(s) of other adults in the household \_\_\_\_\_  
 Any pets? Yes / No If yes, what type? \_\_\_\_\_

**Current Living Situation** (may differ from homeless status at time of permanent housing program enrollment):  
 \_\_\_ A. Unsheltered      \_\_\_ B. Bridge Housing/Shelter      \_\_\_ C. Bridge Housing/Motel Voucher  
 \_\_\_ D. Hotel/Motel by household      \_\_\_ E. temporarily w/family-friends      \_\_\_ F. Fleeing domestic violence/abuse  
 \_\_\_ G. Exiting institution      \_\_\_ H. Other \_\_\_\_\_  
 City/Community of residence/currently sleeping in? \_\_\_\_\_  
 How long has participant been dealing with homelessness? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Does participant have a valid form of ID? Yes / No Does participant have a vehicle/transportation? Yes / No

**Monthly Household Income \$** \_\_\_\_\_  
 Source of Income (check all that apply)  
 \_\_\_ a. Employment      \_\_\_ b. Cash Aid      \_\_\_ c. Cal Fresh      \_\_\_ d. Child/Spousal Support  
 \_\_\_ e. Unemployment      \_\_\_ f. Social Security      \_\_\_ g. Disability      \_\_\_ h. Veterans Benefits  
 \_\_\_ i. Other \_\_\_\_\_  
 If employed, name of employer \_\_\_\_\_  
 City/community employment located? \_\_\_\_\_ How long employed? \_\_\_\_\_  
 How would participant rate their credit history? Good Fair Poor No credit history  
 Does participant have personal funds to contribute toward applications fees, deposits, etc.? Yes / No  
 What other sources have been identified / are available to assist participant with application fees, security deposit, etc.?  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**San Bernardino County Homeless Partnership**  
**CES Universal Housing Needs & Tenancy Barriers Assessment**

**Housing History and Preferences:**

Has participant had a rental agreement in their name in the last 10 years? Yes / No

If yes, month and year participant last resided in their own rental unit? \_\_\_\_\_

Does participant have rental evictions on their record? Yes / No If yes, how many/what year(s)? \_\_\_\_\_

City/Community(s) where participant is seeking to live? \_\_\_\_\_

# of bedrooms needed? \_\_\_\_\_ Voucher maximum (if applicable)? \_\_\_\_\_ Maximum rent desired? \_\_\_\_\_

If children in household, where do they attend school (school name / city)? \_\_\_\_\_

Does participant have any physical challenges that require "accessible accommodations"? Yes / No

Does participant have any disabling conditions that require a "reasonable accommodation"? Yes / No

If yes to either, please describe accommodation \_\_\_\_\_

Does participant smoke? Yes / No Does participant have any felony convictions? Yes / No

If yes to felonies, please identify year and type? \_\_\_\_\_

Is participant open to sharing an apartment with another individual or a shared housing environment? Yes / No

Does participant have any other specific needs or preferences related to their choice of housing? \_\_\_\_\_

**What have you identified as this participant's biggest barriers or obstacles to obtaining permanent housing?**

**Subpopulations/Vulnerabilities:**

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> a. Chronically Homeless              | <input type="checkbox"/> b. Veteran                               | <input type="checkbox"/> c. Mental Health condition  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> d. Transitional Aged Youth           | <input type="checkbox"/> e. Senior (62+)                          | <input type="checkbox"/> f. Chronic Health condition |
| <input type="checkbox"/> g. Alcohol/Drug Abuse issues         | <input type="checkbox"/> h. Living w-HIV/AIDS                     | <input type="checkbox"/> i. On Parole or Probation   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> j. Physically disability             | <input type="checkbox"/> k. Domestic Violence/Abuse               | <input type="checkbox"/> l. Currently Pregnant       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> m. Single parent w/children under 18 | <input type="checkbox"/> n. Developmental/Intellectual disability |  |

Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Please provide any additional comments or information that might be relevant to identifying permanent housing options for this participant.**

**Homeless Certification and Verification of Income**

By submitting this document, I confirm that certification of homeless status at time of enrollment and documentation of household income is on file for this participant.

Case Worker/Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Participating Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

*The space below is available for Participating Agencies to add questions/collect additional information as required/desired for their program*

DRAFT

## LANDLORD-TENANT-CASE MANAGER COMMUNICATION AGREEMENT

**About this tool:** This communication agreement should be filled out and signed by the tenant, landlord and case manager with copies provided to the all parties to promote open communication. The form can easily be modified, but already includes those communication issues that frequently cause problems. Note that before this agreement is used, you may want to have your client sign an information release authorization form.

My goals are to:

- Fulfill my obligations as outlined in the lease
- Ensure rental payments are received on time
- Maintain the rental unit in good condition
- Help maintain a safe, pleasant and decent housing community

One way to achieve these goals is to help maintain a positive and communicative landlord-tenant-case manager relationship. Therefore, I will immediately inform the signors of this agreement (unless otherwise indicated), both verbally and in writing, if any of the following occurs (initial next to all that apply):

### Landlord

\_\_\_\_\_ I have not received full rent by the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of the month.

\_\_\_\_\_ I have received a complaint that there is too much noise from the tenant's apartment.

\_\_\_\_\_ I have significant concerns about the condition of the tenant's unit. (Examples: Landlord has seen damage or received complaints about bad smells that could be related to garbage.)

\_\_\_\_\_ I think someone is living in the tenant's unit who is not named on the lease.

\_\_\_\_\_ I think someone in the tenant's unit may be doing something illegal.

\_\_\_\_\_ The behavior of someone living in or visiting the tenant's unit is causing other tenants to complain.

\_\_\_\_\_ Provide the tenant with 24 hours notice prior to entering the unit.

\_\_\_\_\_ Follow up / Respond quickly to inquiries and concerns.

\_\_\_\_\_ I see something that is a violation of the lease. Describe: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Tenant**

- \_\_\_\_\_ A rare, but serious emergency occurs that will impact my ability to pay rent on time
- \_\_\_\_\_ I will be away from the unit for an extended time period (Examples: 30, 60, 90 days)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Inform the landlord of maintenance issues
- \_\_\_\_\_ I observe or experience an issue or event that impacts the safety of the community
- \_\_\_\_\_ Follow up / Respond quickly to inquiries and concerns.

**Case Manager and/or Housing Coordinator**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Inform the landlord if I become aware of a situation that will impact the tenant's ability to pay rent on time
- \_\_\_\_\_ Inform the landlord if I become aware of a circumstance that will impact the tenant's occupancy of the unit (Examples: tenant is hospitalized for 60, 90 days)
- \_\_\_\_\_ I observe a maintenance issue
- \_\_\_\_\_ I observe or experience an issue or event that impacts the safety of the community
- \_\_\_\_\_ Participate in problem solving / trouble shooting only in the event that the tenant and landlord are unable to resolve an issue without my assistance
- \_\_\_\_\_ Follow up / Respond quickly to inquiries and concerns

Please contact me using any of the following:

	Phone 1	Phone 2	Email	Address
<b>Landlord Name:</b>				
<b>Tenant Name:</b>				
<b>Case Manager Name:</b>				

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of Landlord)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of Tenant)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of Case Worker)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

## Sample Housing Stabilization Plan for Elaine Jones

NAME: <i>Elaine Jones</i> ADDRESS: <i>Houston Family Shelter</i>	ID: <i>XXX5551234</i> DATE of BIRTH: <i>99-99-9999</i>	DATE of PLAN: <i>September 1, 2009</i> REVIEW DATE: <i>November 1, 2009</i>	
	LEGAL STATUS:	PROGRAM: <i>ESG– Rapid Re-housing</i>	
1. Service/Treatment Goal: <i>Obtain housing and address factors that threaten housing stability.</i>			
2. ESG Eligibility:                      Short-term rental assistance                      X <input type="checkbox"/> Medium-term rental assistance			
HOUSING BARRIERS: <i>Sister’s boyfriend asking her to leave; no immediate housing options or means to pay for housing or utilities.</i> FACTORS THAT THREATEN HOUSING STABILITY: <i>Unemployment, history of domestic violence, no childcare, child with medical needs.</i>			
STRENGTHS and RESOURCES: <i>“I am not afraid to work; I had a good job for five years. I can take care of myself and Betsy, if you will give me a chance.”</i>			
<b>OBJECTIVE 1. <i>Secure Housing</i></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Secure income to support housing unit</i></li> <li>• <i>Find and obtain an affordable 2-bedroom apartment</i></li> </ul>			
<b>WHAT</b>	<b>PURPOSE</b>	<b>WHO</b>	<b>BY WHEN</b>
<i>Sign up for ESG deposit and rental assistance.</i>	<i>Financial assistance</i>	<i>Elaine Case Manager</i>	<i>This Friday</i>
<i>Contact PHA to confirm she has a good housing record with them.</i>	<i>If yes, could be useful in obtaining housing. If no, clearing this record could be helpful in obtaining housing.</i>	<i>Elaine Case Manager</i>	<i>End of next week</i>
<i>Develop a preliminary household budget.</i>	<i>Determine the level of financial assistance that will be needed to move-in and sustain housing</i>	<i>Elaine Case Manager</i>	<i>End of month</i>
<i>Look on-line at housing locator and identify 5 possible units that fit within budget</i>	<i>Assess housing market within Elaine’s budget.</i>	<i>Elaine Case Manager</i>	<i>Next month</i>
<i>Visit possible housing units, meet with landlords</i>	<i>Select housing unit</i>	<i>Elaine Case Manager</i>	<i>End of next month</i>
<b>OBJECTIVE 2. <i>Address benefits issues that threaten housing stability</i></b>			
<b>WHAT</b>	<b>PURPOSE</b>	<b>WHO</b>	<b>BY WHEN</b>
<i>Contact Medicaid agency to start benefits.</i>	<i>Provides access to health care for Elaine and the baby.</i>	<i>Elaine</i>	<i>This Friday</i>
<i>Sign up for Food Stamps.</i>	<i>Secure resources that will be needed at move-in</i>	<i>Elaine</i>	<i>End of month</i>

OBJECTIVE 3. <i>Secure employment to promote long-term housing stability</i>			
WHAT	PURPOSE	WHO	BY WHEN
<i>Establish account on-line with One-Stop Career Center, make initial appointment</i>	<i>Secure employment to support this household</i>	<i>Elaine</i>	<i>This Friday</i>
<i>Contact previous employer for reference</i>	<i>Be prepared for job search</i>	<i>Elaine</i>	<i>This Friday</i>
<i>Investigate subsidized child care options for job search and eventual employment</i>	<i>Support ability to look for job and work</i>	<i>Case Manager Elaine</i>	<i>End of next month</i>

OBJECTIVE 4. <i>Connect Elaine with mainstream resources to promote long-term housing stability</i>			
WHAT	PURPOSE	WHO	BY WHEN
<i>Provide referral to Women's Resource Center for counseling</i>	<i>Support longer-term issues that may impact Elaine's long-term housing stability</i>	<i>Case Manager</i>	<i>End of month</i>

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I agree with this Housing Stabilization Plan <input type="checkbox"/> I have been offered a copy of this Housing Stabilization Plan. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> accepted <input type="checkbox"/> declined my own copy of the plan.  SIGNATURE: <i>Elaine Jones</i> DATE: <i>9/01/09</i> COMMENT:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I agree with this Housing Stabilization Plan SIGNATURE: <i>Liza Stewart</i> TITLE: <i>Case Manager</i> DATE: <i>9/01/09</i> <input type="checkbox"/> I agree with this Housing Stabilization Plan. SIGNATURE: TITLE: DATE:
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### Housing Affordability Chart

Housing Affordability Metrics in San Bernardino County					
Unit type	2019 HUD FMR Rent	50% rent-income	Hourly wage	3x income to rent	Hourly wage
Studio	\$826	\$1,652	\$9.53	\$2,478	\$14.30
1 bedroom	\$986	\$1,972	\$11.38	\$2,958	\$17.06
2 bedroom	\$1,232	\$2,464	\$14.21	\$3,696	\$21.32
3 bedroom	\$1,747	\$3,494	\$20.16	\$5,241	\$30.24
4 bedroom	\$2,132	\$4,264	\$24.60	\$6,396	\$36.90

Expanded version of Housing Affordability Chart under development.