



**MaineHousing**

Maine State Housing Authority

**2009**

## **Homeless Diversion & Prevention Program Guide**

*The mission of MaineHousing is to assist Maine people to obtain and maintain decent, safe, affordable housing and services suitable to their unique housing needs.*

*In carrying out this mission, MaineHousing will provide leadership, maximize resources, and promote partnerships to develop and implement sound housing policy.*

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# MaineHousing

## HOMELESS PREVENTION AND RAPID RE-HOUSING PROGRAM (HPRP) HOMELESS DIVERSION & PREVENTION PROGRAM GUIDE

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## **HPRP HOMELESS DIVERSION & PREVENTION PROGRAM**

### **Program Overview**

The Homeless Diversion & Prevention Program (the “Program”) is a two year program that uses funds from the Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP) under Title XII of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Recovery Act) to assist households throughout the State of Maine who are at imminent risk for homelessness or already homeless.

The Program will provide temporary financial assistance and housing relocation and stabilization services. Further information on allowable financial assistance and other services is found later in this program guide. All program applicants will be assessed by a Housing Retention & Stability Specialist for determination of their needs and identification of possible resources, as well as income and program eligibility. Households will be linked with resources needed for stabilization. Housing Retention & Stability Specialists will be located in agencies around the state, helping individuals and families connect with General Assistance, employment and training options, conflict resolution and mediation services, applications for rental subsidies, housing search, and other support services.

All sub-grantees must comply with all relevant HUD regulations outlined in the Notice of Allocations, Application Procedures and Requirements for Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program Grantees under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (HUD Guidance), as well as with the Maine Housing Policies & Procedures for HPRP Initiatives. In addition, all client information must be entered into the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)

### **Program Eligibility**

Individuals and families who are currently in housing but are at imminent risk of becoming homeless and need temporary rent, utility assistance to prevent them from becoming homeless or assistance to move to another unit are eligible for the Program. Individuals and families who are experiencing homelessness, as defined by the McKinney Vento Act, and need temporary assistance in order to obtain and retain housing also meet program eligibility.

### **Income Eligibility**

To be eligible for assistance household income must be at or below 50% of Area Median Income (AMI) as defined in the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s (HUD) Section 8 program rules (“Section 8”).

### **Scope and Length of Assistance**

The Program offers short-term rental assistance (up to 3 months), one time security deposits and other financial assistance to households who are at risk for homelessness or already homeless and whose income is at or below 50% of the AMI for their household size. Sub-grantees are expected to provide ongoing supports, as needed, to all program participants until they have achieved housing stability and any needed support services.

### **Financial Assistance Requirements**

Financial assistance is limited to the following activities: short term rental assistance (up to 3 months) that must comply with HUD’s “rent reasonableness” standard and meets habitability standards, arrears (up to 6 months), security deposits, utility deposits, utility payments (including up to 6 months of utility payments in arrears), moving costs, storage (up to 3 months) and hotel/motel vouchers (up to 30 days).

Recipients of rental assistance who have income will be expected to pay a portion of their rent and utility costs, not to exceed 30% of their income. Exceptions to this rule may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Financial Assistance cannot be used in a property owned by the grantee, sub-grantee or the parent, subsidiary or affiliated organization of the sub-grantee.

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### **Housing Relocation & Stabilization**

The Program offers services to assist homeless persons that need temporary assistance to obtain housing and services to assist persons at imminent risk of homelessness to maintain housing. Eligible services consist of case management; outreach and engagement; housing search and placement; legal services and credit repair. Services will be targeted and prioritized to serve households that are most in need of temporary assistance and are most likely to achieve stable housing, whether subsidized or unsubsidized after the short term assistance ends.

### **Data Collection & Evaluation Requirements**

Data Collection: All data collection and reporting for this program will be conducted through the use of the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) administered by MaineHousing. Each sub-grantee will be provided with the necessary tools and training for entering client data into HMIS on a weekly basis. Sub-grantees also will be required to submit monthly and quarterly reports with information about the number of clients served, the kinds of services provided, and the amount of money spent on each kind of services.

HPRP HMIS Requirements: All homeless and homeless prevention related services provided under HPRP funding must be recorded in the Maine Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) completely and accurately in the week the service(s) are provided. All HPRP recipients and impacted family members must be entered into HMIS with name, date of birth, social security #, and the complete HUD/Maine Universal Data elements plus required service related data. To assure coordination of benefits and monitoring of HPRP requirements regarding eligibility and duration of benefits appropriate inter-agency agreements and client release of information will be executed so that HMIS data may be appropriately shared for all recipients among the various HPRP providers.

All providers receiving funding under HPRP will receive HMIS user licenses necessary to record those services and will be bound by and follow the same confidentiality and other policies and procedures outlined in the Maine HMIS Policies and Procedures Manual.

Evaluation: MaineHousing and sub-grantees will participate in an evaluation project that will measure the overall housing and financial stability of recipients who receive funding under the Recovery Act. Sub-grantees will enter data into HMIS as required by HUD and MaineHousing. This will include the HUD-defined universal data elements, homeless status, client income and sources, Financial Assistance provided, Housing Relocation & Stabilization services provided, and reporting clients' progress on a specified number of domains based on the Arizona Self-Sufficiency Matrix.

### **Program Administration & Fees**

The purpose of the HPRP is to provide homelessness prevention assistance to households who would otherwise become homeless and to provide assistance to rapidly re-house persons who are homeless as defined by section 103 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 111302). HUD expects that HPRP resources will be targeted and prioritized to serve households that are most in need of this temporary assistance and are most likely to achieve stable housing, whether subsidized or unsubsidized, outside of the HPRP after the program concludes.

Maine State Housing Authority (MaineHousing) is the state grantee for the HPRP grant from HUD. A sub-grantee is any private non-profit organization or unit of local government to which the grantee provides funds to carry out the eligible HPRP activities. The sub-grantee is accountable to the grantee for the use of the funds provided.

Any sub-grantee receiving HPRP funds shall be subject to all of the requirements that apply to the grantee under the HUD Notice.

Any jobs created must be listed in the Maine Job Bank with the Maine Career Center

Sub-grantees will:

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- Assess every program applicant for risk of imminent homelessness or verification of current homelessness, and to determine income and program eligibility. Sub-grantees will use a clear process, developed by the grantee, to determine the type, level, and duration of assistance for each program participant.
- Certify eligibility at least once every 3 months for all program participants receiving rental assistance.
- Provide on-going case management or support services, as needed, to all program participants receiving rental assistance in order to transition them to independence.
- Adhere to all data collection and reporting requirements.

HUD requires that the state grantee (MaineHousing) must make available all of its HPRP allocation, except for an appropriate share of funds for administrative costs, to the sub-grantees to carry out eligible activities. However, because MaineHousing administers the statewide HMIS and HUD requires all client level data must be entered into HMIS, there will be data collection and reporting costs incurred by MaineHousing. Therefore, MaineHousing will provide data collection and reporting funds to each sub-grantee and then invoice each sub-grantee for these costs. A portion of the data collection and report funds will be retained by each sub-grantee.

No more than 5 per cent of the total HPRP grant to MaineHousing may be spent on administrative costs, whether by the grantee or sub-grantees. MaineHousing will share a reasonable and appropriate amount of its administrative funds with sub-grantees.

### **Certifications**

All required documents, except item 3, can be found in the appendices at the end of this document. MaineHousing may require a Certification by Local Unit of Government form that will be contained in the Policies and Procedures Manual for HPRP Initiatives.

1. General Certification
2. HPRP Certification
3. Proof of 501 C-3 status

### **Monitoring & Compliance**

The HPRP Program Officer from MaineHousing will provide guidance for sub-grantees to determine that they are meeting all program performance requirements, as well as federal and state reporting requirements. This individual also will facilitate peer-to-peer learning and support, administer contracts with sub-grantees, and provide on-site observation and assistance to ensure that sub-grantees are engaged in building community relationships and using best practices that will increase the likelihood of sustainability for the HPRP initiatives.

### **Allocation & Recapture**

MaineHousing has developed a methodology for allocating funds statewide by utilizing factors such as population, poverty index, changes in unemployment during the past year, the rental and home ownership affordability index, and shelter bednight usage. MaineHousing reserves the right to review the balance of funds quarterly and reallocate unused funds to geographic areas of greater need and/or reallocate funds among the categories of eligible activities for the HPRP program.

### **Other Federal & State Requirements**

All sub-grantees must comply with federal requirements regarding Conflicts of Interest, Environmental Requirements, Habitability Standards, Nondiscrimination & Equal Opportunity Requirements, Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing, Lead-Based Paint Requirements, Uniform Administrative Requirements, and Equal Participation of Religious Organizations as outlined in the HUD Notice and the MaineHousing Policies & Procedures for HPRP Initiatives.

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### MaineHousing Non-Discrimination Notice

Maine State Housing Authority (“MaineHousing”) does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, age, physical or mental disability, or familial status in the admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs, and activities. MaineHousing will provide appropriate communication auxiliary aids and services upon sufficient notice. MaineHousing will also provide this document in alternative formats upon sufficient notice. MaineHousing has designated the following person responsible for coordinating compliance with applicable federal and state nondiscrimination requirements and addressing grievances: Mary Darling, Maine State Housing Authority, 353 Water Street, Augusta, Maine 04330-4633, Telephone Number (207) 626-4600 or 1-800-452-4668 (voice), or 1-800-452-4603 (TTY).



**APPENDIX**

**General Certification**

**HPRP Certification**

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### GENERAL CERTIFICATIONS FOR SUB-GRANTEES HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION AND RAPID RE-HOUSING PROGRAM (HPRP)

In accordance with the applicable statutes and the regulations governing the consolidated plan regulations, the Sub-grantee certifies that:

**Affirmatively Further Fair Housing** – The sub-grantee will affirmatively further fair housing, which means it will conduct an analysis of impediments to fair housing choice within the jurisdiction or state, take appropriate actions to overcome the effects of any impediments identified through that analysis, and maintain records reflecting that analysis and actions in this regard.

**Drug-Free Workplace** --It will or will continue to provide a drug-free workplace by:

1. Publishing a statement notifying employees that the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of a controlled substance is prohibited in the grantee's workplace and specifying the actions that will be taken against employees for violation of such prohibition;
2. Establishing an ongoing drug-free awareness program to inform employees about:
  - (a) The dangers of drug abuse in the workplace;
  - (b) The sub-grantee's policy of maintaining a drug-free workplace;
  - (c) Any available drug counseling, rehabilitation, and employee assistance programs; and
  - (d) The penalties that may be imposed upon employees for drug abuse violations occurring in the workplace;
3. Making it a requirement that each employee to be engaged in the performance of the grant be given a copy of the statement required by paragraph 1;
4. Notifying the employee in the statement required by paragraph 1 that, as a condition of employment under the grant, the employee will -
  - (a) Abide by the terms of the statement; and
  - (b) Notify the employer in writing of his or her conviction for a violation of a criminal drug statute occurring in the workplace no later than five calendar days after such conviction;
5. Notifying the agency in writing, within ten calendar days after receiving notice under subparagraph 4(b) from an employee or otherwise receiving actual notice of such conviction. Employers of convicted employees must provide notice, including position title, to every grant officer or other designee on whose grant activity the convicted employee was working, unless the Federal agency has designated a central point for the receipt of such notices. Notice shall include the identification number(s) of each affected grant;
6. Taking one of the following actions, within 30 calendar days of receiving notice under subparagraph 4(b), with respect to any employee who is so convicted -
  - (a) Taking appropriate personnel action against such an employee, up to and including termination, consistent with the requirements of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; or

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(b) Requiring such employee to participate satisfactorily in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program approved for such purposes by a Federal, state, or local health, law enforcement, or other appropriate agency;

7. Making a good faith effort to continue to maintain a drug-free workplace through implementation of paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6.

**Anti-Lobbying** --To the best of the sub-grantee's knowledge and belief:

1. No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of it, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement;
2. If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, it will complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions; and
3. It will require that the language of paragraphs 1 and 2 of this certification be included in the award documents for all sub-awards at all tiers (including subcontracts, sub-grants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all sub-recipients shall certify and disclose accordingly.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature/Authorized Official

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Title \_\_\_\_\_

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### APPENDIX TO CERTIFICATIONS

#### INSTRUCTIONS CONCERNING LOBBYING AND DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE REQUIREMENTS:

##### A. Lobbying Certification

This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

##### B. Drug-Free Workplace Certification

1. By signing and/or submitting this application or grant agreement, the sub-grantee is providing the certification.
2. The certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance is placed when the agency awards the grant. If it is later determined that the grantee knowingly rendered a false certification, or otherwise violates the requirements of the Drug-Free Workplace Act, HUD, in addition to any other remedies available to the Federal Government, may take action authorized under the Drug-Free Workplace Act.
3. Workplaces under grants, for sub-grantees other than individuals, need not be identified on the certification. If known, they may be identified in the grant application. If the sub-grantee does not identify the workplaces at the time of application, or upon award, if there is no application, the sub-grantee must keep the identity of the workplace(s) on file in its office and make the information available for Federal inspection. Failure to identify all known workplaces constitutes a violation of the sub-grantee's drug-free workplace requirements.
4. Workplace identifications must include the actual address of buildings (or parts of buildings) or other sites where work under the grant takes place. Categorical descriptions may be used (e.g., all vehicles of a mass transit authority or State highway department while in operation, State employees in each local unemployment office, performers in concert halls or radio stations).
5. If the workplace identified to the agency changes during the performance of the grant, the sub-grantee shall inform the agency of the change(s), if it previously identified the workplaces in question (see paragraph three).
6. Definitions of terms in the Nonprocurement Suspension and Debarment common rule and Drug-Free Workplace common rule apply to this certification. Sub-grantees' attention is called, in particular, to the following definitions from these rules:
  - "Controlled substance" means a controlled substance in Schedules I through V of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 812) and as further defined by regulation (21 CFR 1308.11 through 1308.15);
  - "Conviction" means a finding of guilt (including a plea of nolo contendere) or imposition of sentence, or both, by any judicial body charged with the responsibility to determine violations of the Federal or State criminal drug statutes;
  - "Criminal drug statute" means a Federal or non-Federal criminal statute involving the manufacture, distribution, dispensing, use, or possession of any controlled substance;
  - "Employee" means the employee of a sub-grantee directly engaged in the performance of work under a grant, including: (i) All "direct charge" employees; (ii) all "indirect charge" employees unless their impact or involvement is insignificant to the performance of the grant; and (iii) temporary personnel and consultants who are directly engaged in the performance of work under the grant and who are on the sub-grantee's payroll. This definition does not include workers not on the payroll of the sub-grantee (e.g., volunteers, even if used to meet a matching requirement; consultants or independent contractors not on the sub-grantee's payroll; or employees of sub-recipients or subcontractors in covered workplaces).

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**Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP) Certifications**

The \_\_\_\_\_ acknowledges that  
(Certifying Jurisdiction)

\_\_\_\_\_ will administer  
(Sub-grantee)

HPRP funds within the jurisdiction and that::

**Consolidated Plan** – It is following a current HUD-approved Consolidated Plan or CHAS.

**Consistency with Plan** – The housing activities to be undertaken with HPRP funds are consistent with the strategic plan.

**Confidentiality** – It will develop and implement procedures to ensure:

- (1) The confidentiality of records pertaining to any individual provided with assistance; and
- (2) That the address or location of any assisted housing will not be made public, except to the extent that this prohibition contradicts a preexisting privacy policy of the grantee.

**Discharge Policy** – A certification that the State or jurisdiction has established a policy for the discharge of persons from publicly funded institutions or systems of care (such as health care facilities, foster care or other youth facilities, or correction programs and institutions) in order to prevent such discharge from immediately resulting in homelessness for such persons.

**HMIS** – It will comply with HUD’s standards for participation in a local Homeless Management Information System and the collection and reporting of client-level information.

\_\_\_\_\_ Date  
Signature/Authorized Official

\_\_\_\_\_ Title