



2009

Engagement & Housing Stabilization 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.

MaineHousing
353 Water Street, Augusta, Maine 04330
207/626-4600 VOICE 207/624-5768 FAX

MaineHousing

HOMELESS PREVENTION AND RAPID RE-HOUSING PROGRAM (HPRP) ENGAGEMENT & HOUSING STABILIZATION PROGRAM GUIDE

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HPRP ENGAGEMENT & HOUSING STABILIZATION PROGRAM

Program Overview

The Engagement & Housing Stabilization 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 serve individuals with apparent or diagnosed mental illness or co-occurring disorders from emergency through stability in five geographic areas: Greater Portland, Greater Bangor, Lewiston-Auburn, Augusta-Waterville, and York County. Service providers in sub-grantee agencies, except in the Greater Portland area, will engage with these individuals, provide case management, and oversee support services with a goal of permanent housing and an adequate support network for every program participant. In Greater Portland, the HPRP funds administered by MaineHousing will be used to provide temporary financial assistance services to those clients identified and served by the City of Portland HPRP grant from HUD.

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 case manager for determination of their needs and identification of possible resources, as well as income and program eligibility. Individuals served in this initiative will be those who have the most significant challenges to becoming stabilized and who tend to use the largest percentage of emergency shelter and other emergency resources.

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 MaineHousing Policies & Procedures for HPRP Initiatives. In addition, all client information must be entered into the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)

Program Eligibility

Individuals with apparent or diagnosed mental illness or co-occurring disorders will be eligible for this program. In general, participants will be those individuals who experience extended periods of homelessness and have a difficult time engaging with service providers. A participant must meet the HUD McKinney-Vento definition of homelessness.

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 Section 8 program rules (“Section 8”).

Scope and Length of Assistance

HPRP assistance is to be focused on engagement with program participants and on housing stabilization, linking participants to community resources and mainstream benefits, and helping them develop a plan for preventing future housing instability.

Rental assistance for this program is expected to be no more 12 months. However, after 12 months, if program participants receiving temporary rental assistance need additional financial assistance to remain housed, they can be evaluated for eligibility to receive additional assistance on a case-by-case basis. HUD rules prohibit any program participant from receiving more than 18 months of assistance under HPRP. HUD requires grantees and sub-grantees to certify eligibility at least once every 3 months for all program participants receiving medium-term rental assistance. Sub-grantees are expected to provide ongoing case management, as needed, to all program participants until they have achieved housing stability and any needed support services.

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Financial Assistance Requirements

Financial assistance is limited to the following activities: short-term rental assistance not to exceed rental costs accrued over a period of 3 months; medium-term rental assistance not to exceed actual rental costs accrued over a period of 4 to 18 months; security deposits not to exceed the amount of one month's rent; utility payments, including up to 6 months of utility payments in arrears; reasonable moving costs or short-term storage fees; motel and hotel vouchers up to 30 days if no appropriate shelter beds are available and subsequent rental housing has been identified but is not immediately available for move-in. Sub-grantees may not make payments directly to program participants, but only to third parties, such as landlords or utility companies.

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.

Housing Relocation & Stabilization Requirements

HPRP funds may be used for services that assist program participants with housing stability and placement. These services are focused on the following activities: outreach and engagement; housing search and placement; legal services that help people stay in their homes; credit repair; and ongoing case management in the community.

The target populations for this initiative are individuals or families who either have met or come close to meeting a definition of chronic homelessness. This population is likely to have behaviors similar to, or actual serious and persistent mental illness and/or significant patterns of substance abuse or chemical dependency. The initiative is intended to serve individuals without having barriers to service such as MaineCare eligibility, clinical diagnoses, or meeting a specific HUD definition of chronic homelessness.

This population may be difficult to reach because individuals may present with suspiciousness, paranoia, irritability, patterns of intoxication, or isolation. It is essential that service providers have clearly defined strategies for outreach that includes selection of staff that have skills, experience, demeanors, and training that leaves them well poised to develop therapeutic alliances with individuals through which they can foster movement from homelessness to housing with stability. Stability will include supportive services delivered in housing and solid connections with other stabilizing community resources. When complete, a program participant's support network should include services designed to address on an ongoing basis each of the issues underlying each participant's homelessness (mental illness, substance abuse or chemical dependency, financial issues, and relationship issues, for example).

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.

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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 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 Centers.

Sub-grantees will:

- Assess every program applicant for 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 and Other Required Documents

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.

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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

Each of the five geographic areas to be served by this program has been allocated funding based on an allocation factor made up of the poverty index, shelter bednights used, persons in need of substance abuse treatment services and not receiving this service, a serious psychological distress index, and a rental affordability index, all based on the counties in which the geographic areas are located. 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 shall 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.

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