

Policies and Procedures Manual

HPRP Initiatives

“We must devise plans that will not merely alleviate the ills of today, but will prevent their recurrence in the future. The task of recovery is inseparable from the fundamental task of social reconstruction.”

~Frances Perkins in a 1935 national radio address
(U.S. Secretary of Labor under President Franklin D. Roosevelt)

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MaineHousing Policies and Procedures Manual

Introduction

The MaineHousing Policy and Procedures Manual for the Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP) is a compilation of policies and procedures from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the State of Maine and MaineHousing. The policies, procedures and other information in the MaineHousing Policy and Procedures Manual for the HPRP Initiatives are derived from sources such as the HUD (Docket No. FR-5307-N-01) 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, decisions of MaineHousing, operating requirements, standard practices and other state and federal requirements. The policies and procedures in this manual were established by MaineHousing as the Grantee responsible for the HPRP funds.

The documentation of these policies and procedures promotes the standardization and simplification of requirements and functions and is a reference for all sub-grantees that are responsible for the administration of all MaineHousing HPRP initiatives and funds. The Homeless Initiatives Department of MaineHousing is responsible for coordinating the development of these guidelines to ensure consistency of the information, the coordination of revisions/additions from HUD or MaineHousing and the distribution of the information. It is the responsibility of the sub-grantees to disseminate information pertinent to their respective initiatives and to ensure that their staff are aware of, understand and comply with policies and procedures in this guide.

The MaineHousing Policies and Procedures Manual for the HPRP is organized in five major categories:

- ◆ Description – a summary and overview of the program
- ◆ Definitions – an explanation of terms used
- ◆ Policy – Federal and MaineHousing
- ◆ Procedure – the steps to administer each initiative
- ◆ Attachments and Exhibits

Overview

On March 19, 2009, the Department of Housing and Urban Development issued a Notice of funding and allocation requirements titled 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. This Notice advised the public of the allocation formula and allocation amounts, the list of grantees, and requirements for the Homelessness Prevention Fund, hereafter referred to as the “Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP),” under Title XII of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (“Recovery Act”). Congress has designated \$1.5 billion for communities to provide financial assistance and services to either prevent individuals and families from becoming homeless or help those who are experiencing homelessness to be quickly re-housed and stabilized. MaineHousing, as the state grantee, was allocated \$6,575,089 according to the formula used for the Emergency Shelter Grants (ESG) Program. In order to receive HPRP funds, eligible grantees were required to submit a Substantial Amendment to the Consolidated Plan 2008 Action Plan. MaineHousing submitted its Substantial Amendment on May 5, 2009.

SECTION I: DESCRIPTION

Federal Program

The purpose of the HPRP is to provide homelessness prevention assistance to households who would otherwise become homeless—many due to the economic crisis—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. 11302). HUD expects that these 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.

HPRP is focused on housing for homeless and at-risk households. It will provide temporary financial assistance and housing relocation and stabilization services to individuals and families who are homeless or would be homeless *but for* this assistance. The funds under this program are intended to target two populations of persons facing housing instability: 1) individuals and families who are currently in housing but are at risk of becoming homeless and need temporary rent or utility assistance to prevent them from becoming homeless or assistance to move to another unit (prevention), and 2) individuals and families who are experiencing homelessness (residing in emergency or transitional shelters or on the street) and need temporary assistance in order to obtain housing and retain it (rapid re-housing).

HPRP is not a mortgage assistance program. HPRP funds are only eligible to help program participants—whether they are renters or homeowners about to become homeless—pay for utilities, moving costs, security deposits and rent in a new unit, storage fees, and other financial costs or services. HPRP funds are not eligible to pay for any mortgage costs or legal or other fees associated with retaining homeowners’ housing.

MaineHousing Initiatives

Homeless Diversion & Prevention Program

Individuals and families at imminent risk for homelessness or already homeless will be linked with resources needed for housing 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. Short-term rental assistance (up to 3 months) and security deposits, along with other eligible financial assistance activities, will be available.

MaineHousing will contract with sub-grantees to pay the salary, benefits, and travel of the Housing Retention & Stability Specialists for two years. Each specialist will have access to a predetermined amount of financial assistance funds.

Engagement & Housing Stabilization Program for Individuals

Individuals with apparent or diagnosed mental illness or co-occurring disorders will be served from emergency through stability by service providers who will engage with these individuals, provide case management, and oversee support services with a goal of permanent housing and an adequate support network. Temporary rental subsidies and security deposits, along with other eligible financial assistance activities, will be available to participants. 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.

MaineHousing will contract with sub-grantees for case management positions over two years, including salary, benefits and travel. Each case manager will have access to a predetermined amount of financial assistance funds.

This initiative will involve coordination with DHHS to be certain that individuals who get served will have on-going service support for as long they need it.

Security Deposit Program

Households (in addition to those listed in the two initiatives outlined above) will get security deposits that will help them transition more quickly from homelessness to stable housing. MaineHousing will contract with shelter sub-grantees throughout the state and each shelter will have access to a predetermined amount of financial assistance for security deposit funds.

Homeless Advocacy Project

Funds will be provided to Pine Tree Legal Association to continue an eviction prevention project that has a primary strategy of Pine Tree attorneys serving as “lawyer of the day” in several District Court locations when “forcible entry and detainer” (FED) proceedings are scheduled in order to provide legal representation to low-income tenants.

SECTION II: DEFINITIONS

Arizona Self-Sufficiency Matrix is a tool that evaluates the client's situation in a number of areas that impact the client's life in regard to stability and quality of life. The tool provides a structured way to record overall client progress over time and in relation to interventions.

Certification means a written assertion, based on supporting evidence that must be kept available for inspection by HUD, by the Inspector General of HUD, and by the public. The assertion shall be deemed to be accurate unless HUD determines otherwise, after inspecting the evidence and providing due notice and opportunity for comment.

Consolidated Plan means the plan prepared in accordance with 24 CFR Part 91.

Grantee means the legal entity to which HUD awards an HPRP grant and which is accountable for the use of the funds provided.

Homeless means as the term is defined by section 103 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11302).

HMIS means Homeless Management Information System.

HUD means the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Imminent Risk of Homelessness means the threat of homelessness is so immediate that in all likelihood the individual or family would be homeless *but* for this assistance.

Non-profit sub-grantee means any private non-profit organization to which a grantee provides funds to carry out the eligible activities under the grant and which is accountable to the grantee for the use of funds provided.

Private non-profit organization means an organization described in 26 U.S.C. 501(c) that is exempt from taxation under subtitle A of the Internal Revenue Code, has an accounting system and a voluntary board, and practices nondiscrimination in the provision of assistance.

Program participant means an individual or family with or without children that is provided HPRP financial assistance or housing relocation and stabilization services through a rapid rehousing or prevention program. In this manual, the term "household" refers to individuals or families.

State means the State of Maine.

Sub-grantee means any private non-profit organization or unit of general local government to which a grantee provides funds to carry out the eligible activities under the grant and which is accountable to the grantee for the use of the funds provided.

SECTION III: POLICY

Allocations

The Recovery Act directs HUD to allocate funds to grantees that are eligible under the ESG program, as defined and designated in sections 411 and 412 of subtitle B of Title IV of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, pursuant to the formula authorized by section 413 of that Act. States, urban counties, metropolitan cities, and U.S. territories are eligible grantees under HPRP.

MaineHousing developed a methodology for allocating funds statewide by utilizing factors such as the poverty index, changes in unemployment during the past year, the number of Earned Income Tax Credit filings, the rental affordability index, shelter bednight usage, and information related to reported psychological distress and untreated substance abuse. These factors produced an allocation factor which resulted in a predetermined allocation of financial assistance funds for each sub-grantee.

Reallocation and Recapture

The Recovery Act requires HUD to obligate all funds to grantees by September 30, 2011. HUD will closely track grantee expenditures in order to meet this requirement and allow for reallocation if grantees have not spent 60 percent of their funds within 2 years. MaineHousing will be issuing 2-year contracts to sub-grantees and expects to obligate all of its HPRP funds within this time period.

MaineHousing reserves the right to review a sub-grantee's 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.

Eligible Activities

As a state grantee, MaineHousing will make available all of its formula allocation, except for an appropriate share of funds for administrative costs, to the sub-grantees to carry out all eligible activities. Any organization receiving HPRP funds shall be subject to all of the requirements that apply to the grantee under the HUD Notice. This includes HMIS data requirements.

Because MaineHousing administers the statewide HMIS and HUD requires that 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 participation fees associated with the cost of the HMIS. A portion of the data collection and report funds will be retained by each sub-grantee.

Grant funds must be used for eligible activities as described in the HUD Notice. There are four categories of eligible activities for the HPRP program: financial assistance, housing relocation and stabilization services, data collection and evaluation, and administrative costs. These eligible activities are intentionally focused on housing—either financial assistance to help pay for housing, or services designed to keep people in housing or to find housing. Generally, the intent of HPRP assistance is to rapidly transition program participants to stability, either through their own means or through public assistance, as appropriate. HPRP assistance is not intended to provide long-term support for program participants, nor will it be able to address all of the financial and supportive services needs of households that affect housing stability. Assistance should be focused on housing stabilization, linking program participants to community resources and mainstream benefits, and helping them develop a plan for preventing future housing instability.

Financial Assistance

Financial assistance is limited to the following activities: short-term rental assistance, medium-term rental assistance, security deposits, utility deposits, utility payments, moving cost assistance, and motel and hotel vouchers. Grantees and sub-grantees must not make payments directly to program participants, but only to third parties, such as landlords or utility companies. In addition, an assisted property may not be owned by the grantee, sub-grantee or the parent, subsidiary or affiliated organization of the sub-grantee.

HPRP funds may not be used to move an individual or family into a transitional housing program, nor may the funds be used to assist persons residing in a transitional housing program. HPRP funds may be used to assist persons who are graduating from or timing out of a transitional housing program to obtain permanent housing.

Rental Assistance

Short- and medium-term rental assistance means tenant-based rental assistance that can be used to allow individuals and families to remain in their existing rental units or to help them obtain and remain in rental units they select. Short-term rental assistance may not exceed rental costs accrued over a period of 3 months. Medium-term rental assistance may not exceed actual rental costs accrued over a period of 4 to 18 months. No program participant may receive more than 18 months of assistance under HPRP. After 3 months, if program participants receiving short-term rental assistance need additional financial assistance to remain housed, they must be evaluated for eligibility to receive up to 15 additional months of medium-term rental assistance, for a total of 18 months. HUD is requiring grantees and sub-grantees to certify eligibility at least once every 3 months for all program participants receiving medium-term rental assistance. HUD additionally encourages grantees and sub-grantees to provide ongoing case management, as needed, to all program participants receiving rental assistance in order to transition them to independence, including permanent housing arrangements (subsidized or unsubsidized).

In general, the Homeless Diversion and Prevention Program will offer rental assistance up to 3 months, and the Engagement and Housing Stabilization Program will offer rental assistance up to 12 months.

Rental assistance payments cannot be made on behalf of eligible individuals or families for the same period of time and for the same cost types that are being provided through another federal, state or local housing subsidy program. Cost types are the categories of eligible HPRP financial assistance: rent, either the client portion or the subsidy; security deposits, utility deposits, utility payments, moving cost assistance, and hotel/motel vouchers.

Security and Utility Deposits

HPRP funds may be used to pay for security deposits, including utility deposits, for eligible program participants. In contrast to the requirements regarding rental assistance payments, security and utility deposits covering the same period of time in which assistance is being provided through another housing subsidy program are eligible, as long as they cover separate cost types. One example of this would be providing a security deposit for a client receiving a HUD VA Supportive Housing (VASH) voucher, which provides rental assistance and services.

HPRP funds may be used for up to 18 months of utility payments, including up to 6 months of utility payments in arrears, for each program participant, provided that the program participant or a member of his/her household has an account in his/her name with a utility company or proof of responsibility to make utility payments, such as cancelled checks or receipts in his/her name from a utility company.

Moving Cost Assistance

HPRP funds may be used for reasonable moving costs, such as truck rental, hiring a moving company, or short-term storage fees for a maximum of 3 months or until the program participant is in housing, whichever is shorter.

Motel and Hotel Vouchers

HPRP funds may be used for reasonable and appropriate motel and hotel vouchers for 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 by the program participants.

Housing Relocation and Stabilization

HPRP funds may be used for services that assist program participants with housing stability and placement. These services are limited to case management, outreach and engagement, housing search and placement, legal services and credit repair.

Case Management

HPRP funds may be used for case management activities that involve the arrangement, coordination, monitoring, and delivery of services related to meeting the housing needs of program participants and helping them obtain housing stability. Component services and activities may include: counseling; developing, securing, and coordinating services; monitoring and evaluating program participant progress; assuring that program participants' rights are protected; and developing an individualized housing and service plan, including a path to permanent housing stability subsequent to HPRP financial assistance.

Outreach and Engagement

HPRP funds may be used for services or assistance designed to publicize the availability of programs to make persons who are homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness aware of these and other available services and programs.

Housing Search and Placement

HPRP funds may be used for services or activities designed to assist individuals or families in locating, obtaining, and retaining suitable housing. Component services or activities may include: tenant counseling; assisting individuals and families to understand leases; securing utilities; making moving arrangements; representative payee services concerning rent and utilities; and mediation and outreach to property owners related to locating or retaining housing.

Legal Services

HPRP funds may be used for legal services to help people stay in their homes, such as services or activities provided by a lawyer or other person(s) under the supervision of a lawyer to assist program participants with legal advice and representation in administrative or court proceedings related to tenant/landlord matters or housing issues. Legal services related to mortgages are not eligible.

Credit Repair

HPRP funds may be used for services that are targeted to assist program participants with critical skills related to household budgeting, money management, accessing a free personal credit report, and resolving personal credit issues.

Ineligible and Prohibited Activities

The intent of HPRP is to provide funding for housing expenses to persons who are homeless or who would be homeless if not for this assistance. Therefore, financial assistance or services to pay for expenses that are available through other Recovery Act programs, including child care and employment training, are not eligible. Case managers should work to link program participants to these other resources.

Financial assistance may not be used to pay for any mortgage costs or costs needed by homeowners to assist with any fees, taxes, or other costs of refinancing a mortgage to make it affordable.

HPRP funds may not be used to pay for any of the following items: construction or rehabilitation; credit card bills or other consumer debt; car repair or other transportation costs; travel costs; food; medical or dental care and medicines; clothing and grooming; home furnishings; pet care; entertainment activities; work or education related materials; and cash assistance to program participants. Programs may not charge fees to HPRP program participants. Any HPRP funds used to support program participants must be issued directly to the appropriate third party, such as the landlord or utility company, and in no case are funds eligible to be issued directly to program participants. If funds are found to be used for ineligible activities as determined by HUD, the grantee and/or sub-grantees will be required to reimburse HUD.

Administrative Costs

Administrative costs may be used for accounting for the use of grant funds; preparing reports for submission to MaineHousing; and sub-grantee staff salaries associated with these administrative costs. Administrative costs also include training for staff who will administer the program or case managers who will serve program participants, as long as this training is directly related to learning about HPRP.

Administrative costs *do not* include the costs of issuing financial assistance, providing housing relocation and stabilization services, or carrying out eligible data collection and evaluation activities, as specified above, such as sub-grantee staff salaries, costs of conducting housing inspections, and other operating costs. These costs should be included under one of the three other eligible activity categories.

MaineHousing will share a reasonable and appropriate amount of their administrative funds with sub-grantees. Sub-grantees will receive 2.5 % of the administration fees for the Financial Assistance and Housing Relocation and Stabilization funds.

Data Collection and Evaluation

Data Collection and Reporting

The Recovery Act requires that data collection and reporting for HPRP be conducted through the use of Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS) or a comparable client-level database. Grantees and sub-grantees must comply if asked to participate in HUD-sponsored research and evaluation of HPRP.

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

Bowman Systems 'ServicePoint' is the software used by all Maine Continuums of Care (COC) as the Maine state wide Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). Maine Housing is the designated HMIS lead agency. All homeless and homeless prevention related services provided under HPRP funding must be recorded in the Maine HMIS.

All HPRP recipients and impacted family members must be entered into HMIS with name, date of birth, social security number, and the complete HUD/Maine Universal Data elements, plus service related data. Depending on the type of service provided, other data may be required.

All sub-grantees receiving funding under HPRP will receive ServicePoint licenses necessary to record these services. ServicePoint users will receive training in the use of ServicePoint by MaineHousing staff and be bound by and follow the same confidentiality and other policies and procedures outlined in the Maine HMIS Policies and Procedures Manual. Specific service related data entry training will be provided to all providers needing to record HPRP related data. Because of state and federal reporting requirements, all data for a service or services must be entered into HMIS completely and accurately in the week the service(s) are provided.

All sub-grantees will be required to meet the following minimum standards for HMIS/HPRP data collection and reporting;

- Sub-grantees must enter into a HMIS/HPRP Agency Participation Agreement
- All sub-grantee staff that participate in HPRP eligible activities must have regular and convenient access to a computer with a high speed Internet connection.
- All sub-grantee staff that participate in HPRP eligible activities must have a unique assigned email address that they can access regularly during work hours.

To promote coordination of benefits and necessary monitoring of HPRP requirements regarding eligibility and duration of benefits, appropriate interagency agreements will be in place and client releases of information will be obtained so that HMIS data may be appropriately shared among HPRP sub-grantees. This data may also be shared with other providers using HMIS, given appropriate agreements and the client's permission, to promote coordinated planning and service delivery.

Evaluation

MaineHousing and its sub-grantees will participate in an evaluation project that will measure the overall housing and financial stability of recipients who receive funding under the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA) within three proposed initiatives which are part of the Homelessness Prevention & Re-Housing Program (HPRP). Sub-grantees will enter data into HMIS as required by HUD and MaineHousing. The evaluation project will develop tracking mechanisms to be used by case management staff and will assess overall stability of those who receive funding at three intervals over 18 months. This will include the HUD-defined universal data elements, housing status, client income and sources, Financial Assistance provided, Housing Relocation & Stabilization services provided, and clients' progress on a specified number of domains based on the Arizona Self-Sufficiency Matrix

Other Program Information and Requirements

Eligible Program Participants

MaineHousing's HPRP Initiatives are designed to serve two eligible populations: persons who are still housed but at imminent risk of becoming homeless and persons who are already homeless. Sub-grantees are responsible for verifying and documenting the program participant's risk of imminent homelessness that qualifies them for receiving rental assistance, or for verifying and documenting a participant's actual homelessness. HUD requires sub-grantees to evaluate and certify the eligibility of program participants at least once every 3 months for all persons receiving medium-term rental assistance. Similarly, sub-grantees should carefully assess a household's need and appropriateness for HPRP assistance. If the household needs more intensive supportive services or long-term assistance than the sub-grantee can provide, or if a household is not at risk of imminent homelessness, sub-grantees must work to link them to other appropriate available resources.

Requirements for All Program Participants

In order to receive financial assistance or services funded by HPRP, individuals and families, whether homeless or housed, must at least meet the following minimum criteria:

- ◆ Any individual or family provided with financial assistance through HPRP must have at least an initial assessment with a case manager or other authorized representative who can determine the appropriate type of assistance to meet their needs. Sub-grantees must have a process in place to refer persons ineligible for HPRP to the appropriate resources or service provider that can assist them.
- ◆ The household must be at or below 50 percent of Area Median Income (AMI).
- ◆ The household must be either homeless or at imminent risk of losing its housing and meet both of the following circumstances: (1) no appropriate subsequent housing options have been identified; AND (2) the household lacks the financial resources and support networks needed to obtain immediate housing or remain in its existing housing.

Prevention Assistance

It can be more challenging to identify persons who are housed but who have a very high risk of becoming homeless. There are many people who are housed and have great need but would not become homeless if they did not receive assistance. Sub-grantees are encouraged to target prevention assistance to those individuals and families at the greatest risk of becoming homeless.

Rapid Re-Housing Assistance

Rapid re-housing assistance is available for individuals and families who meet one of the following criteria, along with the minimum requirements for all program participants as mentioned above:

- ◆ Sleeping in an emergency shelter;
- ◆ Sleeping in a place not meant for human habitation, such as cars, parks, abandoned buildings, streets/sidewalks;
- ◆ Staying in a hospital or other institution for up to 180 days but was sleeping in an emergency shelter or other place not meant for human habitation (cars, parks, streets, etc.) immediately prior to entry into the hospital or institution;
- ◆ Graduating from, or timing out of a transitional housing program; and

- ◆ Victims of domestic violence.

The purpose of HPRP funds for rapid re-housing is to assist eligible program participants to quickly obtain and sustain stable housing. Therefore, sub-grantees providing assistance will utilize a process to assess, for all potential program participants, their level of service need, other resources available to them, and the appropriateness of their participation in the rapid re-housing assistance portion of HPRP. Program participants who require longer-term housing assistance and services should be directed to programs that can provide the requisite services and financial assistance.

Other Federal and State Requirements

Confidentiality

Each HPRP sub-grantee must develop and implement procedures to ensure:

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

Termination of Housing Assistance

The sub-grantee may terminate assistance to a program participant who violates program requirements. Sub-grantees may resume assistance to a program participant whose assistance was previously terminated. In terminating assistance to a program participant, the sub-grantee must provide a formal process that recognizes the rights of individuals receiving assistance to due process of law. This process, at a minimum, must consist of:

- ◆ Written notice to the program participant containing a clear statement of the reasons for termination;
- ◆ A review of the decision, in which the program participant is given the opportunity to present written or oral objections before a person other than the person (or a subordinate of that person) who made or approved the termination decision; and
- ◆ Prompt written notice of the final decision to the program participant.

Recordkeeping

Each sub-grantee must keep any records and make any reports (including those pertaining to race, ethnicity, gender, and disability status data) that HUD may require within the timeframe specified.

Sanctions

If a grantee determines that a sub-grantee is not complying with the requirements of this guide or other applicable federal laws, the grantee will take appropriate actions, which may include;

- ◆ Issue a warning letter that further failure to comply with such requirements will result in a more serious sanction;
- ◆ Direct the sub-grantee to cease incurring costs with grant funds; or

- ◆ Require that some or all of the grant amounts be remitted to MaineHousing.

Any grant amounts that become available to MaineHousing as a result of a sanction will be made available (as soon as practicable) to other private non-profit organizations or units of general local government located in the state for use within the time periods specified in HUD Notice.

Monitoring

MaineHousing is responsible for monitoring all HPRP activities, including activities that are carried out by a sub-grantee, to ensure that the program requirements established by the HUD Notice and any subsequent guidance are met. MaineHousing will follow the monitoring procedures it established in its substantial amendment submitted for HPRP. MaineHousing will have staff that will have responsibility for continuous monitoring of all HPRP sub-grantee activities. This will be accomplished with regular site visits to sub-grantees and monthly review of all grant activity reports that will be required of sub-grantees. This individual will also provide support and mentoring, as needed, to sub-grantee staff who are hired to carry out HPRP activities. Monitoring of sub-grantees may be conducted by the MaineHousing, local HUD Office of Community Planning and Development, HUD's Office of Special Needs Assistance Programs, HUD's Office of Inspector General, HUD's Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity, or another federal agency to determine whether the sub-grantee complied with the requirements of this program.

Conflicts of Interest

With respect to the use of HPRP funds to procure services, equipment, supplies or other property, states, territories and units of general local government that receive HPRP funds shall comply with 24 CFR 85.36(b)(3), and non-profit sub-grantees shall comply with 24 CFR 84.42. With respect to all other decisions involving the use of HPRP funds, the following restriction shall apply: No person who is an employee, agent, consultant, officer, or elected or appointed official of the grantee and who exercises or has exercised any functions or responsibilities with respect to assisted activities, or who is in a position to participate in a decision-making process or gain inside information with regard to such activities, may obtain a personal or financial interest or benefit from the activity, or have an interest in any contract, subcontract, or agreement with respect thereto, or the proceeds thereunder, either for himself or herself or for those with whom he or she has family or business ties, during his or her tenure or for one year thereafter.

Environmental Requirements

The HUD Notice does not direct, provide for assistance or loan and mortgage insurance for, or otherwise govern or regulate, real property acquisition, disposition, leasing (other than tenant-based rental assistance), rehabilitation, alteration, demolition, or new construction, or establish, revise or provide for standards for construction or construction materials, manufactured housing, or occupancy. Accordingly, under 24 CFR 50.19(c)(1), the HUD Notice is categorically excluded from environmental review under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C.4321). Moreover, consistent with the provisions for administrative and management expenses, tenant-based rental assistance, and supportive services in 24 CFR 50.19(b)(3), (11), and (12), the eligible activities to be assisted under the HUD Notice are categorically excluded from the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321) and are not subject to environmental review under the related laws and authorities.

Habitability Standards

Sub-grantees providing rental assistance with HPRP funds will be required to conduct initial and any appropriate follow-up inspections of housing units into which a program participant will be moving. Units must be inspected on an annual basis and upon a change of tenancy. MaineHousing will provide a Habitability Standards Checklist.

Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Requirements

Sub-grantees must comply with all applicable fair housing and civil rights requirements in 24 CFR 5.105(a). In addition, sub-grantees must make known that HPRP rental assistance and services are available to all on a nondiscriminatory basis and ensure that all citizens have equal access to information about HPRP and equal access to the financial assistance and services provided under this program. Among other things, this means that each sub-grantee must take reasonable steps to ensure meaningful access to programs to persons with limited English proficiency (LEP), pursuant to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. This may mean providing language assistance or ensuring that program information is available in the appropriate languages for the geographic area served by the jurisdiction and that limited English proficient persons have meaningful access to HPRP assistance

In addition, all notices and communications shall be provided in a manner that is effective for persons with hearing, visual, and other communication related disabilities consistent with section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and implementing regulations at 24 CFR 8.6. If the procedures that the sub-grantee intends to use to make known the availability of the rental assistance and services are unlikely to reach persons of any particular race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, familial status, or disability who may qualify for such rental assistance and services, the sub-grantee must establish additional procedures that will ensure that such persons are made aware of the rental assistance and services.

Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing

Under section 808(e)(5) of the Fair Housing Act, HUD has a statutory duty to affirmatively further fair housing. HUD requires the same of its funding recipients. Sub-grantees will have a duty to affirmatively further fair housing opportunities for classes protected under the Fair Housing Act. Protected classes include race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, and familial status. Examples of affirmatively furthering fair housing include: (1) marketing the program to all eligible persons, including persons with disabilities and persons with limited English proficiency; (2) making buildings and communications that facilitate applications and service delivery accessible to persons with disabilities (see, for example, HUD's rule on effective communications at 24 CFR 8.6); (3) providing fair housing counseling services or referrals to fair housing agencies; (4) informing participants of how to file a housing discrimination complaint, including providing the toll-free number for the Housing Discrimination Hotline: 1-800-669-9777; and (5) recruiting landlords and service providers in areas that expand housing choice to program participants.

Lead-Based Paint Requirements

The Lead-Based Paint Poisoning Prevention Act (42 U.S.C. 4801 et seq.), as amended by the Residential Lead-Based Paint Hazard Reduction Act of 1992 (42 U.S.C. 4851 et seq.) and implementing regulations at 24 CFR part 35, subparts A, B, M, and R shall apply to housing occupied by families receiving assistance through HPRP.

Uniform Administrative Requirements

Non-profit sub-grantees shall be subject to the requirements of 24 CFR part 84.

Equal Participation of Religious Organizations

Sub-grantees that are religious or faith-based are eligible, on the same basis as any other organization, to participate in HPRP. Neither the federal government nor a grantee shall discriminate against an organization on the basis of the organization's religious character or affiliation.

Sub-grantees that are directly funded under HPRP may not engage in inherently religious activities, such as worship, religious instruction, or proselytization as part of the programs or services funded under HPRP. If an organization conducts such activities, the activities must be offered separately, in time or location, from the programs or services funded under HPRP, and participation must be voluntary for the program participants.

A religious organization that participates in HPRP will retain its independence from federal, state, and local governments, and may continue to carry out its mission, including the definition, practice, and expression of its religious beliefs, provided that it does not use direct HPRP funds to support any inherently religious activities, such as worship, religious instruction, or proselytization. Among other things, faith-based organizations may use space in their facilities to provide HPRP-funded services, without removing religious art, icons, scriptures, or other religious symbols. In addition, a HPRP-funded religious organization retains its authority over its internal governance, and it may retain religious terms in its organization's name, select its board members on a religious basis, and include religious references in its organization's mission statements and other governing documents.

Sub-grantees that participate in the HPRP program shall not, in providing program assistance, discriminate against a program participant or prospective program participant on the basis of religion or religious belief.

Lobbying and Disclosure Requirements

The disclosure requirements and prohibitions of section 319 of the Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 1990 (31 U.S.C. 1352) (the Byrd Amendment), and implementing regulations at 24 CFR part 87, apply to HPRP. Applicants must disclose, using Standard Form LLL (SF-LLL), "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," any funds, other than federally appropriated funds, that will be or have been used to influence federal employees, members of Congress, or congressional staff regarding specific grants or contracts.

Drug-Free Workplace Requirements

The Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 (41 U.S.C. 701, et seq.) and HUD's implementing regulations at 24 CFR part 21 apply to HPRP.

SECTION IV: PROCEDURE

ENGAGEMENT & HOUSING STABILIZATION PROGRAM

Program Overview

The Engagement & Housing Stabilization Program (the Program) serves individuals with apparent or diagnosed mental illness or co-occurring disorders from emergency through stability. Sub-grantees 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 until they have achieved housing stability and any needed support services.

Sub-grantees must demonstrate organizational capacity and criteria as follows;

- 501(c)(3) nonprofit or municipal government
- Successful experience, which is mission driven, serving homeless populations or other very difficult to serve groups
- Immediate ability and capacity to administer, deliver and implement the initiative, including meeting performance outcomes (within 30 days of award of contract)
- Demonstrated presence in the service area
- Strong history and culture of community collaboration, including mainstream resources and developing relationships with new community resources
- Ability to meet all reporting and data collection requirements, including HMIS
- Capacity to provide clinical supervision with at least a master's level clinician

Sub-grantee staff will actively visit homeless shelters and any other known areas where individuals who meet program eligibility requirements may be found in the community with a goal of engagement and admittance to the Program. Sub-grantee staff will work closely with community agencies to build collaborative relationships and to become familiar with how to access available services for clients efficiently and effectively. Further, sub-grantee staff will be responsible for developing a matrix of available resources in their community to use as a tool in directing clients to the appropriate agencies in order to prioritize and access services they need.

Program Eligibility

Sub-grantee staff will conduct an initial intake interview with clients using a standardized Plan for Housing Stability Tool (the Plan) to verify program eligibility and assess the level of client need.

In order to be eligible for the program clients must:

- have an apparent or diagnosed mental illness or co-occurring disorder
- have experienced extended periods of homelessness
- meet HUD McKinney-Vento definition of homelessness

It is also anticipated that many of the program clients will have difficulty in engaging with service providers.

Sub-grantees will certify program eligibility at least every three months by completing the Program Eligibility Certification and placing it in the client file

Income Eligibility

A client 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"). Sub-grantees will complete income verification forms and submit to appropriate income sources for 3rd party verification. Completed income verifications should be placed in the client file. Income Guidelines, Attachment A, can be found in the Attachment section of this manual.

Documentation and File Contents

If a client is found to be eligible and appropriate for the program after the initial interview, certain documents must be obtained and placed in the client file.

Additionally, the Plan must be completed and placed in the client file. The Plan is a tool that will be used to assess and develop a strategy to achieve client stability within the timeframe established by program regulations. Additionally, the Plan must be used to actively assist clients in meeting established outcomes based upon individual client need. The Plan should be referenced, revised and updated weekly throughout a client's participation in the program.

Financial Assistance

The Program offers financial assistance with rent, security deposits, utility payments, moving costs and hotel/motel costs.

Rental Assistance may be provided for up to 12 months. Requests for additional assistance may be considered and approved on a case by case basis with the maximum amount of rental assistance not to exceed 18 months. Clients are expected to pay 30% of their income for rent and utilities. Sub-grantees may waive this requirement on a case-by-case basis and must supply appropriate documentation in the participant's file that clearly states the reasons for the waiver. Sub-grantees are responsible for ensuring a rental unit that a client is moving into meets rent reasonableness and that the unit meets habitability standards before any rental payments are approved. In addition, Lead Based Paint Poisoning Act requirements must be met when applicable based upon participant household composition.

Sub-grantees will work closely with program participants to locate a rental unit. When a rental unit has been located, sub-grantees will assist the client in contacting the landlord to complete the appropriate paperwork and conduct a habitability standards inspection

Security Deposits may be provided as a one-time grant not to exceed the monthly rental amount. Information on the need for a security deposit should be obtained at the same time the required rental paperwork is being completed by the client and landlord

Utility payments: HPRP funds may be used for up to 18 months of utility payments, including up to 6 months of utility payments in arrears, for each program participant.

Sub-grantees must obtain proof that a participant or a household member has a utility account in his/her name or proof of responsibility to make utility payments such as cancelled checks or receipts in his/her name from a utility company before utility payments are approved and released on behalf of the participant.

Copies of the proof of responsibility should be obtained and maintained in the client file.

Moving Costs: HPRP funds may be used for reasonable moving costs, such as truck rental, hiring a moving company, or short-term storage fees for a maximum of 3 months or until the program participant is in housing, whichever is shorter.

If accessing moving/storage services, the sub-grantee must document in detail the circumstances surrounding the need to access these services, include monthly fees that will be charged and the dates in which the services will be accessed. In addition, Sub-grantee staff should take an active role in assisting the participant in finding reasonably priced vendors for this service.

Motel and Hotel Vouchers: HPRP funds may be used for reasonable and appropriate motel and hotel vouchers for 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 by the program participant.

Sub-grantees should be actively assisting a participant in seeking a place to stay while waiting for an available unit. If it is necessary to issue a hotel/motel voucher, the sub-grantee will document the circumstances surrounding the need, include the fees that will be charged, the dates in which the participant will access the service and place all the documentation in the client file.

Housing Relocation & Stabilization Services

The Program offers services that assist program participants with housing stability and placement and are limited to case management, outreach and engagement, housing search and placement, and credit repair. Any services that are provided or accessed should be documented and placed in the client file.

Case Management: HPRP Case Managers will actively participate in arranging, coordinating, monitoring and delivering services related to meeting the housing needs of program participants and help them obtain housing stability.

Sub-grantees will ensure that all HPRP Case Managers possess the following skills and knowledge:

- Clinical training and experience that includes at least a 4-year degree, with master's level social work training preferred
- Demonstrated effectiveness in serving people with severe and persistent mental illness and substance abuse problems
- Demonstrated effectiveness in serving people who experience chronic homelessness
- Demonstrated ability to form therapeutic alliances
- Thorough understanding and demonstrated capacity to connect clients with community and mainstream resources
- Familiarity with community resources where he/she will be working
- Flexibility in work hours in order to meet with clients where and when they are available
- Ability to foster creative solutions

Sub-grantees are expected to include component services and activities which may include: counseling; developing, securing, and coordinating services; monitoring and evaluating program participant progress; assuring that program participants' rights are protected; and developing an individualized housing and service plan, including a path to permanent housing stability subsequent to HPRP financial assistance.

Outreach and Engagement: HPRP funds may be used for services or assistance designed to publicize the availability of programs to make person who are homeless or almost homeless aware of these and other available services and programs.

Sub-grantees are expected to inform community agencies and organizations of the services that the program offers, who is eligible and how services are accessed.

Housing Search and Placement: HPRP housing search and placement funds may be used for services or activities designed to assist individuals or families in locating, obtaining, and retaining suitable housing.

Sub-grantees are expected to provide a variety of services and activities as needed for individual participants including but not limited to: tenant counseling; assisting individuals and families to understand leases; securing utilities; making moving arrangements; representative payee services concerning rent and utilities; and mediation and outreach to property owners related to locating or retaining housing. In addition, sub-grantee staff is encouraged to use the MaineHousing Statewide Housing Locator which can be accessed at www.mainehousingsearch.org

Credit Repair: HPRP funds may be used for services that are targeted to assist program participants with critical skills related to household budgeting, money management, accessing a free personal credit report, and resolving personal credit issues.

Sub-grantees are expected to work closely with participants who require assistance in developing skills necessary to understand and manage their personal funds.

Data Collection, Reporting and Evaluation 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. 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.

Sub-grantees are expected to record all HPRP recipients and impacted family members data into the HMIS including but not limited to:

- Name
- Date of birth
- Social security number
- Complete HUD/Maine Universal Data elements
- Service related data
- Client and financial program information

and to submit required data to MaineHousing in a manner and timeframe to be established by MaineHousing.

Reporting: Sub-grantees are expected to generate weekly reports from HMIS using the Advanced Reporting Tool (ART), that is provided with the HMIS software, and submit these reports on a regular schedule and format to be established by MaineHousing.

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 this program. Case management staff will use tracking mechanisms developed by MaineHousing to assess participant stability at 6-month intervals for up to 18 months. 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.

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 by either the grantee or subgrantee must be listed in the Maine Job Bank with the Maine Career Centers.

Sub-grantees will:

- 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.

MaineHousing will charge a participation fee to all sub-grantees for HMIS data collection and reporting costs associated with the HMIS that is administered by MaineHousing. MaineHousing will allocate HPRP funds to sub-grantees for the HMIS costs. The participation fee will be 75% of the allocation and 25% will be retained by the sub-grantee. MaineHousing will invoice the sub-grantee for the participation fee.

Rent Reasonableness

Sub-grantees must ensure that HPRP funds used for rental assistance do not exceed the actual rental cost, which must be in compliance with HUD's standard of "rent reasonableness." "Rent reasonableness" means that the total rent charged for a unit must be reasonable in relation to the rents being charged during the same time period for comparable units in the private unassisted market and must not be in excess of rents being charged by the owner during the same time period for comparable non-luxury unassisted units.

Habitability Standards

Sub-grantees will conduct a habitability standards inspection on any unit that a client will be moving into using HPRP funds for rental and/or security deposit assistance. Sub-grantees must certify that the unit has passed habitability standards before any HPRP funds may be released. In addition, an annual habitability standards inspection must be conducted for any unit in which HPRP funds are being used. The Habitability Standards, Attachment B, can be found in the Attachments section of this manual.

Monitoring and Compliance

Sub-grantees are expected to make available all client, financial and program records for periodic review on a schedule to be established by MaineHousing. In addition, sub-grantees will maintain client files in compliance with the standard set by MaineHousing.

HOMELESS DIVERSION & PREVENTION PROGRAM

Program Overview

The Homeless Diversion & Prevention Program (the Program) serves individuals and families who are at imminent risk of homelessness or who are already homeless. Sub-grantees will link individuals and families with resources needed for stabilization such as General Assistance, employment and training options, conflict resolution and mediation services, applications for rental subsidies, housing search and other support services. Short-term rental assistance (up to 3 months) and security and utility deposits will be available.

Sub-grantees must demonstrate organizational capacity and criteria as follows;

- 501(c)(3) nonprofit or municipal government
- Successful experience, which is mission driven, serving homeless populations or other very difficult to serve groups
- Immediate ability and capacity to administer, deliver and implement the initiative, including meeting performance outcomes (within 30 days of award of contract)
- Demonstrated presence in the service area
- Strong history and culture of community collaboration, including mainstream resources and developing relationships with new community resources
- Ability to meet all reporting and data collection requirements, including HMIS

MaineHousing will provide guidance to sub-grantees relative to the definition of imminent risk of homelessness and assessing for this risk.

Sub-grantee staff will actively visit homeless shelters and other community agencies and organizations where individuals who meet program eligibility requirements may be found in the community. Sub-grantee staff will work closely with community agencies to build collaborative relationships and to become familiar with how to access available services for clients efficiently and effectively. Further, sub-grantee staff will be responsible for developing a matrix of available resources in their community to use as a tool in directing clients to the appropriate agencies in order to prioritize and access services they need.

Program Eligibility

Sub-grantee staff will conduct an initial intake interview with clients using a standardized Plan for Housing Stability Tool (the Plan) to verify program eligibility and assess the level of client need.

In order to be eligible for the program clients must be:

- Homeless based upon HUD McKinney-Vento definition of homelessness, or
- At imminent risk of becoming homeless

Sub-grantees will certify program eligibility at least every three months by completing the Program Eligibility Certification and placing it in the client file.

Income Eligibility

A client 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"). Sub-grantees will complete income verification forms and submit to appropriate income sources for 3rd party verification. Completed income

verifications should be placed in the client file. Income Guidelines, Attachment A, can be found in the Attachment section of this manual.

Documentation and File Contents

If a client is found to be eligible and appropriate for the program after the initial interview, certain documents must be obtained and placed in the client file. Additionally, the Plan must be completed and placed in the client file. The Plan is a tool that will be used to assess and develop a strategy to achieve client stability within the timeframe established by program regulations. Additionally, the Plan must be used to actively assist clients in meeting established outcomes based upon individual client need. The Plan should be referenced, revised and updated weekly throughout a client's participation in the program.

Financial Assistance

The Program offers financial assistance with rent, security deposits, utility payments, moving costs and hotel/motel costs.

Rental Assistance may be provided for up to 3 months. Requests for additional assistance may be considered and approved on a case by case basis, however it is expected that these exceptions will be rare. Clients are expected to pay 30% of their income for rent and utilities. The sub-grantee may waive this requirement on a case-by-case basis and must supply documentation in the client's file that clearly states the reasons for the waiver. Sub-grantees are responsible for ensuring a rental unit that a client is moving into meets rent reasonableness and that the unit meets habitability standards before any rental payments are approved. In addition, Lead Based Paint Poisoning Act requirements must be met when applicable based upon participant household composition.

Sub-grantees will work closely with program participants to locate a rental unit if needed. When a rental unit has been located, sub-grantees will assist the client in contacting the landlord to complete the appropriate paperwork and conduct a habitability standards inspection

Security Deposits may be provided as a one-time grant not to exceed the monthly rental amount. Information on the need for a security deposit should be obtained at the same time the required rental paperwork is being completed by the client and landlord. Security deposit information should be included in the Rental Unit Information Form if security deposit funds are being accessed.

Utility payments: HPRP funds may be used for up to 18 months of utility payments, including up to 6 months of utility payments in arrears, for each program participant.

Sub-grantees must obtain proof that a participant or a household member has a utility account in his/her name or proof of responsibility to make utility payments such as cancelled checks or receipts in his/her name from a utility company before utility payments are approved and released on behalf of the participant.

Copies of the proof of responsibility should be obtained and maintained in the client file.

Moving Costs: HPRP funds may be used for reasonable moving costs, such as truck rental, hiring a moving company, or short-term storage fees for a maximum of 3 months or until the program participant is in housing, whichever is shorter.

If accessing moving/storage services, the sub-grantee must document in detail the circumstances surrounding the need to access these services, include monthly fees that will be charged and the dates in which the services will be accessed. In addition, sub-grantee staff should take an active role in assisting the participant in finding reasonably priced vendors for this service.

Motel and Hotel Vouchers: HPRP funds may be used for reasonable and appropriate motel and hotel vouchers for 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 by the program participant.

Sub-grantees should be actively assisting a participant in seeking a place to stay while waiting for an available unit. If it is necessary to issue a hotel/motel voucher, the sub-grantee will document the circumstances surrounding the need, include the fees that will be charged, the dates in which the participant will access the service and place all the documentation in the client file.

Housing Relocation & Stabilization Services

The Program offers services that assist program participants with housing stability and placement and are limited to case management, outreach and engagement, housing search and placement and credit repair. Any services that are provided or accessed should be documented and placed in the client file.

Case Management: HPRP Housing Relocation & Stabilization Specialists will actively participate in arranging; coordinating, monitoring and delivering services related to meeting the housing needs of program participants and help them obtain housing stability.

Sub-grantees are expected to include component services and activities which may include: counseling; developing, securing, and coordinating services; monitoring and evaluating program participant progress; assuring that program participants' rights are protected; and developing an individualized housing and service plan, including a path to permanent housing stability subsequent to HPRP financial assistance.

Outreach and Engagement: HPRP funds may be used for services or assistance designed to publicize the availability of programs to make person who are homeless or almost homeless aware of these and other available services and programs.

Sub-grantees are expected to inform community agencies and organizations of the services that the program offers, who is eligible and how services are accessed.

Housing Search and Placement: HPRP housing search and placement funds may be used for services or activities designed to assist individuals or families in locating, obtaining, and retaining suitable housing.

Sub-grantees are expected to provide a variety of services and activities as needed for individual participants including but not limited to: tenant counseling; assisting individuals and families to understand leases; securing utilities; making moving arrangements; representative payee services concerning rent and utilities; and mediation and outreach to property owners related to locating or retaining housing. In addition, Sub-grantee staff is encouraged to use the MaineHousing Statewide Housing Locator which can be accessed at www.mainehousingsearch.org

Credit Repair: HPRP funds may be used for services that are targeted to assist program participants with critical skills related to household budgeting, money management, accessing a free personal credit report, and resolving personal credit issues.

Sub-grantees are expected to work closely with participants who require assistance in developing skills necessary to understand and manage their personal funds.

Data Collection, Reporting and Evaluation 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. 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.

Sub-grantees are expected to record all HPRP recipients and impacted family members data into the HMIS including but not limited to:

- Name
- Date of birth
- Social security number
- Complete HUD/Maine Universal Data elements
- Service related data
- Client and financial program information

as well as any additional data MaineHousing requires and to submit required data to MaineHousing in a manner and timeframe to be established by MaineHousing.

Reporting: Sub-grantees are expected to generate weekly reports from HMIS using the Advanced Reporting Tool (ART), that is provided with the HMIS software, and submit these reports on a regular schedule and format to be established by MaineHousing.

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-grantee staff will use tracking mechanisms developed by MaineHousing to assess participant stability at 6-month intervals for up to 18 months. 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.

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 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.

MaineHousing will charge a participation fee to all sub-grantees for HMIS data collection and reporting costs associated with the HMIS that is administered by MaineHousing. MaineHousing will allocate HPRP funds to sub-grantees for the HMIS costs. The participation fee will be 75% of the allocation and 25% will be retained by the sub-grantee. MaineHousing will invoice the sub-grantee for the participation fee.

Rent Reasonableness

Sub-grantees must ensure that HPRP funds used for rental assistance do not exceed the actual rental cost, which must be in compliance with HUD's standard of "rent reasonableness." "Rent reasonableness" means that the total rent charged for a unit must be reasonable in relation to the rents being charged during the same time period for comparable units in the private unassisted market and must not be in excess of rents being charged by the owner during the same time period for comparable non-luxury unassisted units

Habitability Standards

Sub-grantees will conduct a habitability standards inspection on any unit that a client will be moving into using HPRP funds for rental and/or security deposit assistance. Sub-grantees must certify that the unit has passed habitability standards before any HPRP funds may be released. In addition, an annual habitability standards inspection must be conducted for any unit in which HPRP funds are being used. The Habitability Standards, Attachment B, can be found in the Attachments section of this manual.

Monitoring & Compliance

Sub-grantees are expected to make available all client, financial and program records for periodic review on a schedule to be established by MaineHousing. In addition, sub-grantees will maintain client files in compliance with the standard set by MaineHousing.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment A - Income Guidelines
- Attachment B - Habitability Standards Certification Form

HPRP Habitability Standards Certification

All housing assisted under the Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-housing Program (HPRP) must provide safe and sanitary housing that is in compliance with the habitability standards outlined below and any state or local requirements. Mark each statement as A for approved or D for deficient. Property must meet all standards in order to be approved.

- ___ 1. Structure and materials: The structures must be structurally sound so as not to pose any threat to the health and safety of the occupants and so as to protect the residents from hazards.
- ___ 2. Access: The housing must be accessible and capable of being utilized without unauthorized use of other private properties. Structures must provide alternate means of egress in case of fire.
- ___ 3. Space and Security: Each resident must be afforded adequate space and security for themselves and their belongings. An acceptable place to sleep must be provided for each resident.
- ___ 4. Interior air quality: Every room or space must be provided with natural or mechanical ventilation. Structures must be free of pollutants in the air at levels that threaten the health of residents.
- ___ 5. Water Supply: The water supply must be free from contamination at levels that threaten the health of individuals.
- ___ 6. Sanitary facilities: Residents must have access to sufficient sanitary facilities that are in proper operating condition, may be used in privacy, and are adequate for personal cleanliness and the disposal of human waste.
- ___ 7. Thermal environment: The housing must have adequate heating and/or cooling facilities in proper operating condition.
- ___ 8. Illumination and electricity: The housing must have adequate natural or artificial illumination to permit normal indoor activities and to support the health and safety of residents. Sufficient electrical sources must be provided to permit use of essential electrical appliances while assuring safety from fire.
- ___ 9. Food preparation and refuse disposal: All food preparation areas must contain suitable space and equipment to store, prepare, and serve food in a sanitary manner.
- ___ 10. Sanitary Conditions: The housing and any equipment must be maintained in sanitary condition.
- ___ 11. Lead-based paint: If the structure was built prior to 1978, and a child under the age of six or a pregnant woman will reside in the property, and the property has a defective paint surface inside or outside the structure, the property cannot be approved until the defective surface is repaired by at least scraping and painting the surface with two coats of non-lead based paint. Defective paint surface means: applicable surface on which paint is cracking, scaling, chipping, peeling or loose.
- ___ 12. Fire safety
 - (i) Each unit must include at least one battery-operated or hard-wired smoke detector, in proper working condition, on each occupied level of the unit. Smoke detectors must be located, to the extent practicable, in a hallway adjacent to a bedroom. If the unit is occupied by hearing-impaired persons, smoke detectors must have an alarm system designed for hearing-impaired persons in each bedroom occupied by a hearing-impaired person.
 - (ii) The public areas of all housing must be equipped with a sufficient number, but not less than one for each area, of battery-operated or hard-wired smoke detectors. Public areas include, but are not limited to, laundry rooms, community rooms, day care centers, hallways, stairwells, and other common areas.

Note the following to assist in determining if unit can be approved or is deficient:

Building built/rehabbed before 1978?	Yes	No
Children under 6 present	Yes	No
Pregnant woman present	Yes	No

CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

(Source: Department of Housing and Urban Development: Docket No. FR-5307-N-01)

I certify that I am not a HUD certified inspector and I have evaluated the property located at the address below to the best of my ability and find the following:

The property meets all of the above standards	Yes	No
The property is Rent Reasonable	Yes	No

Therefore, I make the following determination:

The property is approved	Yes	No
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Client Name

Rental Unit Street Address: _____ Apartment # _____

City, State Zip _____

Evaluator's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Print. Name:

SECTION 8 INCOME LIMITS
Effective March 19, 2009

<u>County</u>	<u>FY2009 Median Family Income</u>	<u>Program</u>	1 PERSON	2 PERSON	3 PERSON	4 PERSON	5 PERSON	6 PERSON	7 PERSON	8 PERSON
BANGOR HMFA	61,600	30% of median	12,950	14,800	16,650	18,500	20,000	21,450	22,950	24,400
		VLI	21,550	24,650	27,700	30,800	33,250	35,750	38,200	40,650
		LI	34,500	39,450	44,350	49,300	53,250	57,200	61,150	65,100
CUMBERLAND HMFA	62,900	30% of median	13,200	15,100	16,950	18,850	20,350	21,850	23,350	24,900
		VLI	22,000	25,150	28,300	31,450	33,950	36,500	39,000	41,500
		LI	35,200	40,250	45,250	50,300	54,300	58,350	62,350	66,400
LEWISTON-AUBURN MSA	55,900	30% of median	11,750	13,400	15,100	16,750	18,100	19,450	20,750	22,100
		VLI	19,550	22,350	25,150	27,950	30,200	32,400	34,650	36,900
		LI	31,300	35,750	40,250	44,700	48,300	51,850	55,450	59,000
PENOBSCOT HMFA	47,700	30% of median	10,900	12,500	14,050	15,600	16,850	18,100	19,350	20,600
		VLI	18,200	20,800	23,400	26,000	28,100	30,150	32,250	34,300
		LI	29,100	33,300	37,450	41,600	44,950	48,250	51,600	54,900
PORTLAND HMFA	72,400	30% of median	15,200	17,350	19,550	21,700	23,450	25,150	26,900	28,650
		VLI	25,350	28,950	32,600	36,200	39,100	42,000	44,900	47,800
		LI	40,550	46,300	52,100	57,900	62,550	67,150	71,800	76,450
SAGadahoc HMFA	64,700	30% of median	13,600	15,500	17,450	19,400	20,950	22,500	24,050	25,600
		VLI	22,650	25,900	29,100	32,350	34,950	37,550	40,100	42,700
		LI	36,250	41,400	46,600	51,750	55,900	60,050	64,150	68,300
YORK HMFA	63,800	30% of median	13,400	15,300	17,250	19,150	20,700	22,200	23,750	25,300
		VLI	22,350	25,500	28,700	31,900	34,450	37,000	39,550	42,100
		LI	35,750	40,850	45,950	51,050	55,150	59,200	63,300	67,400
YORK-KITTERY-SO BERWICK HMFA	76,500	30% of median	16,050	18,350	20,650	22,950	24,800	26,600	28,450	30,300
		VLI	26,800	30,600	34,450	38,250	41,300	44,350	47,450	50,500
		LI	42,850	48,950	55,100	61,200	66,100	71,000	75,900	80,800
AROOSTOOK	47,300	30% of median	10,900	12,500	14,050	15,600	16,850	18,100	19,350	20,600
		VLI	18,200	20,800	23,400	26,000	28,100	30,150	32,250	34,300
		LI	29,100	33,300	37,450	41,600	44,950	48,250	51,600	54,900
FRANKLIN	49,200	30% of median	10,900	12,500	14,050	15,600	16,850	18,100	19,350	20,600
		VLI	18,200	20,800	23,400	26,000	28,100	30,150	32,250	34,300
		LI	29,100	33,300	37,450	41,600	44,950	48,250	51,600	54,900
HANCOCK	57,500	30% of median	12,100	13,800	15,550	17,250	18,650	20,000	21,400	22,750
		VLI	20,150	23,000	25,900	28,750	31,050	33,350	35,650	37,950
		LI	32,200	36,800	41,400	46,000	49,700	53,350	57,050	60,700
KENNEBEC	58,000	30% of median	12,200	13,900	15,650	17,400	18,800	20,200	21,600	22,950
		VLI	20,300	23,200	26,100	29,000	31,300	33,650	35,950	38,300
		LI	32,500	37,100	41,750	46,400	50,100	53,800	57,550	61,250
KNOX	56,500	30% of median	11,850	13,550	15,250	16,950	18,300	19,650	21,000	22,350
		VLI	19,800	22,600	25,450	28,250	30,500	32,750	35,050	37,300
		LI	31,650	36,150	40,700	45,200	48,800	52,450	56,050	59,650
LINCOLN	59,800	30% of median	12,550	14,350	16,150	17,950	19,400	20,800	22,250	23,700
		VLI	20,950	23,900	26,900	29,900	32,300	34,700	37,100	39,450
		LI	33,500	38,300	43,050	47,850	51,700	55,500	59,350	63,150
OXFORD	50,700	30% of median	10,900	12,500	14,050	15,600	16,850	18,100	19,350	20,600
		VLI	18,200	20,800	23,400	26,000	28,100	30,150	32,250	34,300
		LI	29,100	33,300	37,450	41,600	44,950	48,250	51,600	54,900
PISCATAQUIS	45,200	30% of median	10,900	12,500	14,050	15,600	16,850	18,100	19,350	20,600

<u>County</u>	<u>FY2009 Median Family Income</u>	<u>Program</u>	1 PERSON	2 PERSON	3 PERSON	4 PERSON	5 PERSON	6 PERSON	7 PERSON	8 PERSON
		VLI	18,200	20,800	23,400	26,000	28,100	30,150	32,250	34,300
		LI	29,100	33,300	37,450	41,600	44,950	48,250	51,600	54,900
SOMERSET	47,000	30% of median	10,900	12,500	14,050	15,600	16,850	18,100	19,350	20,600
		VLI	18,200	20,800	23,400	26,000	28,100	30,150	32,250	34,300
		LI	29,100	33,300	37,450	41,600	44,950	48,250	51,600	54,900
WALDO	51,200	30% of median	10,900	12,500	14,050	15,600	16,850	18,100	19,350	20,600
		VLI	18,200	20,800	23,400	26,000	28,100	30,150	32,250	34,300
		LI	29,100	33,300	37,450	41,600	44,950	48,250	51,600	54,900
WASHINGTON	43,200	30% of median	10,900	12,500	14,050	15,600	16,850	18,100	19,350	20,600
		VLI	18,200	20,800	23,400	26,000	28,100	30,150	32,250	34,300
		LI	29,100	33,300	37,450	41,600	44,950	48,250	51,600	54,900

*Add 8% of the 4-person limit for each person over 8 persons to determine the family income limit.

MSA Towns in MAINE

The MSA towns in Maine, based on the Federal Register announcement of October 3, 2005, are as follows:

1. Portland HMFA

Cape Elizabeth	North Yarmouth
Casco	Portland
Cumberland	Raymond
Falmouth	Scarborough
Freeport	South Portland
Frye Island	Standish
Gorham	Westbrook
Gray	Windham
Long Island	Yarmouth

in York County:

Buxton
Hollis
Limington
Old Orchard Beach

2. York-Kittery-South Berwick HMFA

Berwick
Eliot
Kittery
South Berwick
York

3. Lewiston-Auburn MSA

Auburn	Livermore Falls
Durham	Mechanic Falls
Greene	Minot
Leeds	Poland
Lewiston	Sabattus
Lisbon	Turner
Livermore	Wales

4. Bangor HMFA

Bangor	Kenduskeag
Brewer	Milford
Eddington	Old Town
Glenburn	Orono
Hampden	Orrington
Hermon	Penobscot Indian Island Reservation
Holden	Veazie