

## **SAN FRANCISCO EMA RYAN WHITE HIV 2024 STANDARDS OF CARE UPDATE PROJECT**

### **HOUSING SERVICES STANDARDS OF CARE**

**NOTE: The draft standards below describe only service elements specific to Ryan White-funded housing services. Overarching standards common to all programs - such as standards related to client eligibility, insurance and benefits screening, facility standards, staff qualifications, evaluation, and use of Ryan White funds as the payor of last resort - will be included in a separate Common Standards document. This document will also be fully formatted in a future version.**

### **OVERVIEW AND PURPOSE OF HOUSING SERVICES STANDARDS**

The purpose of the San Francisco Eligible Metropolitan Area (EMA) Housing Standards of Care is to ensure consistency among the Ryan White-funded housing services provided as part of the San Francisco EMA's continuum of care for persons living with HIV. These minimally acceptable standards for housing service delivery provide guidance to programs so that they are best equipped to:

- Assist HIV-positive clients and their families and/or partners to deal with access to housing and related services;
- Meet the specific and unique needs of HIV-positive clients;
- Minimize barriers to services;
- Appropriately address client rights and responsibilities for clients receiving housing and related services;
- Provide appropriate and effective referrals for assessment, care, and services;
- Provide housing and related services in as culturally and linguistically appropriate manner as possible, while in compliance with all federal, state and local laws, regulations, ordinances and codes; and
- Assist clients through advocacy and referral in accessing other Continuum of Care services.

### **DESCRIPTION OF HOUSING SERVICES**

The primary goal of Ryan White-funded housing services is to provide transitional, short-term, or emergency housing assistance, including hotel and motel vouchers, that enables a client or family to gain or maintain access to outpatient ambulatory health services and treatment. Housing services also can include housing referral services; housing assessment, search, placement, and advocacy services; and payment of fees associated with these services. Providers must have written policies and procedures that indicate the percentages of a client's monthly rent they can pay through this program.

Ryan White-funded housing categories include:

**Emergency Housing:** Emergency stays intended to assist clients with immediate housing crises.

**Transitional Housing:** Short-term residential and transitional housing programs designed to stabilize an individual and to support transition to a long-term sustainable housing situation. All programs include on-site supportive services.

**Residential Programs and Subsidies:** Residential housing programs and rental assistance/subsidies designed for longer-term stabilization and are often linked to case management and other services to help stabilize and maintain clients' health.

Ryan-White funded housing services are intended to be temporary in nature. Hotel/motel vouchers and other emergency housing support is available for a maximum of **60 days per year**. Meanwhile, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines transitional housing as **lasting up to 24 months**. Providers may extend services beyond 24 months if necessary based on individual client assessment, which must include a transition plan to permanent housing with a concrete timeline.

**Additional allowable activities** in this service category include:

- Housing that provides Ryan White core HIV medical or support services, such as:
  - Residential substance use disorder services;
  - Residential mental health services;
  - Residential foster care; and
  - Assisted living residential services.
- Housing that does not provide direct core medical or support services, but is essential for a client or family to initiate or maintain access to and compliance with HIV-related outpatient ambulatory health services and treatment. This includes paying or supplementing rent and hotel and motel vouchers when provided on a limited basis as part of an overall plan to transition the client to permanent housing.
- Payment of security deposits to secure permanent housing, with the caveat that security deposits must not be redeemed as cash if a client leaves housing.
- Housing referral services to other (non-HCP) housing programs.

Housing services **may not:**

- Be used for mortgage payments;
- Be used to make utility payments (these payments are funded under the Emergency Financial Assistance category); or
- Be in the form of direct cash payments to clients.

Ryan-White funded housing services are intended to be temporary in nature. Hotel/motel vouchers are available for a maximum of **60 days per year**. Meanwhile, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines transitional housing as **lasting up to 24 months**. Providers may extend services beyond 24 months if necessary based on individual

client assessment, which must include a transition plan to permanent housing with a concrete timeline.

### **UNITS OF SERVICE:**

- **A Housing Units of Service are defined as follows:**
- ✓ One 24-hour emergency, short-term, transitional housing, or rental subsidy day.
- ✓ Additionally, the work of a housing case manager or other provider working to secure or refer clients to housing is defined as one hour of face-to-face individual or group contact between a client and a case manager or one hour contact on behalf of the client within a housing setting.

### **HOUSING SERVICES REQUIREMENTS:**

All housing programs and providers must provide the key activities listed below:

- Housing providers will receive referrals from clients in need of emergency, short-term, and transitional housing from local providers and will verify housing client status and needs.
- Housing providers will ensure the absence of alternative resources to meet client housing needs and ensure that Ryan White funds are the funding source of last resort in order to retain clients in HIV care and treatment and preserve health and wellness.
- Providers will develop a housing plan with each client that includes anticipated duration of housing support and essential steps to secure long-term housing. This plan will be developed in coordination with each client's case manager and/or referring service agency. The housing plan will include a preliminary exit strategy that emphasizes the need for each client to secure long-term housing and housing support as rapidly as possible.
- Residential mental health or facility-based care agencies must develop an individual service plan (ISP) for each client within 90 days of intake and must update this plan every 6 months for as long as the client is using Ryan White subsidies.
- Housing providers will offer referrals to needed ancillary services and will track client access to and utilization of housing resources, including ensuring that housing services are allowing the client to remain in HIV care and treatment.
- Clients will be provided with explicit instructions on the process for requesting an extension for housing or housing related services.
- In cases of denial of the extension request, clients will be informed verbally and in writing of the reasons for denial unless a written explanation is deemed clinically inappropriate