Emergency Housing Vouchers: Strategy for Targeting and Related Resources

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Webinar Logistics

- This is session is being recorded. Recording will be shared at: https://www.hud.gov/ehv
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  - Phone Number: +1 646 558 8656
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Welcome and Introductions

- Welcome
- Technical Assistance Providers
  - Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH)
  - Technical Assistance Collaborative (TAC)
- Today's Presenters & Panelists
  - Janis Ikeda, Senior Program Manager, CSH
  - Hannah Roberts, Senior Program Manager, CSH
  - Emma Chapple, Senior Program Manager, CSH

Overview of EHV Training Series

Date/Time	TA Topic
May 11 3-4pm EDT	EHV Program Overview
May 12 2:30pm - 4pm EDT	EHVs for CoCs
May 13 3pm - 4:30pm EDT	Partnerships for EHVs
May 18 3pm – 4:30pm EDT	Strategy for Targeting EHVs and Related Resources
May 20 3pm – 4:30pm EDT	Pairing Services and EHVs
May 25 3pm – 4:30pm EDT	Coordinated Entry and EHVs
June 1 3pm – 4:30pm EDT	Making the Most of EHV Waivers

Poll – Who is Listening in Today?

- ❑ Public Housing Agency (PHA)
- ❑ Continuum of Care (CoC)
- ❑ Victim Service Provider (VSP)
- ❑ Other (write in chat)

Overview

- PIH Notice 2021-15 outlines the eligible populations and referral requirements for Emergency Housing Vouchers.
  - Requires PHAs to work with community partners to determine the best way to target the vouchers and to accept direct Coordinated Entry System referrals
  - Strongly encourages PHAs to consult with its CoC and other partners in establishing what activities it will undertake with the services fee in order to best address the leasing challenges faced by eligible EHV families
- Today's webinar will focus on how you can strategically target EHV resources to meet local needs.

Today's Agenda

Learning Objective: Attendees will be equipped to have inclusive local conversations about the most strategic and equitable ways to target vouchers, services funding, and other resources.

Agenda:

- Eligible populations
- Strategically targeting vouchers and resources:
  - Racial Equity and Inclusive Planning
  - Key Considerations for Targeting EHVs and Related Resources
- Next Steps
- Q&A

Eligible Populations

Overview of Eligible Populations

EHV eligibility is limited to individuals and families who are:

- Homeless;
- At-risk of homelessness;
- Fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking; and
- Recently homeless and for whom providing rental assistance will prevent the family's homelessness or having high risk of housing instability.

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(1) People Experiencing Homelessness

- Definition: Same definition as in ESG and CoC programs
  Homeless Definition Recordkeeping Requirements and Criteria
- Includes individuals and families who:
  - Reside in congregate and non-congregate shelters
  - Reside in unsheltered situations
  - Are at imminent risk of homelessness

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(2) At-Risk of Experiencing Homelessness

Same definition as in ESG and CoC programs: Criteria: At-Risk of Homelessness

1) Individuals or families who have less than 30% of the AMI, do not have sufficient resources or support networks immediately available to prevent them from moving to an emergency shelter or another place defined in Category 1 of the 'homeless' definition and:

- Have moved because of economic reasons 2 or more times during the 60 days; or
- Are doubled up because of economic hardship; OR
- Their right to occupy their current housing or living situation will be terminated within 21 days
- Lives in a hotel or motel not paid for by charitable organizations or government programs
- Lives in overcrowded housing (e.g. a studio with >2 ppl/room or other housing with >1½ ppl/room); or
- Are exiting a public institution (e.g. foster care, health/mental health facility, correction program, etc.) or
- Is otherwise unstably housed and at an increased risk of homelessness, as identified in the recipient's approved Con Plan

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(2) At-Risk of Experiencing Homelessness: Other Definitions

2. Unaccompanied youth and children defined as homeless under another federal statutes including:

- 34 USC § 11279(3) The Runaway and Homeless Youth and Trafficking Prevention Act of 2018
- 42 U.S. Code § 9832(11) – Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007
- 34 U.S. Code § 12473 - Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2019
- 42 U.S. Code § 254b(h)(5) - Public Health Service Act
- 7 U.S. Code § 2012(l) – The Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018
- 42 USC § 1786(b)(15) Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2020

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(2) At-Risk of Experiencing Homelessness: Other Definitions, cont.

3. Families with Children and Youth defined as homeless under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act: (a) *Homeless children and youths* means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. The term includes—

- (1) Children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; or are abandoned in hospitals.
- (2) Children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.
- (3) Children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
- (4) Migratory children (as defined in section 1309 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended), who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described in this definition.

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(3) Fleeing Domestic Violence

- Individuals or families fleeing, or attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking
- EHVs may additionally be utilized to facilitate an emergency transfer in accordance with the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) as outlined in the PHA's Emergency Transfer Plan.

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(4) People Who Were Recently Homeless

- Individuals and families who have previously been classified by a member agency of the CoC as homeless but are not currently homeless as a result of homeless assistance (financial assistance or services), temporary rental assistance or some type of other assistance, and where the CoC or its designee determines that the loss of such assistance would result in a return to homelessness or the family having a high risk of housing instability.
- Includes participants in rapid rehousing (RRH) and permanent supportive housing (PSH).

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Recently Homeless Individuals and Families: Bridging from RRH

- Many individuals and families in RRH programs need long-term rental assistance, but not intensive long-term services.
- 'Bridging' to an EHV could stabilize such a household to ensure that they do not return to homelessness or experience a high degree of housing instability when their RRH assistance ends.

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Recently Homeless Individuals and Families: Moving On From PSH

- PSH programs are not time-limited, but some tenants reach the point where they no longer want and need intensive services, but still require the rental assistance component of PSH.
- Helping willing PSH tenants 'move on' to an EHV can support independence and choice for tenants who are ready and desire to move on from PSH while freeing up space in PSH for people who would most benefit from it.

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Moving On Initiatives

- Moving On initiatives connect tenants with affordable housing and other financial resources and provide transition supports to set them up for long-term stability and success after Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH).
- For more information on Moving On, see:
  - Moving On - HUDExchange
  - Moving On Webinar Series

Strategically Targeting Vouchers and Resources

The Bigger Picture

- EHVs are one of many resources that communities can use to house people experiencing or at-risk of homelessness. PHAs, CoCs, and other key stakeholders should work together to determine how EHVs and related resources (e.g. the services fee) can strategically be targeted to best address unmet needs in the community.
- Although communities have received an influx of resources through the CARES Act, Heroes Act, and the ARP to address homelessness, most have been for time-limited programs - EHVs are unique in their ability to provide long-term rental assistance.

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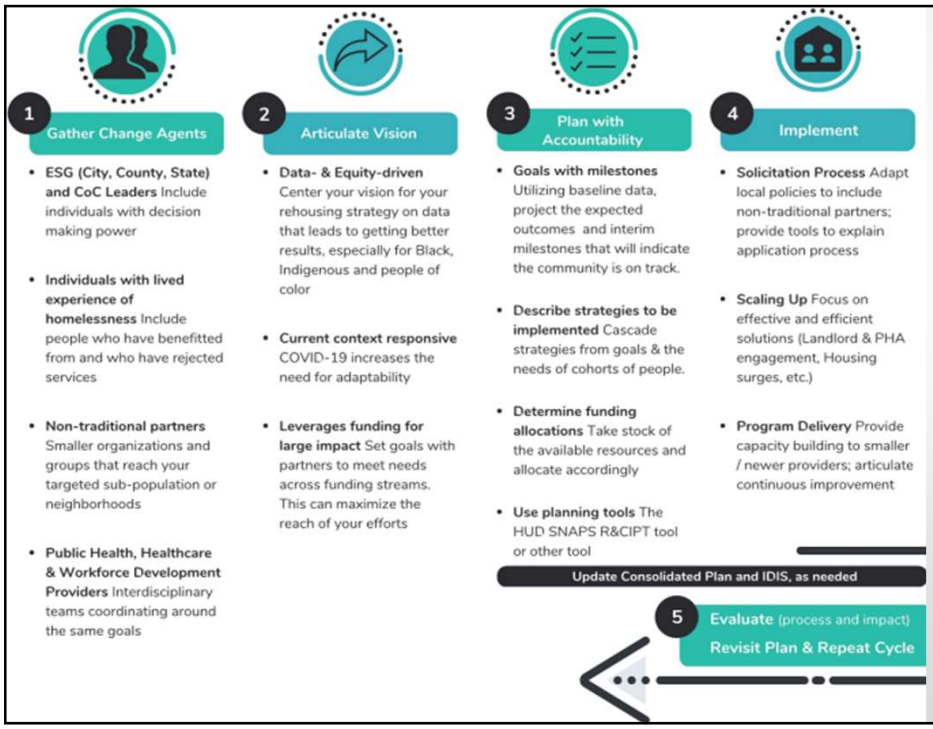

Targeted Rehousing Strategy: How do EHVs Fit?

Source: HUDExchange, Targeted Rehousing Strategy Overview

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How to Target EHVs

- Eligibility categories are defined by statue, but the MOU should outline how eligible households will be prioritized for referral by CE.
- This can include specific numbers of vouchers targeted to certain eligible populations, as well as subpopulations within it. For example:
  - Households who were recently homeless, are in RRH, and have experienced multiple previous episodes of homelessness
  - Households who meet the McKinney-Vento definition of homelessness and can receive services through Department of Education funding
  - Households experiencing or at-risk of homelessness who are living in overcrowded conditions that put them at greater risk of COVID-19

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Decision Points around Resources Targeting

- Subpopulations within the eligible populations that will be prioritized for assistance, and what prioritization factors and/or partnerships will be used to identify households for referral
- How people fleeing DV will be prioritized and referred for assistance, if not coming through CE
- Services and assistance to be offered under the EHV services fee
- Other services to be provided to EHV participants, how they will be funded, and who they will be provided by (e.g. State/local partners, philanthropic and faith-based organizations, CoC recipients, etc.)

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Racial Equity and Inclusive Planning

Importance of Racial Equity Considerations

EHVs and other new resources provide an opportunity to close the gap on current inequities driven by structural and systemic racism, as well as inequities faced by historically marginalized populations, such as people with disabilities and LGBTQ+ individuals.

	% Total US Population, 2019*	% People experiencing homelessness, 2019**
Black or African American People	13.4%	40%
Hispanic/Latinx	18.5%	22%
American Indian, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian, or Pacific Islander	1.5%	7.2%

*US Census Bureau, Population estimates, July 1, 2019 (V2019)
**HUD, 2019 AHAR Part 1

Strategies for Centering Considerations of Racial Equity

- Work to understand local inequities in outcomes:
  - Data & Equity: Using the Data you Have
  - Stella P Race and Ethnicity Analysis Guide
- Conduct a **Racial Equity Impact Assessment** to examine how different racial and ethnic groups will likely be affected by proposed funding decisions, processes, programs, and policies and identify ways to advance equity. See Equity as the Foundation for more.

Inclusive Planning & Decision-Making

- The process for targeting EHVs (and other resources) should be *inclusive* – meaning the people who are most impacted by the decision, policy, program, etc. are involved in the planning. People who will have unique expertise to guide your planning and decision-making include:
  - People of color (POC), who are disproportionately impacted by homelessness and COVID-19
  - People with lived experience (PWLE) - those who have experienced or are currently experiencing homelessness

Engaging POC and PWLE in the Planning Process

- Tap into existing advocacy groups: PHA Resident Advisory Boards, CoC Board members who have or are experiencing homelessness, committees led by people with lived experience (PWLE), Youth Action Boards.
- Engage funded and non-funded agencies, homeless services, and other service providers, and providers who play a variety of roles within agencies.
- Engage diverse agencies and staff, including culturally-specific organizations, and those with POC and/or LGBTQ leadership.

Engaging POC and PWLE in the Planning Process, cont.

- Create new employment positions and paid opportunities for PWLE to support EHV planning and implementation.
- Partner with community-based and grassroots agencies with close and trusted relationships with people experiencing homelessness.
- Engage program participants who have lived experience with shelter, RRH, PSH, and other relevant programs.
- For more, see: Integrating Persons with Lived Experience in our Efforts to Prevent and End Homelessness

Opportunities to Collaborate

- Invite PWLE and POC stakeholders to your EHV planning and implementation team
  - For tips, see: Untapped Expertise: Strategies for Inclusive Stakeholder Engagement when Developing Your Coordinated Investment Plan
- Collaboratively review data and inventory of existing housing and service resources
  - See 'Analyze Needs' in: Creating Cohorts for Your Rehousing Strategy
- Organize virtual town halls, focus groups, or surveys to share information and solicit feedback

Community Discussion on Inclusion and Equity Strategies

- Poll Question: What strategies would you be most interested in pursuing to create a more inclusive process?
  - Engage PHA Resident Advisory Board Members
  - Engage CoC members with lived expertise
  - Identify and engage community-based, grassroots, and/or culturally-specific organizations
  - Host an open meeting to share information and solicit feedback
  - Complete a Racial Equity Impact Assessment

Key Considerations for Targeting EHVs and Related Resources

Where Are the Gaps?

Some of the challenges we hear from communities:

- There are no PSH units or other resources available for people currently experiencing homelessness who need long-term supports, and tenants who no longer want or need intensive services are stuck in PSH because they still need the rental assistance
- Many people placed in rapid rehousing (RRH) are at risk of reentering homelessness when their rental assistance ends
- Temporary non-congregate shelters need to exit participants to permanent housing so sites can wind down
- Communities need resources to help people in encampments and other unsheltered situations enter permanent housing

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Assess Local Needs

- Rehousing and Coordinated Investment Planning Tool – Define and quantify need for housing supports and services and plan for how to meet these needs with existing and newly available funding sources
- Stella P – Understand how households move through the homeless system and see outcome disparities
- Creating Cohorts for Your Rehousing Strategy – Understand local needs and use an inclusive, person-centered approach to design or adapt your community's response to homelessness

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What are the Community's Priorities?

- What are the priorities in your area's Consolidated Plan and other key strategy documents?
- How have priorities shifted or evolved with COVID-19 and how may they be different now than they were earlier on in the pandemic?
- How are the people most impacted by homelessness, housing instability, COVID-19, etc. involved in discussions about priorities?

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Consider: Timing/Timelines

- How can you balance the need to get lease-ups going quickly with the need to take time to ensure vouchers and other resources are being used strategically?
- What are the short- and long-term needs in the community, and how do EHVs fit?
- What are realistic expectations for timelines for the target population(s)?

Consider: Services

Work in partnership with people with lived experience, front-line staff, community providers, and other stakeholders to understand:

- What are the potential services needs of different potential priority populations?
- What needs are short-term (e.g. to help them lease up) and what needs are ongoing?
- What services or resources are available to meet these needs, whether from the PHA, CoC providers, or other community partners? Who is eligible? How can households access them?

For more on services, attend Thursday's Webinar: Pairing Services and EHVs

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Consider: How to use EHV Resources for People Bridging from RRH

- Ideal for those who are most likely to re-enter homelessness without continued housing assistance but do not need intensive, housing-based services.
- Individuals in rapid re-housing may wish to transition in place or move to a new home.
- Habitability standards used for RRH are slightly different than HQS – some tenants that want to transition in place may not be able to do so.
- RRH case managers can provide short-term services to help with the move.

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Consider: How to Use EHVs for People Moving On from PSH

- Ideal for the most stable tenants who do not need intensive services but still need rental support to maintain housing stability.
- Be conservative in determining size for the program.
- Use a standardized, transparent assessment process and work in partnership with interested tenants to help them make an informed decision about if they would like to pursue Moving On
- A voucher alone is not enough – flexible resources and robust transition supports are needed to set tenants up for long-term stability and success.

Coordinated Entry Referrals and Prioritization

- PHAs must retain a separate waiting list for EHV referrals and applicants, accept direct referrals from CE, and work with the COC and other referral agency partners to manage the number of referrals and the size of the EHV waiting list.
- In the MOU, PHAs and CoCs should outline the eligible populations for EHVs as well as how eligible households will be prioritized for referral to the EHV program.

Consider: Prioritization

- Possible prioritization factors may include (but are not limited to):
  - People most at-risk of and most impacted by COVID-19
  - People living in environments where practicing social distancing or taking other preventive measures may be particularly challenging
  - Households with zero or extremely low income
- Communities should assess who is represented and not represented in potential priority populations (NCS, RRH, sheltered and unsheltered, etc.) to promote an equitable approach.
- Also consider what services are available to meet the needs of priority populations

Next Steps

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Immediate Next Steps

- PHAs are encouraged to respond to HUD's notification as soon as possible, but must reply **by May 24, 2021**
- PHAs must enter into an MOU with a CoC no later than **July 31, 2021**
- Continue partnering conversations and build a planning team inclusive of POC and PWLE
- Review available data and other information to identify needs, and begin discussions about the decision points related to targeting resources

Reminder: Decision Points around Resources Targeting

- Populations eligible for EHV assistance to be referred by CoC - eligibility categories are defined by statue, but the MOU should outline how eligible households will be prioritized for referral by CE
- How people fleeing DV will be prioritized and referred for assistance, if not coming through CE
- Services and assistance to be offered under the EHV services fee
- Other services to be provided to EHV participants, how they will be funded, and who they will be provided by (e.g. State/local partners, philanthropic and faith-based organizations, CoC recipients, etc.)

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Other Next Steps

- Work to understand the existing Coordinated Entry process and prioritization. Key questions:
  - What does data tell you about the impact of your current prioritization tool and any COVID-related factors you introduced?
  - What racial inequities can you identify and address?
  - Are there changes you might need to make to your prioritization process to effectively and equitably target EHVs in the current environment?
- Consider changes to your CE access and assessment processes that will be necessary to reach target populations, advance equity, and expedite referrals.

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Next Steps if You're Interested in Moving On

Next steps for communities that do not currently have a Moving On initiative:

- Consult the Project Plan Template and its User Guide to begin planning.
- Engage PSH providers and tenants to better understand needs.
- Identify resources for transition supports, flexible financial resources (security/utility deposits, moving expenses, housing application fees, etc.), and other programmatic needs.

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Next Steps if You're Interested in Scaling an Existing Moving On Initiative

- Existing Moving On initiatives are well-positioned to use EHVs to scale their programs. Next steps:
  - Review your waitlist (if you have one) and speak with PSH providers to get an idea of unmet need for vouchers.
  - Engage people who have moved on from PSH to learn about their experiences.
  - Review existing policies and procedures around assessment, referral, transition supports and aftercare, and financial support.

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Reminder - Next Webinar

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Resources

EHV Email Box: EHV@hud.gov

PIH Notice 2021-15

HUD EHV Webpage

Resources for Centering Considerations of Racial Equity in Planning

- Advancing Racial Equity in Emergency Rental Assistance Programs: Recommendations based on analysis of COVID rental assistance programs and community examples of strategies for advancing equity
- Advancing Racial Equity through Assessments and Prioritization: Strategies to dismantle embedded racism in CE assessment and prioritization processes
- For more resources: HUDExchange: Racial Equity

Q&A