**Emergency Housing Vouchers**

**Eligibility and Process Definitions – Requirements of ‘Housing Case Managers’ Services**

**What:**

* Hennepin County will be collaborating with Public Housing Authorities to issue 300+ Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHVs) through the Hennepin County Coordinated Entry System (CES).
* Hennepin County will continue to prioritize households based on CES assessment and prioritization (disability, chronic homelessness, and number of months HUD homeless).
* There are no continuing support services provided with the Emergency Housing Vouchers.
* To ensure full utilization of the available EHVs and quick connection to housing resources, an additional eligibility criterion for the EHVs will be that in order to receive a referral through CES, the person needs to be connected to a ‘Housing Case Manager’ \*(as defined below) which will be documented in the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).
* EHVs provide long term permanent housing vouchers through public housing authorities.

**Timeline:**

* We anticipate the EHVs to be administered beginning July 2021.
* The goal is to utilize vouchers as quickly as possible and HUD has set incentive timelines for PHAs to achieve full utilization before end 2021
* Vouchers may not be reissued after September 30, 2023

**Eligibility and access to EHVs:**

* Referrals must be made through the Hennepin County CES.
* Households will need to be connected to a “housing case manager” (as defined below) prior to being referred to receive an EHV.
* The household’s connection to housing case management services (as defined below) must be recorded in HMIS or CES Connect.
* Agencies employing the Housing Case Managers and the Housing Case Managers themselves will need to choose to opt into this program and sign an agreement stating that they agree to meet the expectations outlined below regarding helping clients get connected to housing utilizing the EHVs.
* Utilization rates will be monitored and ongoing agency access to EHVs for their clients will be contingent on successful and timely housing placement and sustainment.

**Definition of Required Case Management Services for a Hennepin County issued Emergency Housing Voucher:**

A “Housing Case Manager” is defined as:

* Having a caseload of no more than 30, with capacity to serve EHV households following the definition outlined below.
* Primary focus is securing permanent housing for clients and assisting households to obtain the services needed to maintain stabilize housing.
* Having HMIS access (completed ICA training)
* Participating in the HC Coordinated Entry System including acknowledging referrals, updating move in dates, etc.
* Creating a housing goal plan with each of their clients.
* Supporting Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) to ensure eligible households get PHA appointment notifications and assist eligible households in getting to meetings with the PHA.
* Providing bi-weekly updates on each client with a pending voucher referral to the CES team, utilizing the designated format.
* Participating in weekly EHV specific case conference (including providing updates regarding progress with households, following through with recommendations, etc.).
* Supporting clients to apply for all benefits they are eligible to receive.
* Working with households to complete the required PHA paperwork, including obtaining income verification, social security cards, birth certificates, and completion of voucher application
* Providing counseling and information on compliance with rental lease requirements.
* Addressing housing barriers and ensuring that clients obtain vital documents such as birth certificate, ID, and social security card.
* Assisting the client with housing search, transportation, rental application, lease signing, and moving into the unit.
* Liaising with landlords and/or property owners to quickly identify and secure vacant units where vouchers can be used,
* Assessing and assisting households that may require referrals for assistance on security deposits, utility hook-up fees, and utility deposits and helping the person apply.
* Having a demonstrated ability to connect clients to stabilizing community-based resources such as case management through a Managed Care Provider, an ARHMS worker, a CADI case manager, LTSS, DART, ACT, Housing Stabilization Services, etc. prior to ending case management services, so the person has ongoing supports once in housing to avoid recidivism.

Services may only be discontinued once the client has:

been in housing for a minimum of 12 months OR

once an alternative support service (i.e. Managed Care Provider, an ARHMS worker, a CADI case manager, LTSS, DART, ACT, Housing Stabilization Services) is allocated and the case manager has begun client contact.