

# New Castle County

## Rapid Re-Housing Standards

Revised October, 2016

*This is a working document created in partnership with the Homeless Planning Council of Delaware, Delaware State Housing Authority, City of Wilmington, and New Castle County. Changes and updates to these standards will be forwarded to your agency. These standards should be applied to all beneficiaries throughout the state who are utilizing Rapid Re-Housing Services. This document must be kept with the Emergency Solutions Grant Rapid Re-Housing Contract between New Castle County and your agency.*

In accordance with HUD regulations (24 CFR Part 578), the Delaware Continuum of Care (DE CoC) has developed, in consultation with ESG recipients and Rapid Re-Housing providers, the following written standards for the provision of rapid re-housing (RRH) assistance in Delaware. The standards contained herein apply to Rapid Re-housing projects funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Continuum of Care (CoC) Program, those located in all jurisdictions covered by the DE CoC, as well as those funded by HUD Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funds and other state and local funds, such as the State of Delaware Department of Health and Social Services and DSHA's Housing Development Fund. In addition to compliance with the standards contained herein, Delaware RRH programs must comply with 24 CFR Part 578 (HEARTH Interim Rule).

RRH program standards are beneficial to consumers receiving RRH assistance, programs administering RRH assistance, and funders of RRH. Standardizing the manner by which RRH assistance is provided will allow consumers to be better informed about what services they are eligible to receive, and able to receive the same type of high quality services regardless of where they access it. RRH providers will know what is expected of them regardless of their funding sources, and will have a general guide for the provision of RRH assistance. Furthermore, by standardizing RRH practices statewide the Delaware CoC will be better able to evaluate the performance of RRH as key strategy for ending homelessness in Delaware.

### **RRH Participant Eligibility**

- To be eligible for DE CoC RRH assistance, at initial evaluation households must:
  - 1) Demonstrate literal homelessness (i.e., HUD Category One);
  - 2) Have completed a VI-SPDAT during their current episode of homelessness; and
  - 3) Have experienced literal homelessness (i.e., HUD Category One) for 7 days or more.
- Recipients and sub recipients must conduct regular re-evaluations, at least every 90 days, of program participants who are receiving RRH assistance. To continue to receive rental assistance, the program participant household's annual income must be less than or equal to 30% of Area Median Income (AMI) at re-evaluation.
- Households with no income at initial evaluation and/or re-evaluation are eligible for RRH assistance.
- In order to be eligible for RRH assistance, households must be referred to the RRH program through Delaware's Centralized Intake system.
- Households are not required to enter shelter to be eligible for RRH assistance.
- As indicated by HUD, households who are eligible for Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) and awaiting PSH placement are also eligible to receive RRH assistance and will retain their homeless status and, if applicable, chronically homeless status.

## RRH Participant Prioritization

Participant Prioritization occurs by Centralized Intake. RRH referrals are made to RRH provider agencies based on the follow prioritization method:

- **Criteria 1:**
  - Unsheltered households shall receive first priority for RRH assistance, followed by households in emergency shelter as second priority, and households in transitional housing as third priority (*Please be aware that certain funds may not be used to serve households in transitional housing, such as CoC funds. It is up to the provider to ensure that they are serving households coming from eligible locations*).
- **Criteria 2:**
  - Households with annual incomes below 30% AMI will be prioritized for RRH assistance over households with higher levels of AMI.
- **Criteria 3:**
  - Households that score for RRH on the VI-SPDAT will be prioritized by VI-SPDAT score, with those having higher scores (acuity) prioritized over households with lower scores (acuity)<sup>1</sup>.

### Determining the type of assistance & amount or percentage of rent each program participant must pay

- RRH programs are required to use a progressive engagement model, i.e., starting with a small amount of assistance for the shortest period of time possible to help resolve homelessness then adding more assistance, only as necessary, if the less intensive intervention is unsuccessful.
- RRH programs are required to use a housing first model for the provision of assistance, i.e. providing permanent housing assistance to homeless households without clinical pre-requisites, such the completion of a treatment program, evidence of sobriety, or other programmatic pre-requisites outside of the standards set forth in this document.
- RRH participants may receive eligible supportive services alone or a combination of eligible supportive services and rental assistance. At a minimum, all participants must attend monthly case management meetings in accordance with HUD regulations 24 CFR Part 578.
- Tenant rent contribution may be adjusted at any time including, but not limited to, at each 90 day reassessment. There is no minimum dollar amount rent requirement; tenant rent contribution may be zero for households with no income.
- In addition to rental assistance, eligible program costs are defined by funding source. Providers of RRH assistance should refer to their funding source to determine eligible costs.

### Limitations on amount, frequency and duration of assistance

- In accordance with HUD regulations 24 CFR Part 578, participants may receive eligible supportive services for no longer than 6 months after rental assistance stops.
- Participants may also receive eligible supportive services and/or short-term (up to 3 months) and/or medium-term (for 3 to 12 months) tenant-based rental assistance. RRH Assistance, including supportive services or rental assistance, should not be provided to participants for more than 12 months.
- Participants must be re-evaluated at least every 90 days to determine the need for continued assistance. This requirement applies to both supportive services and rental assistance. Through each re-evaluation the recipient or sub recipient must determine that the continuation of assistance is necessary to avoid literal homelessness.
- Providers are required to follow-up with participants at least one time after rental assistance is no longer being provided to ensure that they are stable and to help prevent a return to homelessness.

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<sup>1</sup> If upon further review it is determined that a household that scored for RRH is not an appropriate match for RRH, or a household that did not score for RRH is an appropriate match for RRH, Delaware's Centralized Intake may override initial scoring decisions.

- Participants may receive no more than \$7,500 in total rental assistance during a 12-month period (*Some local funders may have lower funding caps, such as HDF. Providers are responsible for ensuring that they follow funder requirements*). This amount may be reviewed and revised as needed.
- If through the re-evaluation it is determined that a higher amount of assistance than the levels defined above, or the continuation of assistance after 12 months is necessary to avoid the participant from returning to homelessness, the RRH provider must submit an exemption request in writing to Centralized Intake. Centralized Intake will make decisions on a case by case basis in consultation with funders of RRH in Delaware. If an exemption is authorized, the RRH Provider must continue to re-evaluate participants at least every 90 days to determine the need for continued assistance. Under no circumstances may assistance be provided for more than the maximum period authorized by HUD regulations 24 CFR Part 578.
- Participants may be eligible for rapid re-housing assistance for multiple episodes of literal homelessness based on their need. If participants present for RRH assistance after initial assistance has been provided, Centralized Intake or other designated entity will facilitate a case review to determine how to best assist the participant household to establish housing stability and will consider other methods and resources to stabilize in housing.

Questions regarding this document and the Rapid Re-Housing Standards outlined above should be directed to Nicole Waters, Program Manager, New Castle County Department of Community Services, 77 Reads Way, New Castle, DE 19720 (302) 395-5644/ [nwaters@nccde.org](mailto:nwaters@nccde.org) .

**By signing below the agency recognizes they've received the Rapid Re-Housing Standards and will adhere to them in the administration of their Rapid Re-Housing Programs.**

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**Agency Name:**

**Authorizing Signature:**

**Date:**