

General Rules And Regulations for Direct Housing

The YWCA Family Center (FC), Salvation Army, HFF, and VOA are responsible for posting, reading, or otherwise making known, the Program Agreement of DH participants that includes an appeals policy and a grievance policy for addressing alleged violations of clients' rights. Reasonable efforts must be made to ensure that all residents, regardless of language abilities, understand their rights and responsibilities.

Program Agreement

The YWCA-FC, Salvation Army, HFF, and VOA have a process for posting and distributing and otherwise making known program regulations and termination policies. There are written and posted guidelines of unacceptable behaviors, and the consequences of rules violations are clearly stated and consistently enforced. Families will be asked to sign an agreement form during their intake meeting with their Salvation Army, HFF or VOA Case Manager.

Commitment to Program

Families agree to actively partner with a Case Manager for the time needed to attain housing, as well as time to establish linkages to community resources to ensure the family's ability to maintain housing as identified on the Individualized Housing Stabilization Plan. If housing is not required to have a formal inspection completed, the case manager must review housing and present a completed & signed Housing Checklist to the family prior to making a housing commitment.

Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drugs

The DH should serve families with mental health or alcohol and other drug problems. If they are demonstrating active and severe symptoms that limit the family's ability to obtain or maintain permanent housing the DH case manager needs to make a referral to treatment services. Families that include a person *with a diagnosed mental health or AOD condition* need to be referred to treatment services as soon as possible by the Case Manager, either at the YWCA-FC, Salvation Army, HFF, or VOA, who first becomes aware of the diagnosis in accordance with the Individualized Housing Stabilization Plan. Treatment service providers should be the primary providers of support for mental health and AOD problems, not the Case Manager.

If the Case Manager suspects that alcohol or other drug use by a family member is limiting the family's ability to obtain permanent housing quickly or maintain self-sufficiency, the family member may be asked to obtain an assessment from a qualified provider of recovery services congruent with goals on the Individualized Housing Stabilization Plan.

The DH may terminate services for participants with mental health or alcohol and other drug problems if¹:

- Active drug use is identified and limits the family's ability to obtain and maintain permanent housing;
- A family member refuses to obtain an assessment; or
- A family member appears to be experiencing active and severe symptoms of mental illness or substance abuse and is unwilling or unable to comply with the Individualized Housing Stabilization Plan or to participate in assessment related activities.

If the DH needs to close a case, it will follow the procedure outlined in the exit criteria section.

¹ Active use does not exclude a family from participating in the DH if such use does not restrict the family's ability to attain and maintain housing.

Family Budgets / Fiscal Planning

The DH Case Manager will work with each family to determine their target budget for sustainable living (including desired earnings) and, realistically, how they can increase family income by the planned exit date. In addition, the Case Manager should work with families to develop a household budget while receiving DH services to resolve any past debts and improve credit standing.

Reporting Of Child / Elder Abuse

The Salvation Army, HFF, VOA and YWCA-FC must have a plan and process for reporting child and elder abuse and evidence that the procedures are followed which is shared with participants.

Grievances/Appeals

A family with an appeal or grievance regarding the DH should determine which member of the collaborative is responsible.

- 1) A grievance regarding services received through the YWCA-FC Resource Specialist should be addressed through the YWCA's grievance process.
- 2) A grievance regarding services received through a DH Case Manager should be addressed through the Salvation Army, HFF, or VOA grievance and appeal process. Families must submit a written notice, or contact a member of the agency that is providing the service expressing intent to submit a grievance, within 5 business days of their decision to file. Families may obtain assistance from the agency that is providing service to complete the grievance.
- 3) An appeal regarding a decision of the DH Program Administration Meeting (PAM) group should be brought to the attention of the CSB via the normal CSB customer concern policies and procedures.

The agencies will collect, evaluate, and analyze all grievances so that trends and patterns can be noted and corrections can be made to the DH program. The agency will provide a summary of all grievances and actions to the CSB at the quarterly grievance/appeal review, which will be conducted quarterly at the Family System Operations Workgroup Meeting (FSOW). The provider agency will maintain records of all grievances, and the CSB PM will maintain records of all appeals.

Direct Housing for Families Admissions And Re-Entry Policies

Admissions Policies

Expenses for rent and utilities must be reasonably based on the family's projected ability to sustain payment for the rent and utilities in the future, generally no more than 50 percent of the family monthly income. Families will not be assisted to move into housing that they cannot reasonably be expected to maintain/afford for the twelve months following exit from DH.

Families who have previous eviction or financial assessments due to damages will be considered. Excessive records need to be handled on a case-by-case basis depending on the circumstances. When possible, the DH program will assist families in negotiating a re-payment plan. Families must be willing to cooperate with the DH program to address.

Families who have "open cases" with FCCS must agree to work jointly with an FCCS Case Manager and their Case Manager. The Case Manager will assure that all applicable FCCS financial resources are used as the first resource to meet the family's needs.

Families may have police records. However, families with arson records may not be eligible unless the family has identified a landlord willing to rent to them before acceptance into the program. All other convictions will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Families must show explanations and compliance with probation, parole, and/or treatment for any convictions.

Families should be prepared and expect to pay a portion of their move-in expenses, with either household resources or leveraged community resources.

If the Case Manager is concerned about current alcohol or drug use, or if any adult family member has a diagnosed substance abuse disorder, he or she should agree to be referred to a qualified Alcohol or Other Drug (AOD) provider for an assessment and treatment if recommended.

If the Case Manager is concerned about mental health issues, or if any adult family member has a diagnosed mental health condition, he or she should agree to be referred to a qualified mental health provider for an assessment and treatment if recommended.

Families must be able to obtain and maintain utilities in the name of the Head of Household or other contributing adult residing with the family. If money is owed to utility companies preventing service turn-on:

- families can make a special payment arrangement with the utility company; or
- payments can be made to the utility company with funds leveraged on the family's behalf through community utility assistance programs or the Direct Housing Program.

Admission Procedures

The admissions policy, including re-entry policies and procedures, are to be posted at all collaborating agencies and distributed to families referred to the Direct Housing Program and given, again, to families who are enrolled into the DH program.

DH staff should only accept families referred by the YWCA-FC that meet the eligibility requirements listed above and the following admissions policies.

As part of the referral process, the YWCA-FC Resource Specialist shall fax a copy of the DH Referral Form as soon as possible, and no later than 4 business days, after entry to the Family Center. This provides the YWCA-FC with 2 business days to assess a family's needs and 2 business days to make a referral to the Direct Housing Program.

As part of the referral process the YWCA-FC Resource Specialist shall fax a copy of the family's intake assessment along with the Release of Records Consent(s) secured from the family no later than 2 business days after notification of an opening in Direct Housing.

In addition, a copy of the family's credit/police report will be faxed with the DH Referral form, and the YWCA-FC Resource Specialist will be prepared to provide by telephone any other information from the family's records as requested by the Salvation Army Franklin County Housing Coordinator, HFF Program Director, or VOA Family Service Director. All file records, identification, income verifications, etc., will be provided to the Case Manager as soon as possible.

A decision of entry (or denial) to the DH program will be made within 2 business days of a referral being made. The Case Manager will contact the family and complete intake within three (3) business days. If a family is denied, the Salvation Army Franklin County Housing Coordinator, HFF Program Director, or VOA Family Service Director will send a letter to the family (Attachment 7A), via the YWCA-FC Housing Resource Specialist, informing them of the denial of their request and

how they may appeal the decision. The DH providers may choose to delete a client record from the HMIS data system if the client does not engage with the DH staff after program acceptance on at least 3 separate occasions. The DH provider must keep the client file for their records.

Re-Entry Policies & Procedures

- 1) Families previously housed in permanent housing by the Direct Housing program may only be referred to the same DH program again twelve full months after the previous exit date. Families previously housed in permanent housing by a Direct Housing program may not be referred to the same Direct Housing program again. Exceptions may be made to this rule on a case-by-case basis, *if* the situation that caused the loss of DH-assisted housing seems to no longer exist, *and* after case review, the Salvation Army Franklin County Housing Coordinator, HFF Family Services Director, or VOA Family Service Director decides that the family exhibits the likelihood of successful DH placement and are better candidates for DH placement than other program options. Active DH families that subsequently lose their housing may be able to re-enter the DH program but they **must** first be unsuccessfully exited from the program before reinstatement is possible.
- 2) Families must be willing to realistically assess why the former housing was lost and engage in activities that will help ensure the same difficulty will not be encountered if new housing is obtained through DH assistance.