# CoC Program Rapid Rehousing Rental Assistance Policy

Rapid Rehousing projects are designed to provide flexible programming to expedite a household’s ability to become self-sufficient through time-limited rental subsidy programs. Per 24 CFR part 578.37(a)(1)(ii), the CoC will establish annual priority populations to receive Rapid Rehousing assistance consistent with HUD CoC Program NOFA requirements and in response to analysis of point in time count and housing inventory information, along with identified unmet community needs.

The goal of Rapid Rehousing projects should be to provide assistance leading to independence. This intervention is intended to have some flexibility, allowing programs to be client-centered and tailor services to meet individual needs. Progressive engagement should be implemented with all program participants, with programs providing the least intensive assistance whenever possible.

Client choice should be considered in determining type and frequency of services, location and characteristics of housing, length of program support, and level of rental assistance. Housing and employment opportunities should be selected for sustainability after program graduation, incorporating client input and self-assessment. Housing location should consider client input on access to opportunity including transit, school quality, safety and security, support systems, employment, and other factors.

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines to determine:

* Amounts or percentage of rent each program participant must pay;
* Maximum number of times a program participant may receive rental assistance; and
* Maximum number of months a program participant may receive assistance;
* How Rapid Rehousing should be used as bridge housing into other permanent housing.

**Amount/percentage of rent to be paid by participants**

Rapid Rehousing programs must identify and select one of two subsidy program models for program participants at intake. CoC approved subsidy models include the Income-Based Subsidy and Gradual Declining Subsidy. Programs have the flexibility to change the subsidy model during a participant’s time in the program based on what will best serve the participant.

Should programs need to change the subsidy model initially selected for a participant, programs should give notice to both the participant and landlord to ensure parties understand and are prepared for any impact the change may have on rental payments. Programs have the flexibility to design services with additional structures in place to help determine what subsidy model is best for participants and guidelines case managers must use to change the subsidy.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Rental Assistance Model** | **Rent to be paid by participant** |
| Income-Based Subsidy | 30% of adjusted gross household income$0 minimum |
| Gradual Declining Subsidy | Percentage of rent paid is determined by participant need and is increased as participant ability to pay increases |

**Maximum number of times a program participant may receive rental assistance**

Program participants are not limited to the number of times they can participate in Rapid Rehousing programs within the Fort Worth/Arlington/Tarrant County Continuum of Care and there is no lifetime maximum on number of times a participant can be assisted.

If a program participant has returned to homelessness from another Rapid Rehousing program and is accessing Rapid Rehousing for a second time, the housing case manager must engage with CoC Rapid Rehousing Case Conferencing to ensure comprehensive services are being provided to meet all needs and prevent another return to homelessness.

**Maximum number of months a participant can receive rental assistance**

Rapid Rehousing funds may be used to provide eligible supportive services, and short-term (up to 3 months) and/or medium-term (3-24 months) tenant-based rental assistance. All program participants must be the lease holder and must initially have a one year lease, with the option to renew at a minimum on a monthly basis and is only terminable for cause.

Programs are required to limit the rental assistance to no more than 24 months but may also choose to provide a shorter amount of assistance. When client need indicates rental assistance is needed for more than 12 months, program case managers are required to engage with Rapid Rehousing Case Conferencing for a case review. Supportive services can be offered for up to six months after rental assistance ends, up to 30 months total.

**Rapid Rehousing as bridge housing**

The practice of using Rapid Rehousing as a bridge to PSH or other permanent housing is a recommended practice by HUD, particularly in CoCs that have limited PSH vacancies. Rapid Rehousing as bridge housing ensures those who have the most severe needs or the longest length of time homeless have a quick pathway to housing where appropriate.

Participants coming from a Rapid Rehousing project are allowed to enroll in a PSH project without losing their homeless or chronically homeless status, so long as the household was homeless or chronically homeless and met the eligibility criteria for the PSH project at entry into the initial Rapid Rehousing project. Assistance should be tailored to the participant and their unique and specific needs.