

**MARIE HERB:** So we can see people joining. So we should just pause for a few minutes.

**JACOB** Marie, I'm going to put a thing in the chat to please use the Q&A to ask questions.

**MIHALAK:**

**MARIE HERB:** OK.

Hi. Welcome. As people are joining, we're just going to wait a few more minutes because we can see the folks are getting online right now. Thanks.

So Amy, it's a few minutes after 2:00. Maybe we could just get started, even though folks are still--

**AMY**  
**PALILONIS:** Sure, yeah. That sounds good. So welcome, everyone. I'm Amy Palilonis. I am a senior program specialist in HUD'S Office of HIV/AIDS Housing. Today's webinar is on using hotels and motels for COVID-19 response. And this webinar is for housing opportunities for persons with AIDS, grantees, and project sponsors. Next slide, please.

So on today's webinar, we will cover the following topics related to HOPWA-funded hotel/motel stays. We will cover what role short-term hotel and motel stays can play in your community's COVID-19 response, how to use HOPWA funds to implement this strategy, important HUD guidelines and suggestions around paying for hotel and motel stays. We will cover some tips from the field and a look of how this can be done effectively. And then we will cover some of your frequently asked questions around hotels and motels. Next slide.

So just for some webinar logistics, all attendees will be muted. Please submit your questions in the question and answer box. If you have any technical issues, please put that in the chat box to Laura Harris. This webinar is going to be recorded and posted later. And the slides will be made available.

We won't be able to get to everyone's questions today, although we are going to try. But please submit all questions that you have because seeing the sort of things that you're struggling with or questions that are coming to your mind is really helpful to us.

And we will include answers to as many questions as we can in future webinars or in other resources that we post online. And if we don't get to your question today, you should definitely put that question in the HOPWA Ask a Question portal so that you can get a direct response to that question. Next slide.

So our presenters today are from HUD'S Office of HIV/AIDS Housing, as well as HOPWA technical assistance provider organizations. Joining me from the Office of HIV/AIDS Housing is Rita Harcrow, who is the director of the Office, as well as Benjamin Ayers, who is the deputy director of the Office. Marie Herb and Laura Harris from the Technical Assistance Collaborative are also presenting today, as well as Jacob Mihalak from Sound Thinking. Next slide.

So this webinar has several objectives. By the end of the webinar, we hope that participants will have an increased understanding of the role that hotels and motels can play in a broader community response to COVID-19, the eligible populations for the HOPWA-funded activities that we will be discussing, the federal guidelines and suggestions related to hotel/motel utilization, the different models for implementing this strategy in your community, and where to get additional information and resources online. Next slide.

So why should you consider paying for hotel and motel stays as part of your COVID-19 response? Next slide.

So the preliminary reasons and objectives are to move people living with HIV out of homeless shelters or from unsheltered settings, to provide people living with HIV with a safe place to isolate or quarantine from their household members, to provide HIV-positive and/or non-HIV-positive family members with a safe place to isolate or quarantine, and to decongregate shared housing facilities for social distancing purposes. And so I'm now going to turn things over to Jake, who is going to tell you more about using HOPWA funding for hotel and motel stays.

**MARIE HERB:** Jake, you're on mute.

**JACOB**  
**MIHALAK:** Thank you. 400 Zoom webinars later, I always forget that stuff. I'm happy to be here. And we'd love to learn who all is here attending this webinar. So I just sent out a note on the chat feature. If you all wouldn't mind typing in your city or town and

the state you're from and just addressing it to all panelists and attendees, we'll get a good glimpse of who's coming. Next slide, please, Marie.

So I want to start by saying the original HOPWA legislation was passed in 1990 and implemented in 1992, when almost everybody who got GRID or AIDS ultimately ended up dying in the first years. And so the idea that there would be a use for hotel/motels as a short-term stay was not anticipated. So therefore, over time, the Office of HIV/AIDS Housing at HUD has provided us guidance for how we can use this activity within the existing HOPWA legislation.

And there are a couple of suggestions and restrictions that we need to point out. So if you look in the HOPWA budget legislation Section 574.330, the idea was to have this mirror the leasing of short-term facilities that were in that legislation for the purpose of providing housing and services. And the suggested time limit under normal circumstances is no more than 60 days within any six-month period.

And luckily, this activity is eligible under all types of HOPWA funding, both formula and competitive grants, as well as with the CARES Act funding that was just enacted. And to do that, the activity of leasing must be added. In the case of a formula grantee, it would need to be an amendment to an existing consolidated plan or annual action plan by a substantial amendment-- and we'll get back to both of these methodologies in a minute-- or four competitive grantees through the special CARES Act plan that either is being drafted or has already been submitted. Next.

So there's some basic guidelines here. The first bullet stresses that this activity must be reported on a leasing budget line item. So if your current HOPWA budget does not include leasing, then taking one of those actions to establish leasing activity is a primary priority.

And then a second thing that's tied to this activity is that every assisted individual, if they're eligible, must be able to receive case management services from the appropriate social services agency. So that means if people are placed in a hotel or motel, they must be able to get this case management via remote or on-site staffing.

And third bullet-- of course, HOPWA has always in mind the long-term, permanent housing for its beneficiaries. So to the extent practicable, each individual and their

family should be provided with the opportunity for placement in permanent housing or in a living environment that's appropriate to their health and social needs.

As we said earlier, the initial estimation of maximum stay is 60 days, however, with a demonstrated need and something tied to the COVID guidelines of respond, prepare, and prevent COVID infection documented. Next slide, please.

You probably are all aware that there have been two waivers that were processed this spring. The first one, called mega-waiver one, in April specifically addresses one of the issues in the HOPWA guidance called "space and security." And you can see the subsection referenced there.

So the CARES Act waiver number one allows project sponsors and grantees that are operating housing facilities and shared housing arrangements to have the flexibility to use appropriate spaces for quarantining households. This could be, for example, a dining room that isn't functioning as a dining room anymore because you're not providing shared food. It could potentially be a sleeping room and other examples like that if you can imagine in a building-- office space, for example.

Optional spaces may also include the placement of families in a hotel or motel room where the family members may be required to utilize the same space, which would not normally meet the basic HOPWA space and security guidelines. But because of the special condition, that is waived as well.

And obviously, this waiver suggests that the space and security waiver can be implemented to address the quarantine space during that time that's specified by local health care professionals. And when that period ends, then this waiver for space and security will also end. And things will start to need to go back to normal or what was normal. Next, please.

Also within the CARES Act authorizations, we have this idea that the funds can be used for a range of relocation services. And I specifically mentioned our hotels and motels. What's important to point out here is it's not just for the eligible person living with HIV and AIDS. But also, if there are family members living in the same household who are not living with HIV/AIDS, they may be relocated for the protection and safety of the PLWA who remains in the unit.

In addition to the specific authorizations under the CARES Act, HUD has determined that any portion of the formula grantee's current FY2020 funds that are approved under the Annual Action Plan and mirror the activities of the CARES Act in terms of preventing, preparing for, and responding to the COVID-19 pandemic-- those FY2020 funds may also be expended in the same way as the CARES Act-authorized funds.

There's another note here, which is that regular HOPWA formula funds may also be used for the hotel/motel activity. But they cannot be used to place the non-HIV-positive family members into a hotel or motel unit for quarantine or isolation. Next.

So in the development of the Annual Action Plan or Con Plan amendment, this activity is considered a short-term payment for rent. And as noted earlier, it is to be captured on the leasing line item within IDIS. And therefore that activity and that line item have to be added into the Annual Action Plan as a planned HOPWA service. So if this currently isn't there as a line item action step, then it will need to be added.

And of course, other HUD programs that are receiving CARES Act funds that are covered by the Consolidated Plan, which includes Community Development Block Grant, Emergency Solutions Grant, and the Home Program-- they may also be developing or likely to be developing amendments. So if you're a formula grantee and you haven't yet coordinated with those other programs, it would be a good idea to do that because there is a specified process for substantial amendments that's been curtailed or shortened for this purpose but still needs to be followed. Next slide.

Competitive grantees may also use their CARES Act funds for this activity. And it's a little bit simpler. A competitive grantee must develop a brief plan which includes the activities and expected spending and then send it to the HOPWA mailbox that we talk about all the time, [hopwa@hud.gov](mailto:hopwa@hud.gov), for approval. The plan needs to include a description of the type and amount of each eligible CARES Act activity proposed, the process that will be undertaken to carry out the work quickly, some discussion of, if the main office or when the main office is closed down to the public health guidance, how you can ensure that eligible households will have equitable access to this program.

And then on the last line there, you can see that there are three standard forms that need to be developed and submitted. And if you don't know how to do this, I would suggest looking for one of the webinars that we've covered already, both substantial amendments and developing the CARES Act plan for competitive grantees. Next slide, please.

So one of the first things we mentioned was the idea that the initial guidance for this activity was only 60 days in a six-month period. But if there are COVID-related health and safety concerns for the household members, particularly the eligible persons living with HIV and AIDS, then this assistance can exceed that 60-day limit. And the guidance further states that the grantees and project sponsors should have in place policies and procedures specifically detailing how extensions will be approved and then also when and how the policy will be consistently implemented.

In prior webinars, we've talked about the idea that you can start spending early and then reimburse an existing HOPWA formula grant from the CARES Act funds once everything is in place. That's also true here. We'll talk about that again in a second. But this idea that you develop the plan, and then you document each time you're using it will be helpful in a future monitoring or auditing situation to justify the expenditures of the funds on households that are determined to need it. Next slide, please.

Well, fortunately, like almost everything in HOPWA, the eligible recipients window is actually quite wide. We start with just the two basic requirements for HOPWA that a person be low-income, meaning household income is 80% or less of the area median income, and at least one family member is HIV-positive.

Eligible individuals and their family members who are not currently receiving HOPWA-funded services are also eligible for this activity. So in fact, you may learn of a household that's living in the community. And they can afford their rent. But they need to split up because one of the family members is working. Or the HOPWA-eligible individual needs to move out. That household is allowable.

Also, it's open to all households where they're living in a HOPWA-subsidized unit if isolation is required. And then, again, specifically with the CARES Act and the

mirroring funds from FY2020, if one of the members of the family who is not HIV-positive needs to be isolated, that's eligible as well. Next.

So just to recap and introduce a couple of more ideas, this table shows you the HOPWA-funded activity that we're describing on the left column. And then the right column is some guidance as to which budget line item you would charge this to.

So the first one starts out by saying, aggregated on-site hotel and motel costs into the leasing line item. And let's talk about those aggregated costs because, presumably, almost everybody on this call has stayed at a hotel more than once. And you know when you get your hotel bill there's all kinds of things on there. There could be laundry and parking. There could be telephone or Wi-Fi or even entertainment costs in that bill.

Well, we'll talk about this in detail later. But when you negotiate your contract with the hotel, many or all of those things will be included for each room. So any of those costs that get aggregated into the room costs for an individual who's staying in the hotel or motel-- all of those costs straight off that bill would go directly into the leasing line item.

Now, with many HOPWA activities, we also talk about an associated staffing cost. That is considered a cost associated with that activity, not a separate activity area. So in the case of the hotel and motel activity, the staffing cost to identify, place residents into a hotel, and help them maintain their residency in the hotel-- those would be associated with some kind of rental assistance.

So if this was a TBRA household, and you were moving that person or one of the household members into the hotel/motel, and the staff person who supports TBRA is doing it, then it probably makes sense to bill that to TBRA. If you're specifically going out to identify all of the households, and a person associated with the hotel and motel activity is doing that work, then we would suggest that that would go under leasing.

And if instead a team of case managers or housing navigators goes out and speaks to each one of their clients, and then they're the ones who negotiate this placement, that could be under support services. So you need to look at how your program is designed and where the primary staff are associated in order to determine which

budget line item the staffing costs would go to.

New and specific to the CARES Act and the FY2020 mirroring funds, damages that might be incurred during this leasing period can also be charged to the leasing line item. And then if for any reason there are some significant indirect costs that need to be associated here, particularly if there's a large number of people doing this or it represents a large portion of the agency budget, it might make sense when these CARES Act come in for the agency to look at their estimate for indirect costs.

And if it's determined that some should be associated here, that would also go under leasing. And then any additional supportive services delivered would go under supportive services, as per usual. The asterisk says the staff costs should be charged to the appropriate activity and will vary between project sponsors based on your HUD-approved plans. Next slide.

So when we talk about actually getting into the rentals, there is a little bit of flexibility here. We say hotels and motels. But also, it could include the use of Airbnb facilities. It could be college dormitories or some other kind of short-term rental opportunity that wouldn't normally be considered under the HOPWA activities.

This second bullet here also suggests that you specify the type and frequency of additional services that the hotel or motel might provide. So listed here but not all-inclusive would be housekeeping, laundry, hotel-prepared meals, on-site parking, Wi-Fi, telephone, television, et cetera.

We encourage both formula and competitive grantees to ask around in the community because it's quite likely that the homeless Continuum Of Care, or CoC, is active in placing people in hotels and motel units-- also the Emergency Solutions Grant programs. And of course, the FEMA funds, the Federal Emergency Management Act funds, came in first. And this activity was also eligible under that program.

And then as an alternative to finding and negotiating hotels on your own, we've heard of communities that have engaged a corporate lodging service. And we have some ideas about how to do that. And they would serve as the intermediary with the property. And most of them would already have relationships with one or more properties in your community. So particularly if you feel really tightly staffed, this



might be a good way of getting a consultant to do some of this work for you.

The last bullet on this slide talks about best practices. And of course, the best practice is to make sure that you negotiate a contract with the hotel before you place anyone in that unit. And it very clearly specifies all of these activities, including a projected time frame. Because you don't want them to suddenly say, OK, now all you people have to move out because we're done with this activity. So you want to make sure that you have a time frame that's reasonable for your community. Next.

This slide, again, just goes back over the damages clause because under the CARES Act, it may be considered part of the leasing activity and would be on the leasing budget line item. Again, you should have policies and procedures in place that support the use of leasing funds for damages.

And it would make sense to determine how frequently and how much the damages might be and negotiate that into your contract. And again, your partners in the ESG, CoC, or FEMA programs probably have a pretty good idea of what those expenses have been. Also, the hotel you're talking to probably has an idea of what their minimum would be. So this negotiation is really critical. Next, please.

We touched on this briefly earlier. Here's a short list of the other kinds of additional helpful activities that might be considered-- case management, food and nutrition, permanent housing placement, and transportation.

It's worth saying now-- and we'll probably stress it again-- people aren't being placed in hotels and motels to spend their time locked in their room. This is their new home. They're free to come and go as they please. And it's our responsibility to help make sure that they have a quality of life that's appropriate to their living conditions.

And so we need to make sure that we've considered all of their needs-- maybe not all provided by HOPWA-- but that all the individuals living in a hotel or motel unit have access to the kinds of activities and opportunities that they would if they were in their own home to the extent that it's practical. Next, please.

OK. Thank you very much. At this point, I'll turn it over to Marie again.

**MARIE HERB:** Great. So as you've participated in previous OHH webinars, a lot of questions have come in during those webinars and have come in after those webinars. So we just wanted to review some of those frequently asked questions that are specific to HOPWA and hotel/motels. Ari, next slide. And I have to enlarge so I could read the question.

So the question was, we are already providing hotel rooms now to help clients and household members isolate. Can those costs be reimbursed later from the new CARES Act award? And the answer that we've given before is yes. So CARES Act funding can cover or reimburse allowable costs incurred by a grantee or sponsor for allowable activities that were incurred previous to this.

So if you've already drawn from existing HOPWA grants to temporarily cover some of these costs while you were waiting for your CARES Act funds to come through or while you were planning, you want to submit a question to the HOPWA AAQ to discuss the process for making the adjustments so that those funds then will come out of the CARES Act funds and not out of your regular allocation. So that's one of the several ways that there's been great flexibility built into the CARES Act funding.

Next question-- can we begin utilizing hotel/motels right now, even if that is not a HOPWA activity that was funded in the past? Can this be paid for through STRMU or Permanent Housing Placement, or PHP?

So to get this activity started immediately, you may use any budget line item temporarily and document that you're going to develop a CARES Act leasing line item. And move the costs from there once that's set up in your line of credit for drawdown. You can also use non-HOPWA funds and then seek reconciliation with your HOPWA CARES Act funds later on. And again, there's a whole IDIS TA team that can help you figure out how to do the messy work behind the scenes. Next slide, Ari?

And as you are seeking it, you do have to reconcile those costs to the CARES Act award. You're going to want to set them up correctly in IDIS. And again, if you have any questions about how to do that, you should reach out for TA on doing it because fixing it at the beginning is going to be much better than trying to fix it later on after you've gone down that path. Next slide.

So can hotel/motel stays funded under HOPWA be extended beyond the 60-day time limit due to COVID-19? And while the standard HOPWA guidance suggests that hotel/motel stays be limited to no more than 60 days in a six-month period, if you feel that these stays should be extended due to COVID-19 health and safety reasons, then you could put a policy in place that would allow that. You just want to detail how the extensions would be approved and explain why and how that policy is going to be consistently implemented across all your different clients or, if you're the grantee, working with all your different sponsor agencies in implementing it fairly and consistently.

And then I think this might be the last FAQ right now. As a competitive grantee, can I use my COVID-19 funds to lease hotel/motels? Yes. That's great. So Jake reviewed this a bit. As formula grantees, the leasing line item would have to be included.

So you would be submitting to [hopwa@hud.gov](mailto:hopwa@hud.gov) for approval. And just submit a brief plan and budget with how you intend to implement a hotel/motel in your HOPWA grant. And then you'll get approval and be able to do it. So this definitely applies to you as well.

So Jake went over the details. And I'm a firm believer that the devil is in the details. And that's really critical and important. I'm going to step back for a little bit right now and just talk about ways that you could really design your program because I see that about 200 of you are still here. So I think that means you're a little interested in potentially doing hotel/motels. So we're going to keep you as a captive audience. Ari, next slide.

So the key place to really start when you're going to design any program is identifying what the need is. You have to ask those questions. Why do I want to do this? Is there a need? How many people would need this? And ideally, you're going to get this information by talking to the agencies and the people who are working with people living with HIV and AIDS in your community and, ideally, talking with consumers themselves.

So first place you're going to want to start is to talk with your HOPWA project sponsors. This could be through focus groups. It could be through doing a

SurveyMonkey or some other questionnaire. You could use a Zoom forum like this. Or you could just pick up the phone and call them and see right now. Have they already heard that this might be a need? Have they had clients call them and express concern about not being able to be isolated during the epidemic here?

But besides them, Jake has already, I think, really strongly reinforced the need to talk to the Continuum of Care that is in your community-- and that might be more than one-- and to reach out to the agency that administers the Emergency Solutions Grant Program, the ESG Program, in your community. It's likely they've already identified some needs. It's very likely they're already doing something similar like this.

So one, you don't want to reinvent the wheel. And you want to just really do as much co-planning as you can with those entities. Other key community groups to talk to would be community health centers or clinics and then any of the Ryan White-funded agencies, again, to see, have they heard or identified any need for hotel/motels?

And then looking at the HMIS, the Homeless Management Information System, data-- that may indicate how many people living with HIV are living in shelters or even living in unsheltered situations. And if that number seems to exist really at all, then that's, again, reaching out to your CoC to figure out how you can use these resources to help address that issue that people living with HIV are facing in the shelters and unsheltered situations.

I went over some of this. But other questions would be, how many units do they think when you're talking to all these agencies? Is it just that they've heard of one client or one consumer? Or have they really identified maybe 20 that would be useful? Do they anticipate that it is only for a two-week period of time that they might need this unit for social distancing or for a formal quarantine period? Or do they really need it for a much longer period of time?

Is it people living in facility-based housing that's funded by HOPWA that really are not able to achieve any level of social distancing? And that might mean that they need the unit for a much longer period of time.

Before you really embark on this, you have to identify, are there even hotel/motel

units in your community? And are they safe? Or Jake said you can use alternatives if there aren't any. That might be the dorms, as he mentioned. Or it could be Air BnB. It's really looking at what is available.

And I know many of you may be in much more rural communities and don't have any of that available. So then your questions are also going to be, well, how far away are local hotels? And is there transportation available? Or could I create transportation to get people to the those hotels, as well as to build in the other services that Jake already identified? Next slide.

And then just more questions to address-- and I'm hoping we're on that slide because I'm seeing a different view here-- is, how are you going to get guests moved into those units? Are you going to expect them to get to the hotel on their own? Will they need transportation to get to the hotel? Will you be meeting them at the hotel when they're moving in?

In negotiating with the hotel itself, will people be going to the front desk and getting the room key? Or will you have staff there who are going to get the room keys and then distribute them? All of those are viable options.

People have been using hotels for these kind of crisis situations well before the coronavirus. In any either natural disaster or other kind of crises, many communities turn to hotel/motels as a short-term, temporary, safe place to be. So it's not atypical to do this. So these are all really good questions in thinking about it.

Jake talked about people moving into the hotel in that, yeah, you don't want them isolated in their unit. But clearly, they also will need access to food and access to laundry facilities if they're there for any period of time. I've done some focus groups with HOPWA project sponsors. And I would say one of the number-one issues raised, even not in a hotel/motel situation, is the lack of food and food insecurity overall.

Living in a hotel can definitely exacerbate that. So you're going to need to identify, is it going to be left up to the client to get their own food? Are there food options in walking distance of that hotel? Will you be providing gift cards? We've gone over in previous webinars how the purchase of gift cards is an allowable use of the CARES Act funds.

Is there a way if you're having, say, five hotel rooms in one site that you can have food delivered? Some hotels have had dining spaces before. I'm assuming they've probably all stopped the provision of food. But they may have dining rooms. And you could look to having food delivered.

But again, you're going to want to think about, well, how are those spaces going to be cleaned, both before and after? How will they be sanitized? Is there outdoor seating? In most parts of the country now, eating outside might be a lovely option. So you want to explore all those things with the hotel. Next slide.

Again, this goes back to the details. You need to develop a budget. So in thinking about it, are you talking about five hotel rooms? Or are you talking about 500 hotel rooms? And how many days do you expect? Did you talk to the hotels? And were you able to get a daily rate that you negotiated with them?

We're going to talk about that in a little bit. But all of that is going to go into your very basic calculation. Number of units times the number of days times the rate is what you might need just for the leasing of those units. Jake then talked about how damages could be part of that leasing budget. And that would, again, be part of something that you'll negotiate with the hotel management.

Will they need help-- clients for move-in? And is that a cost? And do you have case managers who could do that? Will you need to find other folks who can help with that? Even though it's a hotel/motel, if you're going to be staying there for a long period of time, you may have a number of things, both besides clothes, but medical equipment and other things, that have to get safely into that hotel unit.

And then lastly, just how are you going to provide case management? You've probably all already shifted to being able to provide really high-quality case management in a remote way. Will you be continuing to do that? You want to make sure that that hotel does have Wi-Fi so that the consumers who are living there will be able to access whatever kind of way you do your remote case management or telehealth visits with them. But you want to see.

If they had internet that they were paying in their own house, and it's not included in this hotel, that would be an additional cost that you're going to want to address and really make sure so that they're not saying, you know what? I can't do case

management right now because it's cost-prohibitive. So those are all things that you really want to think about as you're developing your budget.

We talked about transportation. It's a key thing-- getting folks to and from the hotel just initially, but also their transportation to other appointments. Many medical services are now slowly opening up as we open up across the country from our lockdown. And so people may need to get to their medical appointments.

We've talked about that they're going to need to get to food services, really wanting to make sure that they have all those essential services that they need. Again, these might be consumers who you've never-- they weren't part of your HOPWA program before the pandemic. And so this could be a really good opportunity to also introduce them to the range of services that you have beyond both HOPWA-funded and non-HOPWA-funded. That might be job training programs, educational programs, other supportive services.

This might be their introduction to it. So either during this time or after, once they're back in housing, they might then remember that you mentioned that and say, you know what? This is a great opportunity for me to reach out and get some additional services.

When you negotiate with the hotels, you want to, again, check on the food. But also check on laundry services. Is parking free? In many city hotels, the cost of parking can be crazy prohibitive. And if someone has a car, they're going to want their car with them. So you want to either figure out how to negotiate a rate with the hotel that wouldn't be really obscene or maybe find some other off-site but nearby parking that would be at least much cheaper than the hotel parking.

Many hotels have shuttle vans. You're going to want to check, though. What are they doing as far as health and safety provisions and cleanliness in that van? And is that an option-- and then some of those other charges that both Jake and I have talked about, like the Wi-Fi and laundry and things like that. Next slide.

Jake mentioned that other sources of funding are really out there. Many communities have gotten millions and millions of dollars of CARES Act funds that are not HOPWA or HIV-specific. And it's really both important just in planning but also to make sure that we're not being redundant in our services or double dipping

in our services that you really make an effort to reach out to those entities that are administering the FEMA funds, that are administering Ryan White funds, the Community Development Block Grant funds, the ESG funds that I already mentioned, and even CoC funds.

There's also private funds that have been out there. Lots of foundations have stepped up and have looked at, how can they prevent homelessness or housing instability? A lot of foundations have looked at really addressing the food insecurity that many people have identified.

So you want to really make sure that you're reaching out because while HOPWA got a generous amount of CARES Act funds, it's really pretty small in comparison to these others. And if you are really looking at doing hotel/motels, you might find that your budget goes pretty quickly unless you're able to leverage a lot of these other funds that are out there. Next slide.

Great. So now we're going to talk about just some tips from the field. Again, I've mentioned that people have been doing hotel/motels well before the coronavirus. So there's lessons to be learned.

But a key thing that I feel like we have to stress and probably should have just had a footnote in every slide that we have here is that you have to remember to ensure HIV confidentiality. You are now leaving the cocoon of your social service agency and going out into the big world out there of hotel/motels.

And so if your letterhead says anything about HIV or AIDS, you don't want to use that letterhead. You want to make sure that any checks you're sending to that hotel do not say HIV or AIDS on them, things that, if you're running a TBRA program, you're probably already doing. But if you're not running those sorts of programs, then you definitely want to put confidentiality first and foremost in any of the planning you're doing.

There are a lot of entities that already do planning and hotel negotiations, both for business, as well as just for these crises. But again, Jake mentioned it might be more advantageous. If you see some chains, maybe you call them, and you can access. But in more rural communities, there might be more independent or locally



owned hotels. That could be a really good option, those mom-and-pop hotels.

One, they're not seeing business right now. People are not traveling. So there's vacancies. If you're looking at maybe a chain down the street, and you're thinking, oh, they'll never rent to us, that might not be the case anymore because they, too, are seeing a lot of vacancies. So it's worth putting aside what you may have thought before and making those phone calls and seeing if you can really access those units.

Think about what you're really going to ask the hotel. Go back to these slides. We're going to send them out after the presentation. And have your questions for the hotel so that you can really check the boxes-- both what rates are going to be, but what's going to be included in the rates, how they're going to handle any damages, what kind of commitment they want from you, how they're going to handle people arriving at the hotel. Do you need to have staff there? All those things you want to have a checklist for.

Hotels often have set rates. I'm sure if you've tried to book online, they'll ask you, are you a AAA? Are you a government employee? Are you all these things? Really, you want to negotiate the best rate you can get. And the more hotel units you're leasing, the more leverage you have.

And if you're a grantee in a community with several sponsors, it might be worth your while to have one sponsor do that piece. So you're not having multiple sponsors competing for those hotel rooms. And if it's one sponsor, then they can probably negotiate a better rate than if you have four sponsors going for less units. So those are things to consider. Ari, next slide.

Again, that's the concessions. We've talked about that a lot, the first bullet there. There are companies that do corporate lodging. And they're looking for business right now because business travel is significantly reduced, if it exists at all.

And if you are interested in renting a significant number of units, that might be a way to go. And we can get you links to some of those corporate lodging entities. And they'll do all the negotiating for you. That could save you a lot of time and money.

You want to think about who you're putting in those units. And what is their level of

need? Are they relatively independent? Or are they going to need a little more on-site services and then planning around that?

And again, it's key to remember that-- and Jake, I think, really said it perfectly, where this is still an attempt to provide people with quality housing. So we're not asking you to have folks in a hotel room and closing the door for 14 days or 30 days unless they're in that hotel room for themselves to isolate due to their own exposure to COVID. You want this to be as ideal a setting as possible.

So again, just thinking through how you're already providing any remote access peer groups, focus groups-- perhaps you're doing groups with some of your existing HOPWA clients. And maybe you can incorporate some of these new hotel clients into those groups' meetings. That could be a really helpful way. Next slide.

So ideally, you could have a staff person go and look at the hotel and make sure that they are practicing safe prevention practices, that there's posters, that there's the right things. 10 people aren't expected to jam into an elevator if those exist. If you can't, then you just want to really check with the hotel in your negotiations that they are practicing all CDC-expected safety precautions.

Making sure the hotel is providing soap and other cleaning products-- or if they're not, then you will need to do it. Again, depending on who you're serving, you may want to check with the hotel. Do they have staff who are trained in CPR, trained in the use of Narcan? If not, do you want to see that you have staff on-site who are able to do that?

This could be, actually, your opportunity to provide the hotel with a service that will live longer than your being in it. So if you're able to have those staff trained, then that's a service they're going to provide to their clients down the line because that's going to be a need ongoing. And then just checking and probably providing residents with a number for-- that they can call someone 24/7 in case there's an emergency. Next slide.

You don't want to go into this without having an exit plan. I have a staff member who's worked in a lot of natural disasters putting people in hotels and says the hardest part could be getting people out of hotels. If people have housing to go back to, that might be a little easier. That might just be cleaning up the bill at the

hotel, moving them to their own housing.

But if you're housing people who were unsheltered or in a shelter, then you really need to start from day one thinking about their long-term rehousing strategy. And that's going to be helping identify-- is there TBRA that they can access, helping to think about what the housing plan is and housing search plan is so that they're able to get out of that unit and go into quality housing and not back into homelessness? And that, again, is where you might want to check with the CoC and the ESG program in your community to see what they're doing for their rehousing strategies. Next slide.

It is key. Again, this is the devil in the detail. And I'm not going to go into it in great detail. But you need to have policies and procedures. And again, we're going to send these slides out.

And I know we're running out of time. But you need to really think about all the elements on this slide so that you have everything in place so that someday, if HUD or someone else comes and monitors, you can show them everything is tied up nicely with a bow and also that you are treating folks fairly and consistently across the board. Next slide.

IDIS-- again, we've already had a webinar on IDIS. So this is just repeating some of those instructions for hotel/motels. If, again, you are a new staff person and new to IDIS, just put in a request to the AAQ-- and one of the slides will tell you how to do that-- to check on this. But again, I want to make sure we have time for questions and answers. So I'm not going to go into the details of this slide. Next.

And here we are, questions and answers. Laura, are there any questions?

**LAURA HARRIS:** Yes. We have a few. Let's start with this one. If we are starting from scratch to offer hotel/motel isolation units, as a competitive grantee, what should our strategy be?

**AMY PALILONIS:** I can take that one. So really, the first thing that you need to look at is the housing arrangements that you currently fund. We touched on this a little bit earlier. But if you operate facility-based housing, then you would really need to analyze the spaces in that housing to determine if you are able to provide adequate social distancing and isolation for all of your residents.

And as mentioned earlier, if needed, you should take advantage of the HOPWA Space Insecurity Waiver included in the first mega-waiver memo if you would like to get creative in configuring your facility-based settings into appropriate isolation or quarantine space. If you provide other activities, such as TBRA or STRMU or you master lease units for clients, then you need to look at the layout of the apartments or houses and determine whether one or more members of the family need to move in order to provide a safe space for folks.

And first and foremost, your focus should be on any people living with HIV in the household or others that are at high risk. Once you have an estimate of the number of people who might need the hotel or motel options, you would want to reach out to the ESG grantee or CoC lead agency in your area.

As we touched on before, those programs have likely been working with FEMA and other federal and state programs to assure safe and rapid transitions for people living in congregate shelters that need to social distance, as well as street outreach programs to invite those living outside and in encampments to transition to hotel and motel settings. And you really should tap into those local organizations because they have a wealth of information about the needs that they have encountered and can also help provide guidance as to which hotels they have been working with.

And just a reminder-- in order to provide assistance with hotel or motel stays, for competitive grantees, you need to have included the leasing line item in your budget form and brief description submitted to HUD as part of your CARES Act competitive submission package.

**MARIE HERB:** Thanks, Amy. Laura, another one? You're on mute, Laura.

**LAURA HARRIS:** As a formula grantee, how would we estimate the number of individuals or family members that might need this resource in our community? And how long should we estimate a solution will be required?

**RITA** Hey, Laura. This is Rita. So I think the answer to this is pretty similar to what Amy  
**HARCROW:** just talked about, except I think you as a formula grantee really need to connect with your project sponsors. Make sure that they are communicating with their households, with the families, assessing-- what's the composition of those

households? How likely is it that they're going to need to isolate? How many rooms might that require-- to really get an on-the-ground estimate.

And that's going to require talking to those families and understanding if there are essential workers in the house or there are also elderly people in the house. So what does that look like? And again, how many folks do we think might need that temporary isolation?

As far as how long to estimate the rooms, that's a conversation to have with your local health officials to understand, again, given the situations you're hearing from these households, the type of isolation required. How long would that be? Is that a two-week? That's usually the minimum that we're hearing about. If there is a positive COVID-19 test, there's a two-week period or until there's a series of negative tests.

So find out locally what's recommended from those health officials. And plan according to that. And also, you might want to think about having policies in place around COVID-19 testing. So before someone that you're assisting in a hotel goes back into that household mix, is it appropriate for them to have a test themselves and make sure that there's not going to be exposure that way?

**LAURA HARRIS:** We have one here. If a family is living in a shared unit that is being supported by STRMU, and one member of that family needs to be moved for isolation reasons, how long can we support both units? Is that the same guidance as for a TBRA unit?

**BEN AYERS:** Hello. I'll take this one. So yeah, great question. The short answer to this question really is yes. You can support both STRMU and hotel units at the same time.

Just remember, with CARES Act funding and with the regular HOPWA FY2020 formula funds that intend to designate to supplement the CARES Act funding, meaning providing that money in response to COVID-19, those STRMU payments can be made up to 24 months if needed. And then for all the other HOPWA funding on a case-by-case basis, STRMU can be used up to one year if you're taking advantage of that STRMU time limit waiver. And to take advantage of that, just notify the field office that you intend to take advantage of that mega-waiver.

Also, remember that hotel/motel short-term stays can be provided as long as

needed to effectively quarantine and isolate a household member. I know we did mention earlier in the webinar that we recommend grantees and project sponsors limit the hotel/motel stays to no more than 60 days in the six-month period. And that's really because it's just not appropriate for a long-term living environment for someone to be in a hotel/motel-- but again, with that exception related to COVID-19, related to health and safety concerns.

And also, grantees should really ensure that they have policies in place or that they're developing those policies to put in place around hotel/motel stays. And those should address the time limits that you're willing to implement, as well as the process for granting extensions for households based on the health and safety concerns, and always in consideration and in accordance with the CDC guidance.

**JACOB MIHALAK:** Laura, let me just jump in for a second. Ben, there was a follow-up question on Q&A. Are there any other circumstances that would dictate the 24 months other than the COVID-related concerns? Is there anything else that would say, go for 24 months?

**BEN AYERS:** No. So the flexibilities that allow the 24 months are CARES Act-related. And it's actually in the CARES Act to allow up to 24 months. And it allowed that flexibility to go on to the FY2020 formula grants as well. So it's just related to quarantine issues around COVID.

**JACOB MIHALAK:** Thank you. Sorry, Laura. Go ahead.

**MARIE HERB:** Actually, Laura, I think we're over. So I just want to make sure, before people have to leave, that we can just highlight some resources that are available and then promise folks that we'll get to their questions. There are a number in the chat box or the Q&A box.

So one additional resource is OHH. And TA providers put together a fact sheet on hotel/motels. It's a nice just front-back document. Jake and Laura worked on it. That really answers a lot of the questions, summarizes things we talked about today. We will, when we send out the slides, send out a PDF of this document. But I just wanted to do a little quick preview or highlight of it. Next slide, Ari.

Then there's a lot of other resources. So again, hopefully you've been going on the

HUD Exchange to the HOPWA COVID page and able to access either these existing webinars or other materials. So as I mentioned, there was one on IDIS specifically. There's a document on COVID-19 for hotel/motel use. We have that referenced here. And you'll be getting all of these.

In Alameda County, they've done isolation housing for COVID-19. There's information on that. And then there's guidance on noncongregate sheltering in hotel/motels by the Oregon Health Authority. And again, these are just places where you can look, not reinventing the wheel. Next slide.

I encourage you all to stay informed. If you're not already signed up for the HOPWA mailing list, that link can show you how to do that to subscribe. We walk you through the steps in that second bullet. That's where everything comes out. So the Office of HIV Housing has been sending out a lot of information, having lots of webinars. So if you're not already signed up, I really beg you to sign up after today.

And then just on the HUD Exchange, all of this information will live there. All the webinars that have taken place are saved there. All the material is there. So just check out that page.

And then the last bullet is the HOPWA Ask a Question. And really, when in doubt, that's where you should go. So put your question there. If there's something we don't answer today-- and we will get to those answers today. But if you think of something as you're starting to develop your program, put it in the AAQ.

If you want some technical assistance, put it in the AAQ. If you're like, yes, I want to do this, but that Marie talks way too fast, ask for some TA in the AAQ. And OHH will get you some. Next slide. And then, again, there's TA. And that's where you can get it as well. So all of that information is there.

So let me just quickly just say some next steps. So we will send out these slides to everyone. We will send out that little fact sheet. And for the questions in the Q&A that we did not specifically get to answer today, we'll answer those. And we'll send that out as well.

We'll figure it out. Maybe we'll answer those at the back of the slides and incorporate that and send it out. We'll figure out the details of that. Give us a few

days, and we'll have them. And then this will also be eventually saved onto the HUD Exchange to the HOPWA page.

So with that, I think I just want to thank you all for participating and thank Ben, Rita, and Amy and Jake and Laura and Ari for today's webinar. And thank you all for hanging in there. And good luck and continue on. Thanks, everyone.

**AMY** Thank you.

**PALILONIS:**

**MARIE HERB:** Thank you.

**RITA** Thank you. Good day, everybody.

**HARCROW:**