

DRAFT SAMPLE

Absence From Unit Policy Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS Program

The purpose of this directive is to establish an Absence From Unit Policy on behalf of the federally funded Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS (HOPWA) Program.

Statement of the Policy

Applicability

The provisions of this directive apply to the City's Housing and Community Development Department and project sponsors of the HOPWA Program.

In General

This Policy is to provide formal guidance and uniform procedures to ensure that clients and project sponsors are informed of the terms and conditions affecting clients absences from units assisted with HOPWA funds.

Generally, a client who is or is expected to be absent from the assisted unit for 60 consecutive calendar days or less is considered temporarily absent and continues to be considered an eligible client. A client who is expected to be absent from the assisted unit for more than 60 consecutive calendar days is considered permanently absent and no longer eligible for the program.

Procedures

If the client will be absent from the unit for more than thirty (30) days it will promptly but no more than twenty-one (21) calendar days from the first day of absence, notify both the owner and the project sponsor in writing. The project sponsor will evaluate the request and provide a written response to the client. To obtain the project sponsor's approval, the client will cooperate with the project sponsor and it will:

1. Satisfy any notice requirements;
2. Provide any (requested) information, documentation and/or certification acceptable to the project sponsor to verify the length of absence and the reason/purpose of the absence;
3. Affirm their intent to return to the unit at the end of the leave period;
4. Agree to be responsible for receiving and responding to all notices sent by the project sponsor during the periods of the absence;
5. Pay rent to the owner and pay for utilities while they are absent; and

6. Make arrangements for the unit to be available for the project sponsor's inspections as necessary.

In order to determine if the client is absent from the unit, the project sponsor may:

7. Write letters to the client at the unit;
8. Telephone the client (at the unit);
9. Verify if the utilities are in service; and
10. Check with the post office

If this procedure is not followed, the unit will be considered abandoned and the project sponsor will terminate housing assistance payments and the client's participation in the program.

Terms and Conditions

1. **Medical Reasons.** If the client leaves the household to enter a facility such as a hospital, nursing home or rehabilitation center, the project sponsor will seek advice from a reliable qualified source as to the likelihood of and timing of the family member's return. If the verification indicates that the client will be permanently confined to a nursing home, s/he will be considered permanently absent. If the verification indicates that the client will return in less than 61 consecutive calendar days, s/he will not be considered permanently absent.
2. **Absence Due to Full-Time Student.** A client who attends school away from home but who lives with his/her family during school recesses may, at the client's choice, be considered either temporarily or permanently absent. If the client decides that s/he is permanently absent or if information becomes available to the project sponsor indicating that the client/student has established a separate household, the assisted unit is no longer eligible for program participation. Conversely, if the client decides that s/he is temporarily absent, still income of the client will be included in the total household income, included on the lease and be included for the determination of bedroom size.
3. **Absence due to Incarceration.** If the client is incarcerated for more than thirty (30) days, s/he will be considered permanently absent. Any member of the household other than the client, will be considered permanently absent if s/he is incarcerated for more than thirty (30) days.

4. *Absence of Children due to Placement in Foster Care.* If the family includes a child or children temporarily absent from the home due to placement in foster care, the project sponsor will determine from the appropriate agency when the child/ren will be returned to the home. If the time period is to be greater than 180 days from the date of the removal of the child/ren or permanently, the bedroom size will be reduced at the next annual reexamination.