

Get the Facts: HOPWA and COVID-19 Response



USING HOTELS & MOTELS IN YOUR COMMUNITY RESPONSE

Why consider hotels & motels in your HOPWA COVID-19 response?



Based on currently available information and clinical expertise, older adults and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions might be at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) this includes people who are immunocompromised, including those with poorly controlled HIV or AIDS.

You may have people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) in your community who are homeless or unstably housed and unable to socially distance. Others may be living in their own housing unit with a household member who has COVID-19, may have been exposed, or is at risk of contracting the illness. You may also have a HOPWA-funded program in which PLWHA share common spaces, which may put them at risk of COVID-19 transmission.

How can hotels & motels address these needs?



A hotel/motel room can provide PLWHA with a safe, clean space to isolate from the risks of COVID-19. For example, if a person living with HIV/AIDS has a roommate who has tested positive for COVID-19, moving them to a hotel room could provide safety and protection from the illness.

Hotels can also provide safe, temporary housing for people who are homeless or unstably housed while they work to access permanent housing. These stays may be for a longer period of time depending on the housing market and available permanent housing resources.

Although HOPWA guidance suggests a limit of no more than 60 days in a six-month period, this can be extended for all HOPWA funds, on a case-by-case basis, as needed. However, only CARES Act funds and FY2020 formula funds specifically dedicated to supplement CARES Act-funded activities will cover damages. In all cases, grantees and project sponsors should develop policies that detail how extensions can be approved and explain how the policy will be consistently implemented.

What costs will HOPWA cover?



HOPWA funds, both formula and competitive, can cover the cost of renting the hotel/motel unit. However, as mentioned above, only CARES Act funds and FY2020 formula funds can cover any negotiated damages to the room caused by the participant. HOPWA can also cover costs for case management, nutrition, food, transportation, and any of the regular HOPWA-eligible services.

To use hotel/motel stays as a temporary housing option, formula grantees must include it as a Leasing Line Item in the community's Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan as a planned HOPWA service. If it is not already in the ConPlan and Action Plan, these must be amended to include this planned use.

Can competitive grantees use CARES funds to pay for hotels & motels?



Yes, competitive grantees can also use their CARES Act funds to rent hotel/motel units to ensure the health and safety of their clients. Competitive grantees must develop a brief (activities & spending) plan and send it to HOPWA@hud.gov for approval. The plan should include descriptions of:

- Type and amount of each eligible CARES Act activity proposed
- Process to be undertaken to carry out the work quickly
- How eligible households will access the assistance when main operations are closed due to public health guidance
- Completed standard forms: HOPWA budget form HUD-40110-B, SF-424, and SF-424D

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Who is eligible?

Eligibility for HOPWA-funded hotel/motel stays includes the standard HOPWA eligibility of at or below 80% of area median income and having a medical diagnosis of HIV or AIDS. In addition, recipients can be people who are not currently receiving HOPWA-funded housing and services but currently reside in HOPWA-subsidized units if isolation is needed.

Family members of a PLWHA may also be housed in a hotel/motel if the need to temporarily isolate from the person living with HIV/AIDS is demonstrated.

TIPS FROM THE FIELD

- Locally owned hotels may have greater flexibility in contracting. Ask to speak with sales or the general manager.
- Work with your local COVID-19 response leads to see if any pre-negotiated rates have already been determined.
- Concessions, such as free Wi-Fi or food discounts, generally increase based on the size of the room block.
- Post instructions for COVID-19 prevention practices and clearly designate safe distances in all waiting areas.
- Maintaining visible but low-key security may be helpful. Provide the hotel and residents with a 24/7 phone number to call.
- Some communities have used “corporate lodging” companies, which can help negotiate rates, provide detailed transaction records and more. Depending on the scale of use, this may save significant time & money.
- Consider each individual’s functional level in the community to help determine their level of both general and HIV-related support, care, and treatment.
- Support residents in hotels/motels through recovery peers, self-help services, and mental health providers. Routinely provide information and resources for self-care and entertainment.
- Make sure that staff trained in CPR, the use of naloxone and other life-saving interventions, such as Automated External Defibrillators, is present on site, if possible.



HOPWA Guidance for COVID-19 on the HUD Exchange

Resources & Guidance: <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/hopwa/covid-19/#resources-and-guidance>

Webinars: <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/hopwa/covid-19/#webinars>

Other COVID-19 Resources: <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/hopwa/covid-19/#other-covid-19-resources>

Supporting Individuals Exiting Isolation and Quarantine: <https://tinyurl.com/exitqandi>

IMPORTANT: Begin transition planning immediately upon (if not before) arrival at the hotel. Make sure there is a clear plan for hotel residents to obtain permanent housing or for when they will return to their original housing unit.

