

# USING PHP WITH TENANT-BASED RENTAL ASSISTANCE

HOPWA's Permanent Housing Placement (PHP) activity is a useful tool in helping HOPWA-eligible households secure safe and affordable housing. The goal of using PHP is to establish permanent residency where continued occupancy is expected. PHP can be used as a stand-alone service, as well as in combination with Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA).

*This resource is prepared by technical assistance providers and intended to help grantees and project sponsors understand HOPWA program guidance. The contents of this document, except when based on statutory or regulatory authority or law, do not have the force and effect of law and are not meant to bind the public in any way. This document is intended only to provide clarity to the public regarding existing requirements under the law or agency policies.*

## ABOUT PHP

For financial management and reporting purposes, PHP must be tracked as a separate activity in IDIS and should be reported as a HOPWA Housing Subsidy Assistance cost on the APR/CAPER. Household housing costs and budgets should be assessed to determine whether paying the rent amount in the new unit, including any subsidies, is sustainable for the household.

## ELIGIBLE ASSISTANCE COSTS

### ELIGIBLE PHP RENTAL ASSISTANCE COSTS

- Security deposit
- First month's rent (when required for occupancy and no ongoing housing subsidy, whether HOPWA or another program, is expected)
- Last month's rent (when required for occupancy and no ongoing housing subsidy, whether HOPWA or another program, is expected)

### ELIGIBLE PHP DIRECT ASSISTANCE COSTS

- Utility deposit and one-time utility hook-up fees
- Utility and rent arrears (when determined to be a barrier to establishing new permanent housing)
- Application fee
- Credit check expenses (when required)
- Administrative fee (charged in lieu of or in addition to a security deposit)
- Rental insurance (limited to the first month or initial payment period only)

### ELIGIBLE PHP SERVICE DELIVERY/PERSONNEL COSTS

Delivery of supportive services, including tenant counseling, understanding leases, and mediation of disputes related to landlord or neighbor issues *at the time of placing the client into the unit*

- Staff time to conduct assessment of household need
- Staff time to conduct initial housing inspection

### A FEW IMPORTANT NOTES ON COSTS

- Total rental assistance (security deposit, first month's rent, last month's rent) cannot exceed the amount of two months' rent
- A good faith effort is expected to reclaim security deposit funds; reclaimed funds are considered program income
- All costs must meet the standard of being reasonable and should be comparable to other units
- All assistance payments must be made directly to the landlord, utility company, or relevant third party



## HELPFUL LINKS

- Find a sample habitability form as Attachment 5-4 to the HOPWA Rental Assistance Guidebook here: <https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/2818/hopwa-rental-assistance-guidebook/>
- HOPWA Regulation (24 CFR 574): <https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/2936/24-cfr-part-574-housing-opportunities-for-persons-with-aids/>

## USING PHP & TBRA TOGETHER

- PHP can pay security deposits to assist households moving into a new TBRA unit
- PHP cannot pay first month's rent when TBRA is also provided, regardless of the source of TBRA (whether HOPWA or another program)
- PHP can help households to move into new permanent housing when leaving a TBRA unit
- PHP and TBRA must be tracked and reported separately

## HOUSING STANDARDS

All assisted housing should be affordable, safe, decent, and sanitary. HUD's Office of HIV/AIDS Housing has established a policy that, whenever possible, HOPWA-assisted households should be placed into quality, affordable units by ensuring FMR/rent standard or rent reasonableness, and that HOPWA's Habitability Standards are met. The cost to conduct an initial housing inspection is an eligible cost under PHP.

## INELIGIBLE COSTS

- Housing search
- Moving costs such as movers, truck rentals, and packing materials
- Household start-up costs such as furniture, household goods, repairs, or other incidentals
- Drug testing
- Ongoing assistance payments for utilities, rent, or insurance
- Housing Quality Standards recertification
- Fees other than those described in [Eligible PHP Direct Assistance Costs](#) on reverse