

# American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-housing Program



## Determining and Documenting HPRP Participant Eligibility



Sponsored by:  
Office of Special Needs Assistance Programs (SNAPS)  
**U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development**

# Partners

2

- Presenter: Karen DeBlasio, HUD
- Presenter: Tom Albanese, Abt Associates
- Resource Advisor: Theresa Silla, ICF

# Purpose

3

- Provide grantees and subgrantees with an overview of HUD requirements for determining and documenting participant eligibility, including:
  - HPRP eligibility determination
  - Income and housing status documentation standards
  - HPRP Staff Certification of Eligibility for HPRP Assistance (previously referred to as the Staff Affidavit)

# Webinar Format

4

- Call will last approximately an hour and a half.
- Presenters will walk through presentation material.
- Call audience members are “muted” due to the high number of participants.
- Call will be recorded.

# Submitting questions in the webinar ....

5

- Audience members who would like to pose a question can do so through the “questions” function found in the “GoToWebinar” toolbar.
- Questions will be responded to directly by HPRP resource advisors standing by.
- We will only be able to answer some questions. If you have a question, please submit it to HUD’s Virtual Help Desk at <http://hudhre.info/HPRP/>

# Webinar Materials & Evaluation

6

- Materials referenced during this webinar can be found on HUD's Homelessness Resource Exchange at <http://hudhre.info/HPRP/>
- Evaluation questions to measure the effectiveness of this call will be emailed out following the call to all participants.

# Program Assistance Types

7

- Homelessness Prevention
  - Prevent individuals and families at risk of homelessness from becoming homeless
- Rapid Re-housing (Homeless Assistance)
  - Assist persons experiencing homelessness to be quickly re-housed and stabilized
  - Persons served under this category must meet the HUD homeless definition.

# HUD Eligibility Requirements

8

- **Initial Consultation**
  - Required to establish eligibility and appropriate type of assistance.
- **Income**
  - Must be at or below 50 percent of AMI.
- **Housing Status**
  - Is homeless (for rapid re-housing assistance) **OR** at imminent risk of homelessness (for prevention assistance);  
**AND:**
  - Lacks financial resources and support networks needed to obtain or remain in housing.
  - Has no subsequent housing options.



# Local Determinants

9

- Grantee can add additional eligibility criteria
- Must ensure criteria are applied consistently
- HUD will look to see this criteria is documented in a grantee's "Policies and Procedures"

# Eligibility vs. Targeting

10

- Participant eligibility is:
  - Whether participants meet HUD's minimum requirements
- Targeting is:
  - Process of determining the target population to serve
  - Targeting decisions impact program design and program design decisions impact targeting
  - May focus on ...
    - Specific homeless or at-risk sub-populations
    - Households at more imminent risk of homelessness
    - Households served based on program design

# Assessment & Eligibility Certification

11

- Required process for determining and documenting household income and housing status of applicants.
- Updated requirements available on HRE.
- Staff Certification of Eligibility for HPRP Assistance (formerly referred to as "Staff Affidavit") must be completed for each participant and placed in case file.

# Eligibility Recertification

12

- Recertification required every three months.
- Evaluate and document eligibility for HPRP assistance at least every 3 months (Financial Assistance and/or Housing Relocation & Stabilization Services)
  - Eligibility criteria
  - Appropriateness
- Evaluate the continuation of services

# Participant Eligibility: Rapid Re-housing

13

- Homeless per HUD HPRP definition (must meet one of the following):
  - Sleeping in emergency shelter
  - Sleeping in place not meant for human habitation
  - Staying in hospital or institution for up to 180 days, but literally homeless immediately prior to entry
  - Graduating from/timing out of transitional housing
  - Victim of domestic violence

# Participant Eligibility: Homelessness Prevention

14

- Household must be at imminent risk of literal homelessness.
  - “Would this individual or family be homeless *but for* this assistance?”
- Intent is to assist households who are at the greatest risk of becoming literally homeless and requiring emergency shelter.
- Many are recently affected by economic crisis; others have been “precariously housed” and/or homeless for longer.

# Participant Eligibility: Homelessness Prevention (cont.)

15

- Possible living situations:
  - Rented by Applicant
  - Doubled up with family or friends
  - Hospital or other institution
  - Hotels or Motels not paid for by Federal, State or local government or charitable programs

# Participant Eligibility: Income

16

- At or below 50% Area Median Income (AMI)
- **AMI:** based on state and community and updated annually: <http://www.huduser.org/DATASETS/il.html>.
- **Income Definition:** any money that goes to, or on behalf of, the head of household or spouse (even if temporarily absent) or to any other household member.
  - Includes **current gross income** of all **adult household members** and **unearned income attributable to a minor** (e.g., child support, TANF payments, SSI payment, and other benefits paid on behalf of a minor)



# Participant Eligibility: Income (cont.)

17

- **Current Income:** income that the household is currently receiving at the time of application for HPRP assistance.
  - Income recently terminated should not be included.
  - Current income at the three month eligibility recertification also based on the total income the household is receiving at the time of recertification

# Participant Eligibility: Income (cont.)

18

- HPRP definition contains income "inclusions" (types of income to be counted) and "exclusions" (types of income that are not considered) for all adult members of a household.
- Assets generally not counted except interest and dividend income
  - Assets should be taken into account when determining whether a household has other financial resources sufficient to obtain or maintain housing.

# Participant Eligibility: Income (cont.)

19

## ■ Income Inclusions:

- Earned Income
- Self Employment/Business Income
- Interest & Dividend Income
- Pension/Retirement Income
- Unemployment & Disability Income
- TANF/Public Assistance
- Alimony, Child Support and Foster Care Income
- Armed Forces Income

# Participant Eligibility: Income (cont.)

20

## ■ Income Exclusions:

- Income of Children
- Inheritance and Insurance Income
- Medical Expense Reimbursements
- Income of Live-in Aides
- Disabled Persons
- Student Financial Aid
- Armed Forces Hostile Fire Pay
- Self-Sufficiency Program Income
- Other Income (i.e., temporary, non-recurring or sporadic income)
- Reparations
- Income from full-time students
- Adoption Assistance Payments
- Deferred and Lump Sum Social Security & SSI payments
- Income Tax and Property Tax refunds
- Home Care Assistance
- Other Federal Exclusions

# Participant Eligibility: Income (cont.)

21

- Calculating income
  - Annualize based on documented current gross income for household
  - Example: \$525 gross wages for most recent two week period x 26 pay periods = \$13,650 annual income
- Documentation of calculated income relative to AMI must be kept in participant file

# Treatment of Assets

22

- Cash or material items that can be converted to cash quickly
- HUD has not established requirements related to assets & eligibility, level of assistance
- *HUD requires grantees to determine whether an applicant household must spend down its assets and, if so, by how much*

# Documentation Standards

23

- Verify and document eligibility prior to providing HPRP assistance
- Maintain documentation in participant case file
- Minimum acceptable types, *in order of preference*:
  - Written third party
  - Oral third party
  - Applicant self-declaration

# Determining Acceptable Level of Documentation

24

- Grantees/subgrantees must make effort to achieve highest standard that is reasonable
  - Dependent on program resources and type of assistance
  - Example: not reasonable to delay assistance for written third party documentation if delay results in literal homelessness occurring
  - Example: reasonable to obtain written third party documentation if assistance ongoing
- Must document when lower standard used



# Self-Declaration of Housing Status

25

- Self-declaration of housing status for participants who are at-risk of losing housing is acceptable ONLY in very limited circumstances
- Must clearly document in case file, including all attempts to obtain third party verification of housing status

# Timeliness of Income Documentation

26

- Documentation should be within 30 days prior to application
  
- Exception: public assistance benefits
  - Benefits statement received within past 12 months and reflecting current benefits
  - Copy of recent bank statement showing direct deposit also acceptable

# Housing Status Documentation Standards

*(listed in order of preference)*

27

## HOMELESS

- Emergency shelter
  - HMIS record, OR
  - Homeless Certification, OR
  - Shelter provider letter
- Places not meant for human habitation
  - Homeless Certification, OR
  - Street outreach provider letter, OR
  - Self-declaration of homelessness

# Housing Status Documentation Standards

28

*(listed in order of preference)*

## HOMELESS

- Hospital or other institution
  - Letter from hospital/other institution, AND
  - HMIS record if previously in shelter, OR
  - Homeless Certification, OR
  - Shelter/outreach provider letter, OR
  - Self-declaration of homelessness
- Transitional Housing
  - Homeless Certification, OR
  - Transitional housing provider letter
- Domestic violence
  - Self-declaration of homelessness

# Housing Status Documentation Standards

29

*(listed in order of preference)*

## AT-RISK OF HOMELESSNESS

- Rented by Applicant: *Non-payment of rent and/or other lease violation*
  - Eviction notice or court order
  - Lease or other written occupancy agreement
- Rented by Applicant: *Utility non-payment*
  - Utility shut-off notice
  - Lease or other written occupancy agreement (must indicate tenant responsibility for utility)

# Housing Status Documentation Standards

30

*(listed in order of preference)*

## AT-RISK OF HOMELESSNESS

- Rented by Applicant OR Other Housing Occupied by Applicant (i.e. family/friends): *Foreclosure on rental property*
  - Notice indicating building being foreclosed on
  - Lease or other written occupancy agreement
- Other Housing Occupied by Applicant (family/friends): *Eviction by host family/friend*
  - Eviction letter
  - Lease or other written occupancy agreement (indicating host family/friend as legal tenant)
  - OR self-declaration *if unable to obtain third party*

# Housing Status Documentation Standards

31

*(listed in order of preference)*

## AT-RISK OF HOMELESSNESS

- Rented by Applicant OR Other Housing Occupied by Applicant (i.e. family/friends): *Uninhabitable conditions*
  - Notice from landlord/property manager, public health, code enforcement, fire marshal, child welfare or other government entity that housing is condemned
  - Lease or other written occupancy agreement
- Owned by Applicant: *Foreclosure*
  - Foreclosure notice

# Housing Status Documentation Standards

32

*(listed in order of preference)*

## AT-RISK OF HOMELESSNESS

- Hospital or Other Institution: *Institutional discharge*
  - Statement from hospital/institution
- Hotel/Motels (not paid for by Fed/State/Local Government or Charities): *Non-payment of hotel/motel*
  - Self-declaration



# Polling Question

33

Is an eviction notice alone enough to qualify someone to receive HPRP assistance?

# Housing Status Documentation Standards

34

## REQUIRED FOR ALL HPRP APPLICANTS

### ■ **Other Subsequent Housing Options**

- Assessment form or other documentation (e.g. case notes) of housing options by HPRP case manager or other authorized HPRP staff

### ■ **Financial Resources and Support Networks**

- Assessment of financial resources and support networks by HPRP case manager or other authorized HPRP staff.
- Must include review of current account balances in checking and savings accounts held by applicant household.

# Housing Status in HPRP

35

- When assisted with HPRP, participants maintain the housing status (homeless or at-risk) they had immediately prior to receiving assistance
  - If homeless prior to HPRP, still considered homeless while in HPRP
  - If NOT homeless prior to HPRP (e.g. prevention) then not considered homeless while in HPRP

# Income

## Documentation Standards

36 *(listed in order of preference)*

- Written verification
  - Pay stubs (wages, salary, armed forces income)
  - Statement or benefit notice
  - Court order (alimony, child support)
  - Federal or state tax return
  - Dividend interest statement
  - Other written Verification of Income
    - Name of income source, and applicant name
    - Income amount and frequency
    - Contact information for authorized income source representative
    - Signed and dated by authorized income source representative

# Income

## Documentation Standards

37 *(listed in order of preference)*

- Oral verification
  - Name of income source, and applicant name
  - Income amount and frequency
  - Contact information for authorized income source representative
  - Signed and dated by HPRP staff who obtained oral verification
  
- Self-declaration *(only if written/oral verification cannot be obtained)*

# Polling Question

38

Is 3rd party documentation acceptable when no written verification available and assistance is needed now to prevent homelessness?

# Polling Question

39

What website is the best source of information about HPRP?

# HPRP Resources on the HRE

40

- HPRP page on HUD HRE:  
[www.hudhre.info/hprp](http://www.hudhre.info/hprp)
  - HUD-Issued Guidance
  - Data Collection and Reporting
  - Tools and Templates
  - FAQs and Help Desk
- Sign up for HPRP listserv on the HRE.



# Save the Date

41

## HUD Conference on Homelessness

September 14-17 - Denver

September 27-30 - Atlanta

Covering topics on:

HPRP HEARTH HMIS

**Questions?**  
**HUDHRE Helpdesk**  
**[www.HUDHRE.info](http://www.HUDHRE.info)**

# Additional Trainings

43

- HPRP 101 (repeated):
  - Thursday, March 18<sup>th</sup> at 11am ET
- HPRP Eligibility Determination and Documentation:
  - Monday, March 15<sup>th</sup> at 2pm ET
  - Thursday, March 25<sup>th</sup> at 11am ET
- HPRP Reporting:
  - Tuesday, March 23<sup>rd</sup> at 2pm ET
  - Wednesday, March 31<sup>st</sup> at 11am ET