



Housing Problem-Solving Foundations: Funding HPS

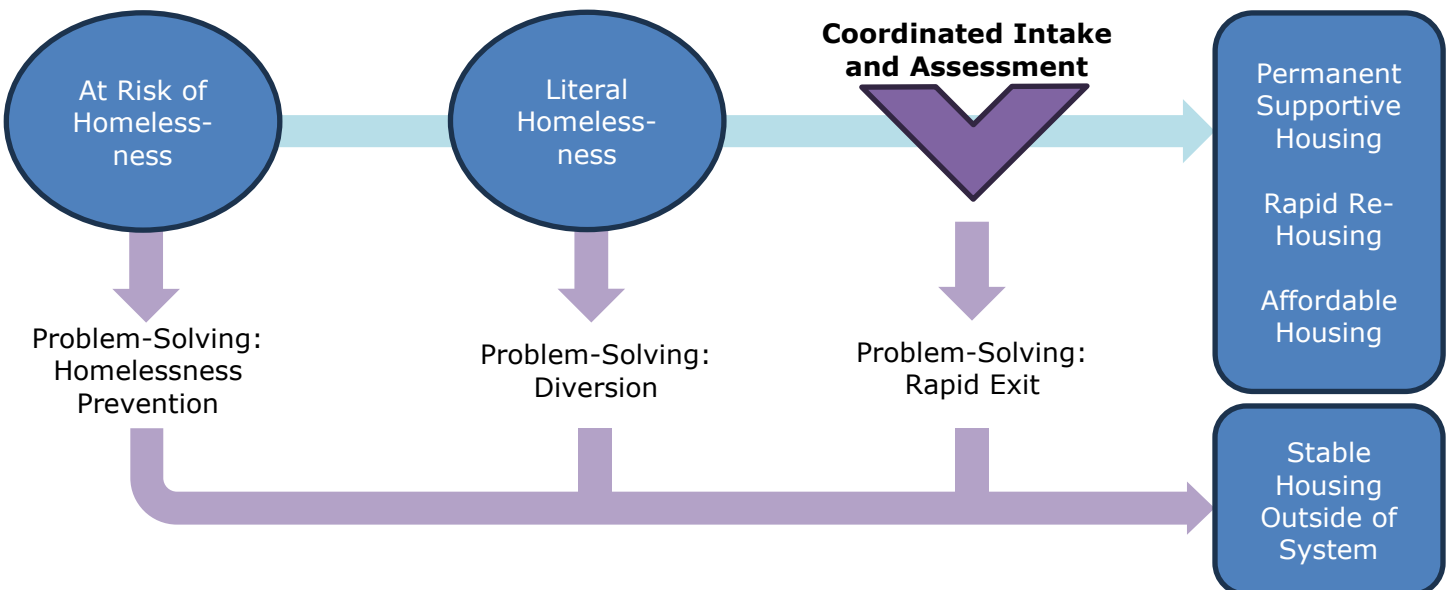
Introduction and purpose

[Housing problem-solving](#) (HPS) is a person-centered, housing-focused approach to quickly resolve housing crises by exploring creative, safe, and cost-effective alternatives to literal homelessness. It is a set of foundational techniques to be used with all participants which are not contingent upon the standardized assessment, screening, eligibility, or prioritization used for other permanent housing resources. This model moves away from practices that have marginalized some populations. By helping participants tap into their existing strengths and support networks, HPS can often achieve successful returns to housing without ongoing rental assistance or other financial assistance. Adopting HPS techniques system-wide as part of the coordinated entry (CE) process and other interventions such as rapid re-housing (RRH) is critical to expanding every community's and household's array of housing options. A successful HPS implementation requires a robust CE system that includes partners beyond the CoC and ESG Programs.

This document outlines the foundational elements of HPS, the benefits of adopting a system-wide commitment to HPS, and how HPS can be funded across a range of Federally funded interventions.

Core components

HPS is an approach and set of techniques that support the effective implementation of [prevention, diversion, and rapid exit strategies](#) that should be a central part of every homeless services system, including the coordinated entry process, and offered to every participant as a primary housing pathway. HPS typically begins with an exploratory conversation that can occur at any point of engagement in the system. Depending on each participant's needs, HPS engagements may involve elements of case management, conflict resolution and mediation, landlord negotiation, and/or flexible financial assistance. While many participants return to housing after their first HPS conversation, others need multiple engagements, which may occur over time and in different parts of the homeless services system.



System benefits

- HPS can reduce trauma by preventing or shortening experiences of literal homelessness, including shelter stays and unsheltered homelessness.
- HPS expands community efforts to prevent and end homelessness while preserving more intensive, higher cost interventions for the most vulnerable by reducing system inflow and pressure on scarce resources.
- HPS can help mitigate the spread of infectious diseases such as COVID-19 by reducing entries into higher risk settings such as congregate shelters.
- HPS is not confined to a particular program type; it is a set of approaches and techniques that can be embedded across access points, engagement opportunities, and projects.

Housing Problem-Solving by funding source

HPS activities can be implemented using a wide array of Federal, State, local, and private funding streams. This document highlights how selected Federal programs can fund HPS. This document is not all-inclusive; there are many other programs that can fund HPS, including [Runaway and Homeless Youth \(RHY\)](#), [Community Development Block Grant \(CDBG\)](#), [Emergency Rental Assistance \(ERAP\)](#), and funding through HUD's [Office of Housing Counseling \(OHC\)](#).

Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) and Continuum of Care (CoC) Programs

CoC and ESG recipients can immediately integrate HPS into their existing systems and projects by applying HPS techniques, including diversion and rapid exit strategies into their case management and service offerings. See [COVID-19 Homeless System Response: Housing Problem-Solving](#) for details about funding HPS with CoC and ESG.

Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP)

The [Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program \(YHDP\)](#) is a discretionary grant program awarded by the HUD Office of Special Needs Assistance Programs (SNAPS). It serves youth aged 24 and under who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness. YHDP projects are administered in accordance with CoC Program requirements with YHDP-specific flexibilities and special activities specific to the [YHDP NOFO](#) under which the community received funding. Many YHDP communities include HPS in their YHDP project design, implementing diversion strategies to assist youth in finding or maintaining safe and appropriate housing before becoming homeless and/or at the first point of engagement in seeking services.

Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Program

The [Supportive Services for Veteran Families \(SSVF\)](#) Program is a discretionary grant program awarded by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). It serves Veterans experiencing or at imminent risk of homelessness. In an effort to identify and promote new and creative responses, SSVF has implemented [Rapid Resolution Services](#) as an allowable activity. Rapid Resolution is designed to prevent Veteran households from experiencing homelessness or to immediately return them to safe, stable permanent housing. It also provides additional flexibility beyond traditional SSVF services to support Veterans without a formal lease such as those who are staying with friends or family.

Projects for Assistance in the Transition from Homelessness (PATH) Program

The [Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness \(PATH\) Program](#) is a formula grant awarded by the Department of Health and Human Services Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). PATH serves people experiencing or at imminent risk of

homelessness who are living with severe mental illness, including those with co-occurring substance abuse and including people who are currently living in residential settings who are at risk of experiencing homelessness. PATH HPS activities often focus on case management, mediation, and landlord negotiation.

Funding Sources Serving Survivors of Domestic Violence

There are multiple Federal funding sources that are dedicated to or primarily serve survivors of domestic violence (DV) that can fund HPS. Two examples are:

- Victims of Crime Act ([VOCA](#)), which encompasses formula grants awarded by the Department of Justice Office for Victims of Crime to state administering agencies (SAAs) and discretionary grants awarded to entities including tribal entities. SAAs have significant discretion in defining participant and activity eligibility but typically commit VOCA funds to serving people experiencing or fleeing DV, including people who are currently incarcerated.
- The Family Violence Prevention and Services Act ([FVPSA](#)), which encompasses formula grants awarded by the Department of Health and Human Services Family and Youth Services Bureau to state agency recipients and formula grants awarded to tribal entities. FVPSA is typically committed to shelter and related services, but recipients can also use FVPSA to fund HPS for people experiencing unsheltered homelessness.

Additional resources

- [COVID-19 Homeless System Response: Housing Problem Solving](#)
- [Video: Housing Problem Solving: Unscripted](#)
- [Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program](#)
- [SSVF Rapid Resolution Service Compliance Guidance](#)
- [SSVF Rapid Resolution Conversation Guide](#)

Allowable Housing Problem-Solving activities crosswalk

The table on the following pages highlights common allowable HPS activities by selected Federal programs. This chart is not intended to be exhaustive, exclusive, or comprehensive. Listed funding sources may have additional eligible activities that fit within the HPS approach and listed eligible activities may have additional restrictions or qualifications that are not enumerated below. Federal funding recipients should refer to all applicable guidance, particularly funding source-specific guidance, for further details and definitive information about eligible participants, activities, and costs.

Housing Problem-Solving Activities by funding source

Funding Source	CoC Program Funding (including YHDP)			ESG Program Funding				Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF)	Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH)	Victims of Crime Act (VOCA)	Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA)
	SSO-CES	SSO (Other)	RRH	SO	ES	HP	RRH				
Homelessness Prevention						X		X		X	X
Diversion	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X
Rapid Exit	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Case management	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Transportation		X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X
Vocational certifications & licenses		X	X		X	X	X				X
Food		X	X		X						X
Legal services		X	X		X	X	X			X	X
Rent & utility arrears			X			X	X	X		X	
Security deposit			X			X	X	X		X	
Short-term rental assistance			X			X	X	X	X	X	
Application fees			X			X	X			X	
Background/credit checks			X		X	X	X			X	
Moving expenses			X			X	X	X			
Storage			X			X	X				
First/last month's rent			X			X	X	X		X	
Utilities			X			X	X	X		X	
Obtaining vital documents			X	X	X	X	X				
Mental health counseling and care, including providing services directly and connecting participants to services	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
Referring participants to healthcare services	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
Housing repair costs necessary to ensure a victim's safety										X	
Assistance in applying for cash benefits, including SSI/SSDI	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X

Activity eligibility for all programs may be contingent on State or local rules or regulations.