# Rapid Re-Housing for Youth Checklist

Rapid Re-Housing for youth can look different in each project.  However, there are some common standards and practices that should be considered during the planning and implementation of a rapid re-housing project for youth at the system level, project level, and staff level.  The following checklist is intended only as a guide for Continuums of Care and providers that are interested in developing a rapid-rehousing project for youth.

## System Level Considerations

❑ Written standards should reflect strategies for serving youth households in RRH and include:

    ❑ Policies and procedures for evaluating individuals' and families' eligibility for assistance.

    ❑ Policies and procedures for determining and prioritizing which eligible individuals and families will receive rapid re-housing assistance.

    ❑ Standards for determining what percentage or amount of rent each project participant must pay while receiving rapid re-housing assistance.

❑ Develop any minimum, desired service standards or expectations for local RRH projects serving youth.

❑ Include youth who are currently experiencing or have experienced homelessness in the design and funding decision processes.

❑ Integrate requirements into public and private funders' grant-making and monitoring processes.

❑ Review state and local laws to determine if there are barriers that will prevent youth from entering into lease agreements.

❑ Develop state or local resources to fill in the gaps.

❑ Develop partnerships with agencies that administer long-term housing assistance and establish protocols for accessing these subsidies for youth who are determined to need more intensive or longer-term assistance than can be provided through RRH.

# Organization & Project Level Considerations

❑ Assess project design and policies for alignment with the CoC's written standards and any minimum required service standards.

❑ Develop a budget and enrollment targets for a project based on the following:
  ❑ Caseload size
  ❑ Hours during a day that staff need to be available
  ❑ Size of the geographic area being served
  ❑ Staffing model
  ❑ Amount of rental and move-in financial assistance
  ❑ Other discretionary financial assistance

❑ When hiring staff, build into the interview process questions or scenarios related to:
  ❑ Beliefs about harm reduction
  ❑ Youth choice
  ❑ Lack of requirements for services
  ❑ Philosophy of consequences that do not use the threat of eviction or return to homelessness as a tool for project compliance
  ❑ Positive risk-taking and second chances

❑ Clearly communicate with staff about job requirements.

❑ Ensure project design incorporates youth-centered practices:
  ❑ Develop processes to self-assess and make improvements to the physical environment, policies and procedures, etc.
  ❑ Review participant materials for consistency with identified practices
  ❑ Provide staff training or participate in training required by the Continuum of Care
  ❑ Measure fidelity and provide ongoing coaching of staff

❑ Develop supervision procedures to:
  ❑ Include feedback from youth as part of performance review
  ❑ Perform regular reviews of case notes, housing stability plans, communication with participants, and observe staff interaction with participants

❑ Actively recruit landlords who are willing to accept young tenants with housing barriers and very low incomes in exchange for project supports to both youth and landlords:
  ❑ Develop intentional project supports for landlords
  ❑ Develop recruiting materials and staff training
  ❑ Assign staff to recruit landlords in target housing and locations
  ❑ Train all staff to communicate with landlords, understand landlord perspectives and mediate conflict

❑ Ensure that the organization is able to support youth participant needs.
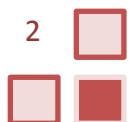
## Staff Level Considerations

❑ Be transparent about the amount and duration of rental and other financial assistance.
- ❑ Explain how the project will calculate rent
- ❑ Discuss when the young person needs to notify the project about income changes and how those changes may affect the amount of rental assistance the project will pay
- ❑ Identify who will pay any utility deposits and monthly utility costs
- ❑ Include youth in making decisions about furnishing their unit

❑ Structure the housing search process to build on youths' strengths and positively engage them. Leverage the housing search to help youth develop life-long skills related to obtaining housing.
- ❑ Provide assistance to help youth think through their housing options
- ❑ Ask youth about what is important to them in the place they live
- ❑ Ask youth about roommate options
- ❑ Assist youth to develop a basic budget
- ❑ Help youth search for rental units
- ❑ Partner with youth through the housing search process
- ❑ Promote youth choice throughout the housing search process
- ❑ Partner with youth through the inspection process to assure the unit is safe

❑ Offer supportive services in ways that reinforce youths' strengths, meet their needs, respect their preferences, are accessible, and are focused on housing stability and retention.
- ❑ Work with youth to develop housing stability plan goals that are developmentally appropriate and action-item driven
- ❑ Make sure that all interactions are trauma-informed
- ❑ Help youth learn to manage tenancy responsibilities
- ❑ Assist youth in identifying and implementing a plan to secure earned income and/or benefits needed to sustain rent after project exit
- ❑ Assist youth to identify and utilize the resources in her/his neighborhood

❑ Provide opportunities for leadership.
- ❑ Involve youth in developing marketing and engagement strategies
- ❑ Have youth provide feedback on the project
- ❑ Implement a peer-support component