



**ARLINGTON**  
**VIRGINIA**

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Human Services

**Arlington County**  
**Permanent Supportive Housing**  
**Policies and Procedures**

03/01/2023

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## **Permanent Supportive Housing Policies and Procedures**

### **I INTRODUCTION**

Arlington County’s Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) Program serves individuals and families with a range of critical housing needs. PSH is an evidence-based housing strategy for persons with disabilities. PSH refers to integrated, permanent housing linked with flexible community-based services that are available to tenants when they need them but are not mandated as a condition of occupancy.

This document contains the policies and procedures of the PSH Program. There are some policies and procedures that are specific to the source of funding attached to the rental subsidies. These specific policies are explicitly referenced in this manual.

### **II PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

#### **A. Key Elements of PSH**

1. Housing is affordable, meaning the tenant household ideally pays no more than 30% of its income toward rent and utilities;
2. Tenant households have a lease or sublease identical to non-supportive housing with no limits on length of tenancy, if lease terms and conditions are met;

3. Staff proactively engage members of the tenant household in a flexible and comprehensive array of supportive services, without requiring participation in services as a condition of ongoing tenancy;
4. Effective coordination with key partners to address issues resulting from medical problems, substance use, or mental health and other crises, with a focus on fostering housing stability and wellness; and
5. Supports tenants in connecting with community-based resources and activities, interacting with diverse individuals including those without disabilities, and building strong social support networks
6. Before moving into PSH, tenants are asked about their housing preferences. Whenever possible, tenants are offered a reasonable choice of units that would be similarly available to non-disabled persons.
7. Housing is integrated. Tenants interact with neighbors who do not have disabilities.
8. Leases comply with the Virginia Residential Landlord and Tenant Act and, therefore, do not have any provisions that would not be found in leases held by someone who does not have a disability. Leases are renewable at tenants' and owners' option.
9. Lease addendums, if any, are like those found in housing for people who do not have disabilities and do not restrict visitors or otherwise interfere with a life in the community.
10. After paying the calculated tenant rental payment, PSH participants are left with the balance available for discretionary spending enough to afford other necessary living expenses.
11. The provision of housing and the provision of support services are distinct, based on the tenant's individual needs.
12. Support services promote recovery and are designed to help tenants choose, obtain, and keep housing.
13. Tenants have choices in the support services that they receive. They are asked about their choices, can choose from a range of services, and different tenants receive different types of services based on their needs and preferences.
14. As needs change over time, tenants can receive more intensive or less intensive support services without losing their homes.
15. PSH prohibits discrimination because of race, color, sex, national origin, familial status and disability with respect to recruitment and selection for program participation.

16. PSH provides reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities.

## **B. Housing First Principles**

The DBHDS (Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services) program, which is a subset of the Arlington County PSH program, adheres to Housing First principles in addition to the key elements listed above. Housing first principles include:

- Admission/tenant screening and selection practices affirm the acceptance of applicants regardless of their sobriety or use of substances, completion of treatment and participation in services.
- Applicants are seldom rejected based on poor credit or financial history, poor or lack of rental history, minor criminal conviction, or behaviors that indicate a lack of “housing readiness”.
- Supportive services emphasize engagement and problem-solving over therapeutic goals. Service plans are highly tenant driven without predetermined goals. Participation in services or program compliance is not a condition of PSH tenancy.
- Use of alcohol or drugs in and of itself (without other lease violations) is not considered a reason for termination.
- Tenant selection plan for PSH includes a prioritization of eligible tenants based on criteria other than “first come/first serve,” such as duration/chronicity of homelessness, vulnerability, or high utilization of crisis services.
- Case managers/service coordinators are trained in and actively employ evidence-based practices for client/tenant engagement, such as motivational interviewing and client-centered counseling.
- Services are informed by a harm-reduction philosophy that recognizes that drug and alcohol use and addiction are part of some tenants’ lives, where tenants are engaged in non-judgmental communication regarding drug and alcohol use, where tenants are offered education regarding how to avoid risky behaviors and engage in safer practices.
- Building and apartment units may include special physical features that accommodate disabilities, reduce harm, and promote health among tenants. These may include elevators, stovetops with automatic shut offs, wall mounted emergency cords, ADA wheelchair compliant showers, etc.

## **C. Structure of PSH**

PSH forms partnerships with a variety of entities. Listed below are descriptions of the roles and expectations of the various PSH partners.

### **Housing Support Services Specialist**

- Identify affordable housing options of apartments that meet tenant needs

- Assist participant to apply for an apartment, including negotiating with landlord around issues of credit or criminal history
- Assist participant in applying for rental assistance subsidy
- Along with case manager and landlord, assist with resolving any tenancy issues, such as failure to pay rent, noise violations, housekeeping issues
- If necessary, assist with moving participant to another PSH apartment
- Maintain effective relationships with landlords, property managers, and housing assistance providers
- Provide expertise to tenants and clinical staff in tenant-landlord and fair housing laws, including the use of reasonable accommodations
- Assist other staff members to develop individualized housing skills training for residents
- *For DHBDS Subsidies:* Assist individuals with developing a housing assessment and plan
- Conduct HQS inspections of rental units

### **Clinical Case Managers**

- Assist with identifying and addressing potential barriers to successful tenancy and develop a plan to address barriers
- Conduct regular home visits to assess the condition of apartments, and tenants' ability to live independently and abide by the lease
- Provide on-going housing-based support
- Work closely with tenants and landlords to resolve any lease violations
- Provide landlord with case manager contact information
- Notify PSH staff of any threatening tenancy situations and work with tenants accordingly
- *For DBHDS Contract:* Behavioral health service providers must hold a triennial license in good standing with DBHDS to provide in-kind community-based behavioral health supportive services. Individuals must be assessed for and have access to treatment, rehabilitative, and supportive services reflective of their changing needs and preferences

### **Subsidy Administrators**

- Process applications for the rental subsidy program
- Verify that income and asset and household composition adhere to programmatic administrative regulations
- Determine benefit level eligibility in accordance with established policies and procedures
- Approve or deny rental subsidy applications and communicate this information with applicants in writing
- Maintain client records and files regarding subsidy determination
- Conduct rent reasonableness determination (*state and federal subsidy*)
- Provide information to DHS clients regarding their rights and responsibilities
- Accurately track payments made to landlords in a timely manner

- Annually recertify applicant for rental subsidy
- Adjust rental subsidy amount when client income or household composition changes

### **PSH Participants**

- Be available for home visits conducted by case manager
- Abide by the lease (i.e., pay rent on time, keep apartment clean etc.)
- Report any changes in income or household composition to subsidy administrator (Housing Choice Voucher or PSH office)
- Provide proper documentation regarding income, assets and employment to subsidy administrator (Housing Choice Voucher or PSH office).
- Provide consent for DHS staff to speak with landlord
- Provide consent for DHS staff to speak with individuals listed as emergency contacts

### **PSH Landlords**

- Process apartment application
- Provide proper maintenance to your apartment
- Collect rent
- Work with participant and PSH staff to resolve any tenancy issues

### **Services and Supports Available to Participant**

Below are examples of services and housing related supports that are available to PSH participants:

- Assistance with budgeting and paying rent
- Assistance in applying for apartment and rental assistance subsidy
- Help in meeting lease obligations and complying with apartment rules
- Finding and retaining employment
- Medication monitoring and management
- Assistance with daily living skills, such as meal preparation, housekeeping, developing support networks and socialization
- Access to medical and health services
- Counseling and support in achieving self-identified goals
- Conflict-resolution training

## **III INTAKE AND REFERRAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **A. PSH Admissions and Eligibility Policy**

**Purpose:** To define eligibility criteria for the PSH program, describe the necessary documentation to prove program eligibility and outline the admissions process for PSH applicants.

**Eligibility Criteria:** To qualify for the Arlington County PSH program a household must be a low income (no more than 40% Area Median Income (AMI) for local and federal subsidies and no more than 50% AMI for DBHDS-PSH subsidies) Arlington resident with a disability and have a critical housing need. Applicants must need housing-focused case management and support to adhere to the lease and live in the community. Applicants must have a DHS clinical case manager at the time of application. On-going clinical case management is a requirement for PSH eligibility for federally and locally subsidized tenants only.

### **Preferences**

Applicants will be screened and housed based on their preference scores which are listed below. The intent is that individuals who are the most vulnerable and have the highest housing need obtain housing as quickly as possible:

1. Exiting state hospitals and/or other specialized populations identified by state funding authorities as being a high priority for PSH. \*
2. Chronically homeless - as defined by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
  - a. Further prioritized by length of homelessness (for screening process only)
3. Literally Homeless with a disability (Literally Homeless is defined as an individual or family who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence)
  - a. Further prioritized by aging into chronic homelessness and high severity of need
  - b. Further prioritized by homeless with a high severity of need
  - c. Further prioritized by homeless with a low severity of need
4. Residing in a transitional setting. This includes jail/prison, detox, group home, rehabilitation setting, rapid re-housing
  - a. Further prioritized by days in a transitional setting
5. Non-Homeless (all one category – couch surfing, living w/family etc.)
  - a. Further prioritized by severity of need
  - b. Preference given to safety issues (including victims of domestic violence)– living in an abusive relationship
6. Non-homeless in need of multiple bedrooms \* \*

\* Disclaimer: Once state and federal funding priorities have been exhausted, individuals who are chronically homeless will become the top priority.

\*\*Disclaimer – DHS will make every effort to screen PSH applicants according to the above–mentioned prioritization. However, there may be limited circumstances where the apartment that is available does not meet the needs of the individuals with the highest priority. In this case, PSH staff will house the person with the highest priority that can fill the unit. The original prioritized applicant will remain a priority.

### **Residency Verification**

PSH applicants and participants must be Arlington residents. Proof of residency can include the following and are ranked in order of preference:

1. Lease – A lease current within the last 90 days. Leases should come directly from the leasing company and will be verified by PSH staff, or;
2. Notarized Residency Verification Form - completed by head of household where individual is residing and documenting that the applicant has resided in Arlington County for at least 90 days, or;
3. Documented connection to local services- An adult member of the household should provide documentation from either an Arlington County Homeless Outreach provider, Department of Human Services Treatment on Wheels program, DHS clinical case manager or shelter provider that the client has been engaged in services for the last 90 days. Documentation from Efforts to Outcomes (ETO) will also suffice. The letter will also verify where the individual has been staying in Arlington to receive services, or;
4. Documentation of connection to services and residing in Arlington County jail- Letter from DHS case manager should state that individual was either an Arlington resident prior to going to jail or was not a resident, but has been mandated by the court to remain in Arlington upon release, or;
5. Documentation of connection to services and currently hospitalized at a state psychiatric facility through Arlington County Emergency Services, or;
6. Documentation of connection to services and currently living in Arlington County sponsored placements or participating regional agreements, i.e., Regional Older Adult Facilities Mental Health Support Team (RAFT), Children Services Act (CSA) funded services, group homes, Highly Intensive Residential (ICRT), or;
7. Documentation of connection to services and head of household's children are enrolled in Arlington County public schools. This is applicable only when the child is the PSH applicant.

### **Disability Verification**

A member of the household must have a disability (including sole Substance Abuse diagnosis) which can be documented through one of the following items:

1. Documentation of disability from a licensed professional
2. SSI award letter
3. Proof of receipt of General Relief
4. Documentation of serious mental illness or serious emotional disturbance on PSH referral\*
5. Observation by staff of a disability within the past 45 days.
6. Uniform Assessment Instrument (UAI)

*\*Tenants placed in the state-funded DBHDS-PSH program will need to meet the state definition of serious mental illness and will need to have serious mental illness status verified at intake and annually thereafter by a licensed clinician.*

### **Critical Housing Need Verification**

Applicants must have a critical housing need which can be documented through one of the following items:



1. Exiting a state hospital or other specialized populations identified by state funding authorities as being a high priority for PSH. Referrals must have a letter from the clinical case manager documenting that the applicant is currently in a state hospital or part of a specialized population identified by state funding authorities as being a high priority for PSH.
2. Chronically homeless –Households meeting these criteria must meet the federal definition of homelessness (<https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/Defining-Chronically-Homeless-Final-Rule.pdf> ) Case managers can submit the Continuum of Care (CoC) packet which has already been vetted through the CoC.
3. Homeless –Documentation options include third party verification (ETO, letter from clinical case manager or Treatment on Wheels case manager) that the individual is in shelter or on the street; self-certification is also acceptable if third party verification is not an option.
4. Transitional setting - Referrals must have a letter from transitional housing verifying tenancy of individual.
5. Non-homeless – Additional documentation is not needed, as it is provided by the clinician in referral.

### **Severity of Need Verification**

Applicants must demonstrate a need for housing-focused case management.

Documentation of this need can be obtained through one of the following items:

- Daily Living Activities-20 (DLA-20) – Severity of need is established with a DLA-20 score of 5.0 or lower at the time of admission. Scores higher than 5.0 must have a written explanation and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
- Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (SPDAT) - For individuals experiencing homelessness) – Severity of need is established with a score of 37 and above for individuals and 53 and above for families. Applicants whose scores do not meet severity of need can provide a written justification as to why they would meet severity of need. These applications will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
- Virginia Individual Developmental Disability Eligibility Survey (VIDES) - Completion of the VIDES is proof of severity of need for individuals with a developmental disability. Individuals who meet criteria for Intermediate Care Facilities have a higher severity of need than others.

### **Income Verification**

Due to the level of income fluctuation of DHS clients, income will be verified at the time of subsidy application.

### **Application Process**

Clinical case managers who are part of the Community Services Board (CSB) will submit their referral through Welligent. All other case managers will submit a referral and accompanying eligibility documentation to [pshreferral@arlingtonva.us](mailto:pshreferral@arlingtonva.us).

Documentation must include verification of residency, housing need, disability, and severity of need using the examples of documentation listed in the previous sections.

PSH staff will verify applications once a month to see that they meet PSH eligibility criteria. Incomplete applications or applications not meeting basic PSH criteria will either be rejected at this point, or the referring case manager will be asked to provide more information. Case managers will receive an email regarding the rejection.

Once applications are verified, PSH staff will select a numerical preference for the applicant and will enter client information in an electronic database. The lower the numerical preference score, the higher the priority. Applications will be screened based on ranked preferences and, if necessary, date/time submission. The Clinical case manager will be given access to the database to view the status of the application. Case managers will receive an email from PSH staff stating that the application has been received.

Once a month, PSH staff will select batched applications off the waiting list to be screened based on preference. PSH staff will contact the referring case manager to schedule a time for the referral to be reviewed by the PSH/Continuum of Care (CoC) admissions committee. The applicant is strongly encouraged to attend. If accepted or denied, PSH staff will notify the tenant and case manager in writing. At this point, PSH applicants are now in the PSH “pool”, which is the list that PSH draws from when there is a vacancy. Approved applications will have an assigned preference for housing, like the preferences stated in previous sections. Applications with the highest housing need will be selected for the next available units. For more information on PSH waitlist/pool management, please refer to the PSH Waitlist policy. If case managers want to provide updated information regarding an individual’s housing status or severity of need, an email should be sent to [pshreferral@arlingtonva.us](mailto:pshreferral@arlingtonva.us). Failure to update PSH staff can result in inaccurate preferences.

If at any time, PSH staff obtains information from case managers that would alter applicant preference, the ranking will be changed to reflect the applicant’s current situation. For example, an individual was living with friends, but now is homeless, thus creating more of a housing need. The preference will be updated by PSH staff at any point during the application process if there is appropriate documentation to change the preference.

On a periodic basis, PSH staff will select new applicants from the pool to apply for apartments. At this time, the applicant's income will be verified. Applicants participating in the DBHDS-PSH program can have income at or below 50% of Area Median Income (AMI). Federal and Local subsidies require income at 40% or below of AMI. Once an applicant is housed, they will be removed from the pool.

*Arlington Mill Supportive Studio:* Arlington Mill Supportive Studio is an eight-unit program attached to a residential building that provides 60 hours of on-site support. During each admission meeting, applicants will also be screened for Arlington Mill Supportive Studio, based on service and housing need.

Disclaimer – DHS will make every effort to house PSH applicants according to the above-mentioned preferences. However, there may be limited circumstances where the apartment that is available does not meet the needs of the individuals with the highest priority. In this case, PSH staff will house the person with the highest housing priority that can fill the unit. The original prioritized applicant will remain a priority.

## **B. DBHDS Verification of Eligibility Criteria**

1. Serious Mental Illness: Verification of Serious Mental Illness will be documented by a licensed clinician at program intake and annually thereafter

2. Patient of State Psychiatric Facility: The participant’s clinical case manager will verify that the individual is a resident of a State Psychiatric facility at the time of intake. This will be documented on the DBHDS Eligibility Verification form

3. Chronic Homelessness: Is defined using the HUD definition of chronic homelessness. It will also be documented by the referring clinician using the DBHDS Eligibility Verification form. Verification of homelessness can also be achieved by third party verification (HMIS, shelter letter etc.) or self-affidavit.

4. Literally Homeless: Is defined by an individual or family who lacks a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence. Verification of this will be documented on the DBHDS Eligibility Verification form. Third party documentation is required or, if no other documentation exists, a self-affidavit is acceptable.

## **C. PSH Waitlist/ “Pool” Policy**

***Purpose:*** To outline the methods in which individuals are placed in the PSH Pool/Waitlist, the ways that PSH staff prioritize selection of individuals for units and the circumstances under which individuals are removed from the PSH Pool.

***PSH Pool -Active:*** Refers to those applicants whose referrals were approved by the PSH Admissions team and can apply for an apartment. To apply for an apartment, applicants must possess:

- A valid ID
- Social security card
- For minors in the household, a birth certificate
- Updated income and asset information
- The ability to attend, in person, an appointment to apply for an apartment and ultimately sign a lease (i.e., whereabouts are known, is not currently incarcerated or hospitalized without the ability to obtain a temporary community pass to apply for an apartment)

The active pool is the list that PSH draws from when identifying who to apply for an upcoming vacancy. Generally, individuals in the pool will be prioritized for placement based on their housing need.

***PSH Pool -Inactive:*** Refers to individuals whose applications were determined as “active” by the PSH Admissions team but are not able to apply for an apartment as they do not possess the bulleted items mentioned above. Additionally, an individual may have a *temporarily inactive* status if PSH staff have made reasonable attempts to find an apartment and either the individual is rejecting the apartment(s) offered or their applications are consistently rejected by landlords due to poor credit or criminal history. Individuals in the PSH inactive pool will not be prioritized for housing placement.

The PSH Pool will be reviewed and updated at least monthly. Applicants will be placed in either active or inactive status. This can change from month to month, depending on individual circumstances. Applicants and/or case managers must keep PSH staff apprised of changes in an applicant’s circumstances that might impact their housing prioritization. A low housing need is not a reason for placing an individual in inactive status.

***Removal from PSH Pool/Waitlist:*** Individuals will be removed from the PSH pool under the following circumstances:

- There is no longer a housing need
- The individual no longer needs housing-focused case management
- The individual has moved out of jurisdiction (note - this is not applicable to individuals under the state contract)
- Household income exceeds the limit of PSH subsidy programs
- The individual has been placed in an institution (i.e., jail or hospital) for more than six (6) months
- The individual no longer has a DHS case manager
- The individual needs a higher level of care
- If three (3) attempts have been made to contact an individual and they have not returned calls, emails, or attended meetings, they will be placed in inactive status. If they continue to not respond to outreach for a total of 6 months, they will be removed from the PSH pool.
- In instances where PSH attempts to house individuals with extremely high housing barriers with our most lenient landlords and the applications are repeatedly rejected, PSH reserves the right to remove them from the pool. Decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis.

Individuals who have been removed from the PSH pool/waitlist may re-apply at any time.

## **IV PROGRAM ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **A. Application and Move-In Process**

Once a referral has been accepted, the application is placed in the PSH “pool”, which is the list that PSH draws from when a vacancy occurs. Priority is given to individuals with the highest housing need (individuals exiting out of state hospitals and/or other specialized populations identified by state funding authorities as being a high priority for PSH, followed by individuals who are chronically homeless, followed by individuals who are literally homeless etc.) Individuals who are homeless are processed more quickly than individuals who have some form of housing.

***Identification of Apartments:*** PSH has contracts with landlords throughout Arlington County for PSH units. Prior to having an individual apply for a unit, the Housing Specialist will identify the specific housing needs and preferences of each applicant and will refer to the list of landlords to see if there are any units available that meet the tenants needs and preferences. Once an apartment has been identified, the Housing Support Services Specialist will contact the applicant and the case manager to start the apartment application process. Whenever possible, the tenant will be offered a reasonable choice of units that would be similarly available to non-disabled persons.

***Applying for An Apartment:*** When an apartment becomes available, the Housing Support Services Specialist will assist the tenant in applying for the apartment. The following documentation will be needed to apply for an apartment:

- Identification
- Check/Money Order for application fee
- Check/Money Order for security deposit
- Income information (award letter from SSI/SSDI, pay stubs etc.)
- Asset information, such as several months of checking and savings account statements.

The landlord will do a background check which involves reviewing the applicant’s credit and criminal history. If the applicant’s application is rejected, PSH staff will provide the landlord with accompanying documentation to demonstrate mitigating circumstances behind poor credit and/or criminal history. If an applicant is part of the Arlington Landlord Partnership (ALP) and the landlord participates in the ALP, the landlord will apply ALP screening criteria.

If the participant’s application is approved, a date for lease signing will be scheduled. PSH staff will accompany the individual to the lease signing and apartment inspection. The apartment must pass Housing Quality Standard (HQS), prior to lease signing and annually thereafter.

## **B. Lease Agreements**

1. Participant households should have a lease identical to non-supportive housing leases with no limits on length of tenancy, if the lease term and conditions are met.
2. Leases should comply with the Virginia Residential Landlord and Tenant Act and, therefore, shall not have any provisions that would not be found in leases held by

- someone who does not have a psychiatric disability. Leases are renewable at tenants' and owners' option.
3. Lease addendums, if any, should be like those found in housing for people who do not have disabilities and do not restrict visitors or otherwise interfere with life in the community.
  4. The most current and updated lease documentation should always be in the participant file.

### **C. Coordination with Property Management**

Successful supportive housing is predicated on coordination among housing and supportive services staff, including the clinical case manager, property management, and PSH staff.

PSH staff meet with property management staff at least three times a year, or as often as necessary, to monitor progress of DHS residents in meeting lease obligations, including payment of rent, violations of lease rules, behavior jeopardizing the quiet enjoyment and safety of other residents, and/or community activities and resources available to support individual DHS clients.

When appropriate, PSH staff will convene team meetings which will include the clinical case manager, as well as property management staff, to address individual resident concerns. Information exchange will be open within applicable privacy and confidentiality regulations.

### **D. Inspections**

Arlington County reserves the right to inspect an apartment in order to ensure that the landlord is properly maintaining apartments and that utilities are being provided. All inspections are performed by certified HQS inspectors.

*PSH Project Based Units at the Gates of Ballston:* As part of the initial lease-up and on-going recertification process, all households that have a PSH Project-Based voucher will be required to have their apartment inspected by Housing Choice Voucher inspectors. These apartments must meet the federal Housing Quality Standards. Policies and Procedures related to apartment inspections are found in Chapter 8 of the Arlington County Housing Choice Voucher Program Administrative Plan.  
<https://arlingtonva.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/15/2020/06/Administrative-Plan-05-21-2020.pdf> .

*Local and DBHDS units:* PSH program staff will inspect units using HUD Housing Quality Standards. Inspections will be conducted prior to the lease signing and annually thereafter. HQS inspection forms will be documented in the assisted household's file and results will be shared with the housing provider.

If it is determined that a unit is not being maintained in good repair and safe condition, as evidenced through HQS, PSH may abate rental assistance payments until such time that the owner corrects the deficiency (ies). The tenant shall not be responsible to the Owner for any such abatement and the abatement shall not be deemed a breach of the tenant's lease.

It is an expectation that PSH tenants will cooperate with the inspection process. For the local program, if a tenant does not cooperate with the inspection process to the extent that the unit continues to fail inspection, the tenant will be discharged from the program. For the DBHDS program, cooperation with the inspection process is strongly encouraged.

### **E. Home Visits Policy**

**Purpose:** To clarify the purpose of the PSH home visit, the frequency of the home visit, and guidelines for conducting the home visit.

**Policy:** PSH is designed for individuals who, without in-home support, would not likely be able to succeed in housing. Furthermore, the County has made a commitment to landlords participating in PSH that in-home supports visits will be provided to PSH tenants.

Clinical case managers will make home visits to individuals participating in the PSH program. It is expected that individuals in PSH will need in-home visits. The purpose of the home visit is to provide the individual with necessary support related to meeting lease obligations (i.e., paying rent, reporting any maintenance issues, keeping apartment clean etc.) and to ensure that the apartment is in good condition. The frequency of the in-home visits is expected to ebb and flow over time, depending on an individual's needs and circumstances. It will also vary depending on the role of the case manager. At a minimum, case managers must make a home visit to a PSH client apartment once every 90 days. If the individual in PSH is not willing to have home visits, the Case Manager needs to notify PSH staff. Continued outreach will be conducted with the tenant.

#### **Guidelines**

1. Many individuals moving into PSH have not had a lease in their own name for a significant amount of time, are homeless and/or have difficulty managing daily stressors. Therefore, it is expected that PSH participants will initially need in-home visits more frequently than once every 90 days (i.e., once per month), until they have demonstrated responsible tenant behavior, such as paying rent on time, becoming familiar with local transportation routes, notifying the landlord of maintenance issues, and obtaining basic apartment furnishings. This process usually takes 3-6 months, but it is understood that each person acclimates to apartment living at his or her own pace.
2. As mentioned above, the role of the case manager may also dictate the frequency of the home visits. The Clinical Case Manager will make a home visit at a minimum of once every 90 days, except for the first home visit, which should

occur within a month of the move-in date. Additionally, the Housing Specialist through the DBHDS-PSH program will conduct monthly outreach to clients. Home visits for DBHDS clients who are stably housed will be at a minimum of twice per year, but more frequent for those who are not stably housed. The Housing Specialists in the local PSH program will make home visits twice per year. Auxiliary in-home support services, such as BHD (Behavioral Healthcare Division) support services, ADSD (Aging and Disability Services Division) cluster care, or home health aide services, do not count as home visits as defined by this policy. Home visits that do not address tenancy issues, such as physical therapy or in-home parenting support are also not considered a home visit as defined by this policy.

3. During the home visit, staff should attempt to inspect every room of the apartment. Attention should be paid to potential lease violations, such as unreported maintenance issues, housekeeping issues, unauthorized occupants, damage to the apartment, etc. If such things are found during the home visit, staff should work with the client to see that these are resolved. It is recommended that a follow-up home visit occur. Staff should also inquire as to the tenants' overall well-being in the apartment. For example, do they have enough food? Do they have adequate furniture? Are they having any issues with neighbors?
4. When staff conduct a home visit, it is *extremely important* that they go to the leasing office to inquire how the tenant is doing and if there are any tenancy issues. If leasing staff are not available, staff should follow up by phone or email.
5. During home visits, appropriate measures will be taken to ensure consumer and staff safety. Strategies for conducting home visits safely include but are not limited to, bringing a second staff member, asking the tenant to show staff the apartment rooms, notifying supervisor as to where and when home visits will occur, and conducting home visits in a scheduled manner.

#### **F. Extended Leave from Apartment**

**Purpose:** To clarify the circumstances under which PSH will pay a subsidy when an individual is not in their apartment.

**Policy:** If an individual in PSH will be absent from his/her apartment for an extended time, his/her subsidy may remain intact for up to 90 days for hospitalizations and incarcerations and for 30 days for long-distance travel provided that:

- There is an adequate plan for the individual to continue to pay his/her portion of the rent.
- There is an adequate plan for the individual to continue to pay for his/her utilities.
- There is an adequate plan for delivery of the individual's mail.
- There is an adequate plan to ensure that no other individuals except the lease holder and the landlord will have access to the apartment.



- There is an adequate plan for how landlords will communicate/correspond with the tenant. \*
- There is an adequate plan for recertification if it occurs while the individual is away from the apartment.
- The time spent away from the unit is not considered a lease violation or abandonment by the landlord.

The case manager and individual will develop a plan to address the above-mentioned items. The plan will be forwarded to the PSH manager. If the plan is approved, the manager will inform the subsidy administrator to continue the subsidy for up to 90 days. After 90 days, the individual will lose his/her subsidy *and will be discharged* but can remain in the apartment for as long as s/he abides by the lease and pays the full portion of his/her rent on time. *Extensions to the 90-day rule can be made by the PSH supervisor on a case-by-case basis.* The subsidy administrator will also notify the individual as to the date of termination of the subsidy. *If an individual is in a designated PSH unit, PSH will inform the landlord that the individual is being discharged from PSH and that the individual is no longer eligible to stay in that unit.*

If the individual will be away from his/her apartment for over 90 days, the case manager will discuss with the individual the option of vacating the apartment to avoid an eviction on his/her credit report. For DBHDS-PSH clients who are hospitalized or incarcerated for more than 90 days, written approval must be obtained from DBHDS.

#### Special Circumstances

*Repeated Hospitalization:* PSH reserves the right to refuse the extended leave request if an individual has repeated hospitalizations. PSH will review these requests on a case-by-case basis.

*Repeated Incarcerations:* PSH reserves the right to refuse the extended leave request if an individual has repeated incarcerations. PSH will review these requests on a case-by-case basis.

*Long-Distance Travel:* PSH realizes that a significant portion of tenants have family living in another country or state. There may be occasions when a tenant needs to leave the area to see family. Under such circumstances, PSH will continue to pay the subsidy for up to 30 days. The tenant must submit proof of departure and return dates. PSH will not adjust the subsidy amount if income from employment is reduced during the travel period. If the tenant is gone for more than 30 days, the subsidy will be closed, and they will be responsible for the full portion of the rent.

*Federal Subsidies:* Restrictions apply to those PSH subsidies administered by the Housing Choice Voucher program. If an individual is charged with a drug-related crime or violent felony, their subsidy will be immediately revoked.

\* If it is not possible to communicate/correspond directly with the tenant, and the individual has no other family or support to receive such communication, the case manager will serve at the point of contact.

## **G. PSH Live-In Aide Policy**

**Purpose:** To clarify the definition of a live-in aide, who can serve as a live-in aide, how the need for a live-in aide is verified, and the impact of a live-in aide on an individual's apartment size and subsidy.

**Policy:** Tenants can request a live-in aide to assist them with their overall care and well-being. The US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines a live-in aide as "A person who resides with one or more elderly persons or near-elderly persons or persons with disabilities who:

- Is determined to be essential to the care and well-being of the persons;
- Is not obligated for the support of the persons; and
- Would not be living in the unit except to provide the necessary supportive services"<sup>1</sup>

There is a difference between a person who needs occasional home-based support and a live-in aide. A live-in aide helps overnight as well as during the day.

The Arlington County PSH program live-in aid policy is modeled after the Arlington County Housing Choice Vouchers Live-In Aide policy. PSH tenants whose subsidy is administered by the HCV program will follow the HCV guidelines for live-in aides.

### *Verification of need of live-in aide for essential care*

As the subsidy administrator, the PSH program has a responsibility to verify that the live-in aide is necessary to provide the supportive services that are essential to the care and well-being of the individual.

The tenant will need to submit documentation to the subsidy administrator from a doctor, healthcare provider or caseworker verifying that a live-in aide is essential to the tenant's well-being and care. Additionally, the tenant will be assessed by Arlington County's Department of Human Services Aging and Disability Division as to whether the tenant needs a live-in aide. The results of the assessment will not include medical information. If there is a discrepancy between the tenant's healthcare provider and the DHS assessment, the DHS recommendation will be followed.

### *Who can be a live-in aide?*

A live-in aide can come from either an independent agency, or it can be a family member or friend, provided that the family member is not obligated for the support of the tenant. In other words, the individual cannot be financially responsible for the tenant (i.e., spouse, parent etc.).

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<sup>1</sup> 24 CFR part 5.403 as cited in "Live in Aides in Federally-funded Housing Programs: Information for MFP Participants and Program Staff". Housing Capacity Building Initiative for Community Living. May, 2013

Typically, when an individual utilizes multiple caregivers on a shift basis, they will not qualify as a live-in aide. This is because the caregivers are not residing in the unit. However, there may be certain circumstances where the rotating caregivers might qualify as live-in aides.

Additionally, individuals who were residing in the unit prior to the request for a live-in aide cannot be considered as a live-in aide.

If the live-in aide is receiving earned income, the subsidy administrator will determine if the hours that the live-in aide works conflict with providing essential care to the individual.

#### *Income*

The income of the live-in aide is not counted for the purposes of calculating the rental subsidy.

#### *Bedroom size*

If the household has a live-in aide, then the aide must be included when determining the family unit size. However, the presence of a live-in aide does not automatically mean that an additional bedroom is warranted.

#### *Occupancy*

The live-in aide is considered an occupant of the unit and does not have the rights of tenancy. As an occupant, the live-in aide must abide by the rules and regulations of the landlord.

#### *Background Checks*

Most landlords will require that a live-in aide undergo their criminal background check.

### **H. Moving Policy**

**Purpose:** To determine under what circumstances PSH will move PSH participants to another PSH apartment.

**Policy:** PSH recognizes that over time, individuals may want to move to a different apartment. Moving within PSH is allowable. PSH will make every effort to expedite move requests but cannot guarantee a timeframe for any move. Financial resources are also limited – therefore, tenants requesting to move should be prepared to cover some costs associated with the move. These costs include application fees, holding fees, pro-rated rental costs, potential damage fees from the previous apartment, and moving costs. If the tenant does not have the means to pay for a security deposit, PSH will assist the tenant to apply for emergency financial assistance.

The tenant is also responsible for coordinating their move to ensure that they vacate the apartment in accordance with their lease. PSH staff will assist the tenant with these tasks. All landlords require a written notice to vacate from the tenant with a specific time frame ranging from 30-60 days.

The process for identifying an apartment will not begin until the tenant completes and submits the required Tenant Request to Move Form. The tenant must complete this form with their PSH Housing Support Services Specialist. The tenant and PSH staff will discuss the viability of moving the tenant to the Housing Grant or Housing Choice Voucher program or transferring to another unit within the property. The clinical case manager will also be involved in this decision. PSH tenants should not move to another apartment without notifying PSH staff.

Applications which meet certain preferences will be prioritized. Listed below are the PSH moving preferences and definitions:

*Safety:* A specific incident threatening or violating an individual's safety that occurs on the property within 90 days of the move request. Examples include incidents of domestic violence, assault, or verbal threats of physical harm. It does not include general beliefs that the overall neighborhood is not safe.

*Supporting Documentation:* Tenant must submit written documentation in the forms of one of the following:

1. Police report
2. Written statement from landlord documenting the incident
3. Written statement from tenant expressing that the tenant reasonably believes that there is a threat of imminent harm from further violence if the tenant were to remain in the existing PSH unit

*Over-Occupancy:* The household size is or will be increasing to exceed the maximum number of individuals allowed on the lease.

*Accessibility:* An individual in the apartment who, due to a disability, needs an apartment that meets their accessibility needs. The tenant will need to follow the landlord policy for reasonable accommodation requests.

*Unresolved Maintenance Issues:* Instances where the unit has repeated incidents of HQS violations.

*Supporting Documentation:* Written documentation of failed HQS inspections.

Applicants who submit a move-request due to a lease violation or notice to vacate should follow the re-housing protocol outlined in the PSH discharge policy.

When a vacancy occurs, decisions regarding which of the prioritized applicants will be housed will be made by PSH staff with input from relevant clinical staff. Factors considered include, but are not limited to, severity of the situation, whether the applicant has multiple priorities, and whether the apartment available meets the needs of applicant. It should be noted that individuals who are still waiting for PSH housing have priority over move requests.

### **Process for Moving to another PSH apartment**

1. Complete the Tenant Request to Move Form with PSH Housing Specialist.
2. Discuss with tenant, case manager, and PSH Housing Specialist to determine if household is appropriate for the Housing Grant program instead of PSH, or to transfer within the property to another apartment.
3. PSH Housing Specialist will contact the tenant when a new apartment has been identified.
4. If necessary, PSH Housing Specialist will secure funding for the security deposit.
5. PSH Housing Specialist will assist the tenant to apply for a new apartment.
6. PSH Housing Specialist will assist tenant to ensure that current subsidy paperwork is up to date.
7. Tenant must give proper notice to landlord whose apartment is being vacated.
8. PSH Housing Specialist will complete a home visit to the previous apartment prior to move-out.
9. Tenant moves into new apartment.

### **Moving Costs**

- New application fee (\$37-\$50 per applicant)
- Security Deposit (\$250 - up to two months' rent)
- Damages from previous apartment, if any
- If tenants break the lease, they may be responsible for the rent on the unit for an assigned amount of time, provided that the unit is vacant.
- If the tenant moves mid-month, they may be responsible for the full pro-rated rent at the new apartment.

## **I. Apartment Abandonment**

**Purpose:** To clarify the process for determining if a PSH apartment has been abandoned, when the subsidy will be terminated, and when the individual will be discharged from the program.

**Policy:** PSH considers an apartment to be abandoned when the landlord deems the unit to be abandoned. If PSH staff suspects that the apartment has been abandoned, the following steps will be taken:

1. Call the landlord to see if they have seen or heard from the tenant.
2. Schedule a wellness check.
3. Contact emergency numbers listed in file.
4. File a missing person's report.
5. Tenant's lease will be reviewed for abandonment clauses.
6. Make at least four (4) documented attempts to locate and/or contact the client. Send a letter to the tenant documenting that they are at risk of having their unit deemed abandoned, which could result in the loss of rental subsidy and discharge from the PSH program.

Results of outreach will be shared with the landlords. Subsidy payment will stop the month following the landlord's determination of apartment abandonment. A discharge letter will be sent to the tenant once the unit is deemed abandoned.

## **J. Program Documentation**

1. *Releases:* PSH staff will ask participants to provide consent for DHS staff to speak with the participant's landlord and any other community partners who are involved with assisting the participant adhere to the lease. Releases will be updated on an annual basis.
2. *Notice of Privacy Practices:* PSH staff will ask participants to sign a Notice of Privacy Practices that informs the participant as to what personal information will be entered into the Homeless Management Information System (Homeless data management system).
3. *DBHDS Eligibility Verification Form:* This form will be completed as part of the DBHDS intake process. Staff completing the form will have proper credentials for verifying disability and housing status.
4. *Case Management Assessment Form (DBHDS-PSH tenants only):* This form is complete at intake and annually thereafter by a licensed clinician. This form verifies that the individual has a serious mental illness as defined by Medicaid.
5. *Participant Agreement (DBHDS-PSH tenants only):* Participants will sign a participant agreement that advises participants of their rights and responsibilities. This is signed at intake and at recertification. The participant agreement will also include information on the Earned Income Disregard.
6. *Residential Follow-Back Form (DBHDS-PSH tenants only):* This is a self-report of a tenant's residential history six (6) months prior to obtaining housing.
7. *Mini-GPRA (DBHDS-PSH tenants only):* This data is collected at intake into program and annually thereafter. Data collected tracks a variety of life domains and whether they have improved since obtaining housing.
8. *Housing Assessment (DBHDS-PSH tenants only):* Housing Assessments will be done at intake and before an individual is housed, and annually thereafter. This document will have information regarding the client's current and prior living situations and will identify potential housing barriers.
9. *Housing/Service Plan (DBHDS-PSH tenants only):* The Housing Plan will be completed within 30 days of intake into the program. The plan will be reviewed and updated at least every six months. Goals will be individualized depending on the needs and interests of the client.
10. *Clinical Service Plans and Case Documentation:* Service plans and clinical information will be maintained in the client's record through the service division where they are receiving case management services. PSH staff maintain a separate chart documenting PSH program eligibility as well as any correspondence that occurs between PSH staff and landlords, case managers, and others on behalf of the tenant. For DBHDS-PSH clients,

PSH staff will develop annual housing assessments and service plans which are kept in the PSH file.

11. *Case Notes:* PSH staff will document in the PSH record any correspondence they have with the tenant, the tenant's landlord, or other community partners regarding the tenant's housing. Case notes will reflect any progress the client is making towards meeting their goals.
12. *Discharge Summary:* This documents the reason for discharge, events leading up to the discharge, any attempts to prevent the discharge, and the individual's discharge destination.

**K. Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)**

All PSH households will have the following information entered in the HMIS system:

- First name, Last Name, Date of Birth, Social Security Number
- All members of the household shall be added to the system as well and will include the above-mentioned data elements.

**L. DBHDS Evaluation and Reporting**

DBHDS partners with PSH providers to develop a common evaluation framework. Providers will report event-based, client-level data to capture outcomes in the following domains:

1. Changes in physical and mental health
2. Changes in substance use
3. Changes in income and benefits, i.e., Medicaid, SSI/SSDI, veterans' benefits, SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program), and earned income
4. Housing stability
5. Institutional care utilization before and after the PSH intervention, including psychiatric hospital stays, emergency department utilization, and criminal justice involvement
6. Access to primary care and engagement in behavioral health services

The evaluation framework also includes the following process measures:

1. Fidelity to evidence-based practices, e.g., the PSH model and *housing first* principles
2. Staff training and certifications (e.g., PSH training and HQS certification)

Additional Reporting Requirements

1. Regular entry of income, benefit, housing, and hospitalization information through the DBHDS database.

**M. Allowable Costs and Limitations (Under the DBHDS contract)**

*1. Housing Assistance*

- Housing Specialist salary, payroll taxes, and fringe benefits

- Salary, payroll taxes, and fringe benefits for other approved PSH program positions
- Supplies and equipment for housing-related services
- Local travel for housing specialist
- Staff training
- Vehicle purchase or allocation of vehicle costs for PSH program
- Vehicle maintenance and fees
- Extermination costs not covered by landlords' lease obligations
- Property damage
- Rental application fees
- Rental assistance payments to landlords
- Utility deposits (up to \$300 per unit)
- Utility allowances paid to utility vendors as part of rental assistance calculations
- Additional and necessary utility costs beyond what the utility allowance will cover (for zero income participants only)
- Fees for credit and criminal background checks
- Security deposits (up to 1.5 months)
- Vacancy payments to landlords (no more than one month at full Fair Market Rate (FMR))

2. *Client Assistance*: Support secured on behalf of PSH participants to improve access to and retention in housing and services:

- a) Hotel/motel assistance while awaiting housing (up to two weeks. Longer stays require approval from DBHDS)
- b) Items to set up households (e.g., bedding, pots & pans, cleaning supplies, etc.)
- c) Payment of old judgments for rent or utility arrears, if necessary, to secure housing.
- d) Fees to obtain IDs and birth certificates
- e) Storage facility fees
- f) Emergency food (up to \$75)
- g) Prescription medication if no other assistance is available
- h) Furnishings (up to \$1,000 per consumer household)
- i) Moving fees, equipment, and supplies

3. *Administration*

- a) Staff time for staff supervision, fiscal and grant management, IT and HR support, etc.
- b) Organizational infrastructure costs (electronic health records, software licenses, office space, phone lines, etc.)

## V. **SUBSIDY ADMINISTRATION**

### A. **Local Project Based Rental Assistance Program**



The Local Project Based Rental Assistance Program: Below are the policies regarding this subsidy.

1. *General Subsidy Requirements*

- Must be assessed and referred by PSH and live, or is applying to live, in a project based supportive housing unit.
- May not be a recipient of Arlington County Housing Grants or HUD Housing Choice Voucher program
- Must be an Arlington County resident
- Each household member who is six years old or older must have a verified social security number.
- Must be legally present in the United States. A person who is legally present is: a citizen, resident alien or other lawfully admitted alien whose status is current and is according to the HUD Housing Choice Voucher policy. The Systematic, Alien Verification for Entitlement Programs (SAVE) may be used to verify alien status. Temporary status individuals do not meet the alien requirement for this program. Expired documents are only allowed if the applicant can verify that they are in the process of having the document renewed. Housing Choice Voucher alien requirements will be used in this program to establish the component of eligibility, unless less restrictive than the legal presence requirement in the Code of Virginia (HB1798-2005).

2. *Application Process:* PSH staff will assist participants in applying for a local project-based housing grant subsidy. Applicants must submit asset and income information to the local project-based subsidy housing administrator. The applicant will be informed in writing of the verifications required to determine eligibility. The applicant will also be informed of the program policy and procedures. Applications must be processed within 60 days of being received by the agency.

3. *Inspections:* All rental units must be inspected upon occupancy and recertification and comply with HUD Housing Quality Standards (HQS).

4. *Income Requirements:* All sources of income must be verified for an initial determination, recertification, and for any reported changes. The countable gross income is the household's gross income prior to any deductions or earnings. Both earned and unearned income are counted.

Income that is counted includes:

- a) Gross Earnings from employer –Are indicated on paystubs or statement from employer. Income of ineligible aliens will be counted in its entirety.
- b) Self- Employment – The difference between gross receipts and legitimate and necessary business expenses incurred for the period of earnings. Self-employment earnings will be averaged for the three months prior to the month of application, or a longer period if needed to accurately predict future earnings. Income tax

returns for the prior year may also be used, if the income received during the prior year is an accurate indicator of future earnings.

- c) Benefits from Social Security, Veterans, Railroad, Retirement, Civil Service Annuity and any other pension or benefit
- d) Unemployment and workman's compensation
- e) Public assistance benefits of all household members such as General Relief, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- f) Child Support and Alimony
- g) Recurring monetary gifts
- h) Recurring personal loans
- i) For assets exceeding \$5000, the interest and or capital gains from these assets will be counted as income
- j) For resources exceeding \$5,000 that generate no income, the current passbook savings rate is computed on the equity value of the resource and counted as income. For example, for a tenant that owns a condominium or other property that produces no revenue or income, the savings rate will be applied to the recipient's equity in the condominium.

Exempt income includes loans/scholarships for educational purposes, foster care payments, income of live-in aides and income of full-time students who are not the applicant or the spouse/cohabitant of the applicant.

5. *Calculation of Earned Income:* Earned income to be used in the establishment of the grant and the tenant portion shall be that which best reflects anticipated earnings during the next six months.  
Generally, earnings received during the two months prior to the month of application/review will be used. Income will be converted to an annual amount by multiplying weekly income by 52, bi-weekly income by 26, and semi-monthly income by 24. Income from new employment may be projected based on a statement from the employer. Fluctuating income will be averaged over a period that will establish a reasonable expectation of future earnings.
6. *Income Disregard:* There is a \$400 annual income disregard that will be deducted from the household's gross annual income.
7. *Changes in Household Circumstance:* Applicants and recipients are required to report any change in income, assets, residence, and household members within ten days. The changes required to report include, but are not limited to, the source and amount of income, number of hours worked, and change in the number of people in the household. Changes in household income of less than \$ 200 per month will be reflected in the next review or recertification. Changes of \$200 or more per month will be reflected as soon as administratively possible, not to exceed two months from the date the change occurred.
8. *Assets:* Income from Assets exceeding \$5,000 is counted. If assets total less than \$5,000 the income is excluded. All sources of income must be verified for an initial

determination, recertification and for reported changes for program eligibility. Countable assets include but are not limited to:

- Cash on hand
- Digital Wallet/Banking accounts (Paypal, Venmo etc.)
- Checking and savings accounts
- Certificates of deposits and IRA's
- Stocks and Bonds
- Deeds of Trust
- Equity value of real property
- Revocable burial trusts or funds
- Fair market value of more than one vehicle

Exempt resources include one motor vehicle, personal effects and life insurance.

9. *Transfer of Assets:* Income from assets more than \$5,000 is used in the subsidy calculation and will continue to be used in the calculation for two years after the assets have been transferred. A program recipient who transfers resources will have the income that those resources generated, or were imputed to have generated, used in the calculation of the grant as if the resources remained in their possession, for two years after the transfer. For example, a recipient gives a child \$8,000, the income that this money (would have) generated in interest shall be used in the subsidy calculation. This interest income will continue to be used in the Subsidy calculation for two years after the transfer.
10. *Calculation of Rent Payments:* The tenant will pay 30% of their adjusted monthly income towards their rent. If the tenant is responsible for utilities, the utility standards will be deducted from the 30% of income and the remainder will be the tenant payment. The subsidy will be the difference between the contract rent and the tenant portion. (Note: contract rent may not exceed the current Fair Market Rent used by the Arlington County Housing Choice Voucher program)
  - Proration of rental subsidy: If there are any ineligible (non-legally present) individuals in the household, the subsidy will be prorated based on the number of household members who meet the legal presence requirement. For example, if, based on a 5- person household's income, rent, and utility allowance, the household's subsidy is \$500.00 before addressing the legal presence requirement. Two of the household members are determined not to meet the legal presence requirement. The subsidy (\$500) would then be divided by the number of people in the household (5) and multiplied by the number of legally present household members. In the above example, the calculation would be: \$500 divided by 5=\$100, \$100 x 3= \$300. The subsidy would be \$300.
11. *Recertification:* All project based PSH program cases will be recertified annually. The recertification requires the completion of a new application, verification of income, and resources and other information necessary to establish continued eligibility. All units must pass HQS inspections for the recertification to be complete.

12. *Rental Payments:* Subsidy payments will be made 2 weeks prior to the first of the month. Payment will be made to the owner/rental agent. All payments will be net of the tenant rent. The tenant rent shall be 30% of tenant income, with a minimum payment of \$25 (unless waived by the PSH manager).
13. *Payment Limits:* Payments are limited to rent subsidies. No subsidy payments will be made for security deposits, utilities or other non-rental expenses as there are other PSH funds to cover these expenses.
14. *Replacement Payments:* The property owner/rental management company must notify the PSH office when his/her monthly check has not been received. Notification of non-receipt of payment must be made during the month for which the payment is intended. A stop payment will be placed on the original payment according to DHS procedures. After confirmation of the stop payment has been received a replacement payment will be issued.
15. *Termination:* Assistance for qualified households will terminate if one of the following situations exists for the household:
  - a) The household moves from the unit to a non-PSH unit
  - b) The PSH client is deceased
  - c) The household no longer meets all eligibility requirements
  - d) The household fails to provide information required for a case recertification
  - e) The household fails to adhere to the recertification requirements
  - f) The household fails to comply with the HQS inspection process
  - g) PSH Manager terminates services. The household may remain in the unit if it is agreeable to the landlord and PSH. In this case, the landlord will offer another unit to PSH.
16. *Overpayments:* Overpayments may be recovered through a subsidy reduction agreement with the client.
17. *Intentional Program Violations:* For intentional program violations, it may be decided that households intentionally providing false or withholding accurate information may be disqualified from the program. This decision will be made in consultation with the Subsidy Administrator and the PSH Manager.
18. *Rental Assistance Extensions:* PSH relies on the contracts with owners/rental agents to set aside a designated number of units for clients of DHS. To ensure that units are available to clients and to ensure that the landlord does not financially suffer when transitions in the rental occur, landlords will be given a Subsidy Extension. An extension will be granted when a tenant vacates a unit in the project or is removed from the program and if the landlord requests an extension to maintain the vacancy while the County identifies a new tenant.

This extension shall last two full months, or until a new tenant is placed in the unit, whichever is the shorter period. The Subsidy Extension will be a payment of 80% of the rent for these two months; beginning the month after the tenant vacates the rental unit.

At the end of two months, either of the following will occur:

- a) PSH will refer another eligible applicant for the unit or,
- b) PSH will notify the owner that it may lease the vacant PSH unit to an eligible applicant for no more than twelve months.

## **B. PSH Project-Based at Gates of Ballston**

The Project Based subsidy are PSH units that are administered through the Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCV) of the Housing Assistance Bureau in the Arlington County Department of Human Services. Overall policies regarding subsidy administration can be found in the Arlington County Housing Choice Voucher Administrative Plan.

<https://www.arlingtonva.us/files/sharedassets/public/housing/documents/administrative-plan-05-21-2020.pdf>

## **C. DBHDS-PSH Program**

The Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS) subsidy is administered through the PSH program of the Housing Assistance Bureau in the Arlington County Department of Human Services. The administration of PSH rental assistance shall comply with the programs own PSH Policies and Procedures and include policies, procedures and forms addressing eligibility criteria, rental calculations, re-certifications, inspections, rental payments, terminations, and other relevant program components. The policy should substantially adhere to relevant components of the DBHDS Permanent Supportive Housing Program Operating Manual and the HUD Housing Choice Voucher Program Guidebook (7420.10G) [Housing Choice Voucher Program Guidebook | HUD.gov / U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development \(HUD\)](#) Below are the existing policies regarding this subsidy.

1. *Application Process:* All DBHDS assisted households must meet specific criteria and will be screened in partnership with Behavioral Health Care and PSH program staff to determine eligibility. All DBHDS applicants must complete a Housing First application to be reviewed by PSH program staff.
2. *Income Requirements:* PSH program staff will ensure that the assisted household income is no greater than 50% of area median income in accordance with HUD standards and income limits. Assisted households are not subject to a minimum income requirement. Households with zero income are eligible for assistance through the DBHDS program.

3. *Determination of Annual Income*: Calculation of and verification of annual income will be conducted in a manner consistent with procedures outlined in the HUD Choice Voucher Program Guidebook. Income will be verified at the time of move-in and at least annually thereafter. Income documentation should be no more than 60 days old. If a participant has zero income, documentation is required certifying that the participant has zero income.
- a) *Annual Income Inclusions*: Annual income that is counted towards the subsidy calculation includes but is not limited to:
- i. The full amount, before any payroll deductions, of wages and salaries, overtime pay, commissions, fees, tips and bonuses, and other compensation for personal services
  - ii. The net income from the operation of a business or profession. (self-employment)
  - iii. Interest, dividends and other net income of any kind from real or personal property  
The full amount of periodic amounts received from Social Security, annuities, insurance policies, retirement funds, pensions, disability or death benefits, and other similar types of periodic receipts, including a lump sum amount of prospective monthly amounts for the delayed start of a periodic amount
  - iv. Payments in lieu of earnings such as unemployment and disability compensation, worker's compensation and severance pay
  - v. Welfare assistance payments (See HCV administrative plan)
  - vi. Periodic and determinable allowances such as alimony and child support payments, and regular contributions or gifts received from organizations or from persons not residing in the dwelling
  - vii. All regular pay, special pay and allowances of a member of the Armed Forces
- b) *Excluded income*: Annual income does not include the following:
- i. Income from employment of children (including foster children) under the age of 18 years
  - ii. Payments received for the care of foster children or foster adults (usually persons with disabilities, unrelated to the tenant family who are unable to live alone)
  - iii. Lump-sum additions to family assets, such as inheritances, insurance payments (including payments under health and accident insurance and worker's compensation), capital gains and settlement for personal or property losses
  - iv. Amounts received by the family that are specifically for, or in reimbursement of, the cost of medical expenses for any family member
  - v. Income of a live-in aide
  - vi. The special pay to a family member service in the Armed Forces who is exposed to hostile fire

- vii. Amounts received under training programs funded by HUD, amounts received by a person with a disability that are disregarded for a limited time for purposes of the Supplemental Security Income eligibility and benefits because they are set aside for use under a Plan to Attain Self – Sufficiency (PASS); amounts received by a participant in other publicly assisted programs which are specifically for or in reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses incurred and which are made solely to allow participation in a specific program; amounts received under a resident service stipend. A resident service stipend is a modest amount (not to exceed \$200 per month) received by a resident for performing a service for the owner, on a part-time basis that enhances the quality of life in the development.; incremental earnings and benefits resulting to any family members from participation in qualifying State or local employment training programs and training of a family member as resident management staff.
- viii. Temporary, nonrecurring, or sporadic income (including gifts)
- ix. Reparation payments paid by a foreign government pursuant to claims filed under the laws of that government by persons who were persecuted during the Nazi era
- x. Earnings exceeding \$480 for each full-time student 18 years or older (excluding the head of household and spouse)
- xi. Adoption assistance payments exceeding \$480 per adopted child
- xii. Deferred periodic amounts from supplemental security income and social security benefits that are received in a lump sum amount or in prospective monthly amounts, or any deferred Department of Veterans Affairs disability benefits that were received in a lump sum amount or prospective monthly amounts
- xiii. Amounts received by the family in the form of refunds or rebates under State or local law for property taxes paid on the dwelling unit
- xiv. Amounts paid by a state agency to a family with a member who has a developmental disability and is living at home to offset the cost of services and equipment needed to keep the developmentally disabled family member at home or
- xv. Amounts specifically excluded by any other Federal statute from consideration as income for purposes of determining eligibility or benefits under a category of assistance programs that includes assistance under any program to which the exclusions set forth in 24 CFR 5.609© apply.

4. *Calculation of Earned Income:* Earned income to be used in the establishment of the subsidy and the assisted household's portion shall be that which best reflects anticipated earnings during the next twelve months. Generally, earnings received during the month prior to the month of the application/annual review will be used. Income will be converted to an annual amount by multiplying weekly income by 52, bi-weekly income by 26 and semi-monthly income by 24. Income from new employment may be projected based on a statement from the employer. Fluctuating

income will be averaged over a period that will establish a reasonable expectation of future earnings.

5. *Assets:* Countable Assets include:

- Checking and Savings accounts
- Digital wallet/banking accounts such as Paypal, Venmo, Chime etc.
- Investment Accounts such as stocks, bonds, savings certificates, and money market funds
- Equity in real property and other capital investments
- Revocable Trusts
- Retirement Accounts
- Personal property held as investment such as gems, jewelry, coin collections, antique cars. Items not held as an investment include clothing, furniture, household furnishings, jewelry and vehicles including those specially equipped for persons with disabilities will not be counted as an asset.
- Life Insurance

6. *Earned Income Disregard:* Assisted households with a disability that receive Social Security Disability Income may be eligible for HUD's Earned Income Disregard. Assisted households must be informed about their potential eligibility for the Earned Income Disregard as an introduction into the program as well as part of their continued service planning. Should an assisted household receiving SSDI obtain employment, a new rental calculation worksheet must be completed documenting the change in income. When calculating the rent, PSH program staff will disregard any earned income that exceeds their SSDI benefit amount at a rate of 100% for the first twelve months and at a rate of 50% for the next twelve months in accordance with HUD standards. Earned income and any changes to the earned income must be reported to PSH program staff and documented in the assisted household's file. Tenants shall be entitled to and notified of the Earned Income Disregard when the rent is calculated.

7. *Adjusted Income:* The PSH-DBHDS program will deduct the following amounts from the annual income:

- a) \$480 for each dependent
- b) \$400 for any elderly family or disabled family
- c) The sum of the following to the extent the sum exceeds three percent of annual income:
  - i. Unreimbursed medical expenses of any elderly family or disabled family
  - ii. Unreimbursed reasonable attendant care and auxiliary apparatus expenses for each member of the family who is a person with disabilities, to the extent necessary to enable any member of the family (including the member who is a person with disabilities) to be employed. This deduction may not exceed the earned income received by family members who are



- 18 years of age or older and who are able to work because of such attendant care or auxiliary apparatus;
- iii. Any reasonable child-care expenses necessary to enable a member of the family to be employed or to further his or her education
8. *Changes in Household Circumstances:* Assisted households are required to report any change in income, assets, residence, and household members within 10 days. The changes required to report include, but are not limited to, the source and amount of income, number of hours worked, and changes in the number of people in the household. Units to be shared with family members or friends freely chosen by the head of household will require written permission from DBHDS. The additional household members may count towards the adjusted gross income of the household, thereby decreasing the grant-funded assistance payment for the individuals with SMI (Serious Mental Illness) or if the household composition changes.
9. *Utilities:* If utilities are not included in the rental amount, the PSH program should use the standard utility allowance approved by the local housing agency in determining the tenant rent and grant-funded assistance payment. When a DBHDS household is “over-housed,” the utility allowance used should be for the number of bedrooms they qualify, rather than the number of bedrooms of the unit that they lease. If the landlord provides for a stove and/or refrigerator, then the tenant is not provided an allowance for those items on the utility allowance form. Only when the tenant must provide their own stove and/or refrigerator are they given credit for these on the utility allowance. When a tenant has zero income – if the utility allowance does not cover all necessary utility costs for a unit, the PSH program may pay those extra costs with DBHDS PSH funds. DBHDS will need to approve the program’s continued payment of these costs at each re-certification.
10. *Calculation of Rent Payments:* Rental calculations will be determined using a HUD rent & utility calculation worksheet. The rental calculation will be completed at least annually as part of the recertification process but may be calculated more often based on fluctuations in income/benefits outside the annual process. All rent & utility calculation worksheets will be documented in the assisted household’s file along with documentation of benefit or earned income changes. PSH staff will calculate the subsidy payments. Policies and procedures on how to calculate the subsidy can be found in Chapter 6 of the Arlington County Housing Choice Voucher Program Administrative Plan <https://arlingtonva.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/15/2020/06/Administrative-Plan-05-21-2020.pdf> . PSH – DBHDS programs shall not require a minimum tenant rent contribution. If a tenant has zero income, a zero-income form must be filled out. Both the PSH participant and the landlord will have a breakdown in rent explaining who is responsible for what portion of the rent and other deposits. This breakdown is completed at the time of lease signing and recertification and when there is a change in household income or composition. After paying the calculated tenant rental payment, PSH participants are left with the balance available for discretionary spending sufficient to afford other necessary living expenses.

11. *Payment Standards (DBHDS)* Under the DBHDS program, units requiring assistance will receive no more than the current HUD Fair Market Rent (FMR) for a one-bedroom apartment in the locality or the locally approved payment standard if different than FMR. In Arlington, the locally approved payment standard is a rent of up to 110% of Area Median Income. Efficiency units will receive no more than the 0-bedroom FMR. Participants should be encouraged to lease a unit appropriate for the size of their household. But a participant may be approved to rent a unit that has more bedrooms than they qualify for if the full contract rent for the selected unit is at or below the HUD FMI for the unit size for which the participant qualifies. The participant needs to be notified that their selection could result in higher utility charges than the unit for which they qualify, and the participant should be prepared to pay the additional utility costs. Rent reasonableness standards must apply.

In certain circumstances and with no approval needed from DBHDS, unit rent may exceed the current FMR by 10% for that unit size and location if the unit rent is reasonable in comparison to other similarly sized units in the area. Reasons for the increase must be well documented. Any unit rent over 10% FMR will need approval from DBHDS.

12. *Rent Reasonableness:* PSH program staff will ensure that unit rent is reasonable in relation to rents being charged for comparable unassisted units, in the general area, with similar features and amenities, and that they are not more than rents currently being charged by the same owner for comparable unassisted units. PSH staff will determine rent reasonableness. Comparable rents can be checked by using a market study of rents charged for units of varied sizes and locations or by reviewing advertisements for comparable rent units. PSH staff will compare the unit the tenant will apply for with at least three other units. This information about the comparable units will be documented in the assisted household's file. DBHDS rent reasonableness procedures are like those found in Chapter 8 of the Arlington County Housing Choice Voucher Program Administrative Plan. <https://arlingtonva.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/15/2020/06/Administrative-Plan-05-21-2020.pdf> . Rent Reasonableness should be conducted when a participant is moving into a new unit, or when the current rent is increasing.

13. *Annual Re-certification:* The DBHDS subsidy administrator will re-examine housing income at least annually and make any necessary adjustments to the household rent contribution amount. If a participant has zero income and the program is assisting with utility costs beyond what the utility allowance will cover, DBHDS will need to approve the program's continued coverage of these costs at each recertification. Documentation from the landlord regarding any increase in rent must be obtained. The DBHDS subsidy administrator will provide a 30-day notice before any increase in the tenant portion of the rent goes into effect. If a re-certification is delayed due to tenant turning in paperwork late, the subsidy administrator is not required to provide the standard 30-day notice of rent increase.

Tenants shall be entitled to and notified of the Earned Income Disregard when the rent is calculated. Other DBHDS documents will be completed during the annual certification process. This includes, but is not limited to, the DBHDS application, Case Management Assessment form, Program Agreement form, and the Reporting Responsibilities form. If the rent increases, rent reasonableness will be performed. All updated lease or rent increase documentation should be in the participant file.

*14. Interim Re-certifications:* Interim re-certifications must be conducted at any time throughout the year if the participant loses income, income increases by \$200 or more a month, rent is increased by the landlord, or the household composition changes.

If an individual reports a change that will reduce the amount of rent that they pay, the change is effective on the first of the month following when the written notification was received by the housing specialist. If an individual reports a change that will increase the amount of rent that they pay, the change is effective on the first of the month following a 30-calendar day notice to the household.

#### **D. Income Review of Locally Funded Subsidy**

Once an individual's income exceeds 40% of area median income, their case will be reviewed by the Supportive Housing Subsidy Administrator to determine the appropriateness of a PSH subsidy. The review will be based on the following factors:

- Income and expenses
- Employment history
- Rental payment history/tenancy issues

An individual's subsidy will be discontinued once an individual's income exceeds the limit allowed by a subsidy (60% AMI for local program and 50% AMI for the state-funded program). Whenever possible, individuals receiving the Housing Choice Voucher project based subsidies (which have an income limit of 40%), or state funded subsidies will be referred the Local Project Based Rental Assistance program to ensure that they can continue to receive a subsidy until their income exceeds 60%. Acceptance of such a referral to the Local Project-Based Rental Assistance program is subject to the availability of such subsidies.

The individual can remain in his/her apartment if they meet the conditions of the lease.

#### **E. Rent Increase Policy**

**Purpose:** To clarify the circumstances under which rent may be paid that is above the Fair Market Rent (FMR).

**Policy:** The standard for the maximum rent that landlords can charge under the PSH program is 110% of Fair Market Rents (FMR). This figure is published every year by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

The Housing Assistance Bureau may approve a PSH payment standard that is higher than the basic range for a designated part of the FMR area. The Housing Assistance Bureau may approve an exception payment standard amount from above 110 percent of the published FMR to 120 percent of the published FMR (upper range) if it is determined that the approval is justified, and the rent is reasonably priced to other comparable units in the exception area.

To order to obtain approval, the PSH Manager will submit a written request to the Housing Assistance Bureau Director outlining the amount of rent the landlord wishes to charge and how that rent compares with the HUD-published FMR and how it compares to other units in the exception area. The written request will also include the reason for accepting a rent payment standard that exceeds the PSH rent payment standard.

This policy applies only to PSH units subsidized through the local project-based rental assistance program.

#### **F. Change in Household Composition**

**Purpose:** This policy clarifies how the Arlington County PSH program works with tenants when they want to change the composition of their household. Whether an individual can be added to the lease of a PSH tenant is the decision of the landlord, and PSH will defer to the landlord decision. It is a lease violation for any tenant to have other persons residing in the apartment who are not officially on the lease.

PSH recommends that the following occur *prior* to a PSH tenant changing the composition of their household:

1. The PSH tenant discusses with their clinical case manager any potential clinical issues that might arise as the result of changing their household composition. Examples of potential issues include, but are not limited to, change in subsidy due to increase/decrease in household income, living costs associated with changes to household composition, resolving conflicts, the ability of all members of the household to adhere to the lease, and consequences of not adhering to the lease.
2. Tenants must inform PSH staff of their intent to change the household composition of the lease.
3. PSH tenant discusses with the landlord the steps needed to add an individual to the lease
4. For the PSH tenant to successfully add an adult person to their lease, the following *must* occur:
  - a) The potential tenant must apply to be added to the lease. This usually requires a credit and criminal background check. In most circumstances, the potential tenant is not considered to be under the authority of PSH and therefore will be screened as any member of the public.
  - b) As part of the application process, the potential tenant must provide to the landlord income and asset information.

- c) The PSH tenant must add the potential tenant to the subsidy. This requires providing DHS with income and asset information required to determine the household's rent payment.
- d) If the combined income of the household exceeds the subsidy income limit, the household will no longer be eligible for supportive housing rental subsidy.
- e) All household members must adhere to subsidy requirements – i.e., reporting changes in income, provision of required documentation, and acceptable results of a criminal background check.
- f) If an individual tries to add a person to the lease without notifying the subsidy office, they will jeopardize their rental subsidy.

*Change in household composition regarding minors:* If a PSH tenant wishes to add a minor to the household, they must inform the landlord. The landlord will follow their procedures for adding a minor to the household. Regarding the subsidy, the PSH tenant must provide to the subsidy administrator the name and age of the child, as well as any income or asset that are affiliated with the child.

## **G. Vacancies**

1. *Local Subsidy:* When there is a vacancy, the landlord will make the same or another apartment available to DHS. If the landlord makes the same unit available, and PSH is unable to provide information of another PSH eligible applicant the landlord, then PSH shall either:
  - a) Pay the landlord 80% of the pro rata share of the vacant PSH unit's current rent amount for up to 60 days during which time PSH shall have the option of providing information of an additional eligible applicant for consideration by the landlord to lease the vacant PSH unit pursuant to the designated tenant selection process; or
  - b) Notify the landlord that it shall be permitted to lease the vacant PSH unit to an eligible low or very low-income household for a term no greater than 12 months.
2. *DBHDS Subsidy:* If a unit is vacated before the end of the lease, rental assistance may continue for a maximum of 30 days from the end of the month in which the unit was vacated, unless the unit becomes occupied by another individual eligible for the DBHDS PSH subsidy. DBHDS approval will need to be documented in the file.

No additional assistance will be paid until the unit is occupied by another eligible individual. If an individual is hospitalized or incarcerated, rental assistance can continue for up to 90 days if there is a reasonable expectation that the individual will return to the unit. Any request for rental assistance beyond 90 days requires written approval from DBHDS. If the unit is vacant for a second month, an 80% payment will be made to the landlord out of local rental assistance funds.

There may be situations where the participant states they are still residing in the unit however, there is evidence that the participant has, in fact, vacated or that the participant

is no longer willing to reside in a particular unit during a lease term. The program should provide multiple notices and/or engage in multiple meetings with the participant so that their participant responsibilities, as well as the potential consequences (program and landlord), are reiterated and understood. Continued rental and utility deposits for subsequent moves while in the program are not guaranteed.

## VI. DISCHARGE POLICIES

### A. Termination of Subsidy and Discharge from Program

**Purpose:** To clarify the procedures for and circumstances under which an individual is discharged from the PSH program.

**Policy:** While the goal of the PSH program is to provide permanent housing opportunities for persons with disabilities, there may be times in which it is appropriate for a person to transition out of the program. There are also circumstances under which PSH will terminate the subsidy and discharge individuals from the program. It is important that the Housing Support Services Specialist and case manager work together with the individuals prior to discharge to develop a plan that addresses payment of rent, as well as any other tenancy issues. PSH tenants can appeal the decision to discharge them from the program.

Any time a case manager is considering discharging an individual from PSH, the Permanent Supportive Housing Manager must be notified. Individuals cannot be discharged from PSH without approval from the PSH Manager.

#### *1. Circumstances under which an individual may be discharged from PSH:*

- a) The individuals no longer wish to participate in PSH.
- b) There is no longer any clinical indication to justify the provision of services (i.e., a person is doing well, no longer needs support).
- c) The individual does not cooperate with the HQS inspection process to the extent that the apartment is unable to pass inspection
- d) Individual's income exceeds the maximum income for various PSH subsidies.
- e) The individual has received either a 30-day notice to vacate or, in some circumstances, a lease non-renewal. In both circumstances, for PSH discharge to occur, there must be written documentation of attempts to address the issue leading up to the notice to vacate or the lease non-renewal. There may be instances in which PSH will waive the documentation requirement due to the severity and nature of the lease violation.
- f) The individual does not complete the recertification process.
- g) The individual is in an institution or abandons the unit for more than 90 days.
- h) The client's clinical case management case is closed due to lack of participation in services and all engagement strategies have been exhausted. (Note – applicable only to the locally funded subsidies. Federal and DBHDS subsidies follow a

voluntary services model in which the individual must be eligible for mental health services, participation is not required.)

2. *Termination of DBHDS Subsidy:* Assistance for a qualified household may terminate if items a, b, d, e, f, or g in the above-mentioned sections are met.
  - a) Rental assistance may be terminated if a participant violates conditions of occupancy, as evidenced by a notice to vacate or lease non-renewal. However, all efforts will be made to re-house the individual.
  - b) PSH will take into consideration extenuating circumstances leading up to the violation to ensure that participants are only terminated for the most serious reasons (i.e., safety risk, prolonged institutionalization, needs higher level of care, etc.).
  - c) PSH staff will provide the participant and landlord with written notice of termination. The notification will include date and reason for termination and process for appealing the decision. Events leading up to termination should be clearly documented in either the clinical file or the PSH file.
  - d) If termination of rental assistance is due to violation of rules pertaining to subsidy administration, the subsidy administrator will issue notification of termination or rental subsidy.
  - e) When rental assistance is terminated because PSH is initiating the subsidy termination, the subsidy will terminate at the end of the calendar month that follows the calendar month in which PSH has given notice to the landlord.
  - f) When rental assistance is terminated due to lease violations or non-renewals, rental payments will continue until the end of the lease, the landlord obtains possession of the unit or the individual vacates, whichever comes first.
  - g) Participants have a right to appeal the decision to discharge. See part C (Appeals) of this section.
  
3. *Termination of Local Project-Based Rental Assistance Subsidy:* Assistance for a qualified household will terminate when any of the items in section 1 of the discharge policies are met.
  - a) Rental assistance may be terminated if a participant violates conditions of occupancy, as evidenced by a notice to vacate or lease non-renewal.
  - b) PSH staff will provide the participant and landlord with written notice of termination which will include date of subsidy termination, reason for termination and process for appealing the decision. Events leading up to termination, including efforts to resolve tenancy issues, should be clearly documented in either the clinical file or the PSH file.
  - c) If termination of rental assistance is due to violation of rules pertaining to subsidy administration (i.e., failure to renew paperwork, failure to report income changes, etc.), the subsidy administrator will issue notification of termination of rental subsidy.
  - d) When rental assistance is terminated because PSH is initiating the subsidy termination, the subsidy will terminate at the end of the calendar month that follows the calendar month in which PSH has given notice to the landlord.

- e) When rental assistance is terminated due to lease violations or non-renewals, rental payments will continue until the end of the lease, the landlord obtains possession of the unit or the individual vacates, whichever comes first.
  - f) Participants have a right to appeal the decision to discharge. See part C (Appeals) of this section.
4. *Termination of Federally Funded Rental Assistance Subsidy*; Termination policies and procedures Gates of Ballston Housing Choice Voucher Project Based subsidy will abide by Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program policies and can be found in Chapter 12 of the Arlington County HCV Administrative Regulations  
<https://arlingtonva.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/15/2020/06/Administrative-Plan-05-21-2020.pdf> .
5. *Program Discharge Procedure*
- a) If any of the items mentioned in Section A of the discharge policies occurs, the PSH manager will be notified and will review the case to determine if discharge from the program is appropriate. In instances where an individual is being asked to leave by the landlord, the PSH manager will evaluate if the efforts on behalf of the landlord and service providers were made to address any tenancy issues.
  - b) If it is determined that program discharge is appropriate, a letter will be sent to the tenant outlining the reason discharge, the date of discharge, and the appeal process. The landlord will also be notified in writing of the tenant's discharge.
  - c) If the locally funded PSH tenant holds over, the subsidy will cease on the date that the landlord obtains possession of the unit, or the lease ends. After the landlord obtains possession of the unit, the locally funded PSH program can issue payments to the landlord to cover rental expenses incurred during the time that the tenant has held over. This payment will not exceed two (2) months of the locally funded rental subsidy paid during the month in which the tenant was asked to vacate. See section 7 for additional information.
  - d) If the locally funded PSH program determines that a household is no longer eligible for the program, the rental assistance payment for the household will terminate at the end of the calendar month that follows the calendar month in which PSH staff have given such notice to the landlord.
  - e) PSH staff will provide the participant with written notice of termination and the reason for termination and the procedure for appealing the decision. See part C of this section.
  - f) Discharge plan/summary, which documents reasons for discharge, including events leading to discharge as well as participant destination must be completed by staff.
6. *Re-Housing of PSH participants*  
 Individuals who are asked to leave by a landlord can only be re-housed if they are not discharged or a discharge decision has been overturned on appeal.

PSH reserves the right to require that an individual sign a program agreement to be re-housed. The



decision to re-house an individual is made on a case-by-case basis using the criteria that includes, but not limited to severity of lease violation, types and level of support that will be in place when re-housed, and the level of vulnerability the individual may experience if not housed. If an individual is not discharged and is to be re- housed by PSH, they will be placed back in the “PSH pool”.

The decision to re-house or discharge a client will be made by the PSH manager who will review PSH case notes and the clinical record. Individuals have a right to appeal a discharge, see part C. of this section.

7. *Rental Payment Made to Landlord Regarding a Tenant Who Holds Over*

- a. In the event of a premature lease termination and hold-over, PSH subsidies will cease when either the landlord obtains possession of the unit, the lease ends or the individual vacates – whichever comes first. The landlord must have documentation of their intent to end the lease either through lease termination or non-renewal.
- b. If the lease has been terminated or not renewed and the individual remains in the unit, the landlord shall receive a check for 80% of the rent for a period not to exceed two (2) months.
- c. The PSH manager or designee will fill out the Local Rental Assistance Payment Authorization Form and send it to the Financial Services Bureau.

**B. Transition**

**Purpose:** To outline the circumstances under which the PSH program can transition a PSH out of the PSH program. This policy also outlines the procedures for accomplishing the transition.

**Policy:** PSH reserves the right to transition a person to a Housing Grant or alternative subsidy if they meet all the following criteria:

- Are eligible for the Housing Grant program
  - Have continuously maintained housing for two (2) years or longer
  - The clinical need for home visits is less than once per quarter
  - The tenant has a Daily Living Activity-20 (DLS-20) score of 5.0 or higher, or other clinical equivalent for more than six (6) months
  - Household is in good standing with landlord over the past 12 months (i.e., no 21/30 warning letters issued to tenant)
- or
- If they meet the above criteria and have enough income to sustain full rent independently.
- or
- If they are a resident of Arlington Mill Supportive Studio and no longer need the 60 hours of on-site support.

1. *Process for Transitioning to a Housing Grant*

- a) Tenants will be notified of the PSH transition criteria (see above) prior to moving into a PSH apartment.
- b) PSH staff will continuously review tenant updates to see if there are any individuals who meet the transition criteria.
- c) Upon identifying an individual who meets the PSH transition criteria, PSH staff will consult with the tenant's case manager to confirm that the tenant meets transition criteria.
- d) The individual will be notified that they will be transitioning from PSH. Depending on the apartment, the individual has the option of either transitioning in place or moving to another apartment. \*
- e) PSH staff will inform Housing Grants and the landlord that a PSH tenant will be transitioning to Housing Grants.
- f) A written moving plan must be developed between PSH staff, the case manager, and the tenant. This plan will be reviewed and updated on a regular basis in order to successfully transition the individual out of the apartment.
- g) Tenants will be given a 90-day period to complete their transition out of PSH. PSH reserves the right to terminate the subsidy if the individual has not successfully transitioned within 3 months. Extensions may be granted under extenuating circumstances (i.e., a person is moving out of an apartment and is having difficulty locating an apartment, lease signing for new apartment has been pushed back, etc.)

**\*Move Due to Tax Credit Regulations:** Individuals who are residing in tax credit units may not be able to transition in place, as their unit has been specified as a PSH unit. In these instances, PSH staff will assist the individual in identifying an apartment and will pay costs associated with the move.

2. *Process for Transitioning from Arlington Mill Supportive Studio to a PSH scattered site unit.*

- a) Tenants will be notified of the PSH transition criteria (see above) prior to moving into a PSH apartment.
- b) PSH staff will continuously review tenant updates to see if there are any individuals who meet the transition criteria. Upon identifying an individual who meets the PSH transition criteria, PSH staff will consult with the tenant's case manager to confirm that the tenant meets transition criteria.
- c) The individual will be notified that they will be transitioning from the Arlington Mill Supportive Studio to a PSH scattered site unit.
- d) PSH staff will inform the subsidy administrator that the tenant will be transitioning to another unit.
- e) Once a scattered site unit is identified by PSH staff, the tenant will apply for that unit. PSH staff will assist with applying for the apartment and rental subsidy.
- f) PSH staff will do a walk-through of tenant's prior unit prior to move-out to verify the condition.

**C. Appeals**

1. *Local and State Subsidies*

A PSH participant or applicant may appeal an agency decision within 30 days of notification by contacting, in writing, the PSH Manager for issues related to services, PSH program eligibility, and/or subsidy administration.

The appeal will be scheduled within 10 business days of receipt by a panel. The composition of the panel will depend upon the content of the appeal:

- **Appeal related to subsidy administration (i.e., rent calculation, termination of subsidy etc.):** Housing Assistance Bureau Chief (or designee) and the manager of the subsidy program in dispute
- **Appeal related to discharge from PSH:** Housing Assistance Bureau Director (or designee) and a supervisor from the service division where the individual receives services
- **Appeal related to housing support provided in the PSH program:** Housing Assistance Bureau Director (or designee) and a supervisor from the service division where the individual receives clinical Services.

Regardless of the type of appeal, the individual will be invited to present either verbally or in writing, their reasons for wanting an appeal. The individual is permitted to bring community support members, provided they inform the panel in writing ahead of the meeting. The PSH staff responsible for making the decision related to the appeal will also be allowed to present information to the panel as to how they arrived at their decision. A designee of the panel will notify the participant/applicant in writing of the decision on the appeal and the reasons for denying or approving the appeal. This will occur within seven (7) business days. This decision is final.

If a household has been determined ineligible for PSH, no subsidy payments will be made during the appeal process. If a household has been determined eligible for a lesser grant, payment shall continue in that amount during the appeal process. If PSH reverses its initial decision as a result of the appeal, the household (owner/rental agent) shall receive the amount that was due to them but not received during the appeal process in the next monthly issuance.

2. *Federal Subsidies:*

Appeals process regarding subsidy administration or termination of subsidy will follow the appeals process of the Arlington County Housing Choice Voucher program. Procedures for this are listed in Arlington County Housing Choice Voucher Program Administrative Plan