



A Tradition of Stewardship
A Commitment to Service

NAPA COUNTY HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY
Self Sufficiency Services Division

POLICY AND PROCEDURE:

Homeless Assistance

REVIEW FREQUENCY:

Every two years

POLICY # 2000601-1020-19

DISTRIBUTION:

- Employment Services
- Eligibility Services
- Quality Mgmt

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2006

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APPROVAL: *Olivia Bructista* 4/8/19
 Eligibility Services Manager Date

APPROVAL: *Lynn Perez* 4/8/19
 SSSD Deputy Director Date

APPROVAL: *Julio Yasmob* 4-9-19
 HHS Director Date

POLICY STATEMENT:

It is the policy of the Napa County Health and Human Services Agency (NCHHSA) to provide Homeless Assistance payments within the required timeframes to requesting participants.

ADMINISTRATION:

- Eligibility Worker (EW)
- Receptionist
- Screener

DEFINITIONS:

None

END OF POLICY

PROCEDURE

I. General

- A. Homeless Assistance (HA) is available to:
 - 1. Meet the reasonable costs of securing permanent housing
 - 2. Prevent Eviction
 - 3. Meet the costs of temporary shelter while the Assistance Unit (AU) is seeking permanent housing.
- B. Homeless Assistance benefits are limited to once in a twelve (12) month period.
 - 1. The 12-month period begins on the day the EW issues the first payment of either temporary or permanent HA (whichever comes first) to the client or landlord and ends 12 months later.
 - a. Example: An AU begins receiving temporary HA on February 1, 2017. The 12-month period is from February 1, 2017 (representing the day the first payment of HA is issued), through January 31, 2018.
 - 2. Additional instances are available if the AU meets an exception. See Section V below.

II. Definition of Homelessness

- A. An AU is considered homeless if the following apply:
 - 1. Lacks a fixed and regular nighttime residence; **or**
 - 2. The AU's primary nighttime residence that is a supervised publicly/private operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations; **or**
 - 3. The AU has received a pay rent or quit notice; **or**
 - 4. The AU resides in a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings; **or**
 - 5. The AU has a need for housing in a commercial establishment, shelter, publicly-funded transitional housing, or from a person in the business of renting properties who has a history of renting properties.
- B. Although an AU may be considered homeless, in accordance with the definition of homeless, a Homeless Assistance payment shall not be issued if the county establishes that the AU has shelter at no cost.

III. Application Requirements

- A. The following forms are to be completed when an AU is requesting HA:
 - 1. Cash Assistance application must be completed if AU is not currently in receipt of CalWORKs (CW).
 - 2. The AU must complete a separate Statement of Facts for Homeless Assistance (CW 42) to apply for a temporary shelter payment and/or permanent housing assistance.

IV. Eligibility Criteria

- A. The AU must be "apparently eligible" to cash assistance. Apparent eligibility is determined by the information provided on the SAWS 2 Plus and information otherwise available to the county that indicates the applicant would be eligible for aid if the information were to be verified.
 - 1. In determining an apparently eligible AU, do not include a person who is:
 - a. A non-citizen applicant who does not provide verification of their eligible non-citizen status.
 - b. A pregnant woman only who has not provided proof of pregnancy

- c. A sanctioned individual
- 2. The AU is also considered to be apparently eligible if they have met the technical conditions of eligibility for cash aid, i.e. Social Security enumeration, application for potential available income, meet work registration requirements, and cooperate with the Local Child Support Agency.
- B. CalWORKs Family Reunification cases that are experiencing homelessness are eligible to temporary homeless assistance benefits effective January 1, 2018 as long as they meet all other temporary homeless assistance criteria.
- C. The AU is ineligible to receive HA if they have over \$100 in nonexempt liquid resources with the exception of funds deposited in a restricted account.
 - 1. EW will evaluate nonexempt liquid resource at the time the AU applies for HA but not during the incident of homelessness.
 - 2. Money received in a given month, which meets the definition of income, is not counted as a liquid resource until the following month, and then only to the extent it is retained.
 - 3. Liquid resources of \$100 or less shall not be considered for purposes of computing the non-recurring special need payment.
- D. If payment request is for permanent housing, CW case must be granted before permanent-housing payment can be made.
- E. Verification of homelessness needs to be received within three (3) working days of the request for HA.
 - 1. Verification of homelessness includes, but is not limited to:
 - a. Information obtained from the Special Investigations Unit (SIU).
 - b. Information / referral received from a partner agency
 - c. Eviction notice
 - d. Sworn Statement from client verifying homelessness. Statement must include:
 - 1) Name, address and telephone number of previous landlord
 - 2) Location where the AU is currently staying.

V. Once in a 12 month "Standard HA Period" exception:

- A. If the AU has received HA in the last twelve (12) month period, the exception criterion is reviewed to determine if the AU is eligible under these instances. Exceptions to once in a twelve (12) month HA period must be verified through a third party governmental or private health and human services agency. Request for exceptions to once in a twelve (12) month HA period may be made as a result of:
 - 1. State or federally declared disaster that is the direct and primary cause of homelessness.
 - 2. Limited to a maximum period of up to 16 consecutive days of temporary shelter and one payment of permanent housing assistance once at any point during the "standard" HA twelve (12) month period when homelessness is the result of any of the following exceptions:
 - a. Domestic Violence by a spouse, partner, or roommate.
 - 1) A sworn statement by the victim is acceptable proof of DV
 - i. Sworn statement is acceptable for up to two (2) periods of temporary HA and two (2) payments of permanent HA.
 - ii. A sworn statement can be rejected only if the agency documents, in writing, an independent, reasonable basis to find the recipient not credible.
 - 2) When a sworn statement is not acceptable, documents from one or more of the following is needed as acceptable proof needed for this exception:

- i. Police Department
 - ii. Medical Facility
 - iii. Battered Women’s Shelter (signed by an administrator, counselor, or designated staff member)
 - iv. Adult Protective Services
 - v. Child Protective Services
 - vi. Family Services Bureau
 - vii. Crisis Counseling Service Agency
 - b. Un-inhabitability of residence caused by a sudden and unusual circumstance beyond the applicant/recipient’s control which includes, but is not limited to, fire, natural catastrophe, or condemnation. Written statements or copies of reports from one or more of the following are needed for this exemption:
 - 1) Police Department
 - 2) Fire Department
 - 3) Red Cross
 - 4) Health Department
 - 5) Any other agency authorized to verify un-inhabitability of the former residence.
 - c. Medically verified physical or mental illness, excluding alcoholism, drug addiction, or psychological stress. Medical verification from one or more of the following people is needed for this exception:
 - 1) Treating physician
 - 2) State certified nurse
 - 3) Nurse Practitioner
 - 4) Physician’s assistance
 - 5) Therapist
 - 6) Psychologist
 - 7) Licensed Counselor
 - 8) Medical or clinical personnel with access to the patient’s records who can verify the diagnosis.
- B. If an otherwise eligible assistance unit has received HA at any time in the previous twelve (12) months, on behalf of an eligible child, the applicant/recipient will not be eligible for further HA payments unless:
- 1. There is a new caretaker relative who was not living with the AU at the time the original HA payment was issued **and**
 - 2. The new caretaker relative has not previously received HA on behalf of or as a part of another AU **and**
 - 3. The former caretaker relative is no longer living in the home with the AU.

VI. Expanded Temporary Homeless Assistance for Victims of Domestic Violence

- A. Effective July 1, 2018 domestic violence abuse victims who are fleeing their abusers qualify for expanded temporary homeless assistance (DV THA) for up to 32 consecutive days once in a lifetime.
- B. To qualify for DV THA, the applicant must:
 - 1. Be a current CalWORKs applicant
 - a. CalWORKs recipients do not qualify for this program.
 - 2. Be determined to be apparently eligible to CalWORKs

- a. Joint bank accounts that the applicant claims belongs to the applicant's abuser is disregarded.
 - b. Any income and assets that the applicant has available to them (such as cash on hand) to meet their needs at the time of application will still be evaluated towards the \$100 limit.
- 3. Provide a sworn statement of past or present domestic abuse, **AND**
 - a. Applicants are not required to verify homelessness beyond the sworn statement that the applicant is fleeing domestic abuse
- 4. Be fleeing the abuser
 - a. The applicant is not required to have spent a night homeless.
- C. DV THA benefits are limited to once in a lifetime.
 - 1. EW is responsible for reviewing if an applicant has previously received these benefits prior to issuing DV THA benefits.
 - a. In the absence of information on if an applicant has received prior benefits, an applicant may self-certify that they have never received these benefits.
- D. DV THA benefits do not count against the once-a-year HA exception, including exceptions based on domestic abuse and can still qualify for regular temporary or permanent HA benefits.
- E. CW applicants who are eligible will receive a lump sum equal to sixteen (16) consecutive days on the day of application.
 - 1. If a customer returns and requests additional DV THA due to continued homelessness and the case has not yet been granted or denied:
 - a. EW shall issue one additional lump sum payment for sixteen (16) additional consecutive days, immediately following the initial sixteen (16) day period
 - b. Any additional days beyond the initial sixteen (16) days not requested from the applicant will be excluded from the remaining sixteen (16) days payment.
 - 1) Example: Applicant applies for DV THA benefits on September 1, 2018, and is issued the initial 16 days. On September 17th, the applicant can request an additional 16 days to go through the night of October 2nd. Applicant does not come into the office to request the additional 16 days until September 19th. Applicant will be approved through the night of October 2nd (if meets eligibility), however will only be authorized for the additional 14 days (from September 19th through October 2nd).
 - 2. If a customer returns and requests additional DV THA due to continued homelessness and the CW case has been granted.
 - a. The customer no longer qualifies for additional DV THA benefits
 - b. The EW shall evaluate the customer for regular temporary HA benefits and the once-a-year exception.
- F. CW applicants receiving DV THA benefits are:
 - 1. Required to provide verification that money was spent on shelter
 - a. If applicant fails to provide verification or adequate verification, refer to mismanagement of funds.
 - 2. Not required to provide proof of their search for permanent housing.

VII. Temporary Shelter

- A. An AU determined homeless may be eligible for up to sixteen (16) consecutive days of temporary shelter payments.
 - 1. The 16-consecutive-day period begins on the first day for which a temporary shelter payment is provided.

- B. Unless homelessness and, when applicable, an exception has been verified, an initial temporary shelter payment shall be issued for up to three (3) working days plus any non-working days bracketed by the working days.
 - 1. An AU shall not be issued temporary shelter benefits if the AU has not submitted verification of an exception within the 3 working days.
 - a. If the AU subsequently meets the verification requirement within the 16-consecutive-day period, the AU shall continue to receive temporary shelter benefits for the remainder of the 16 consecutive days.
 - 1) No payment shall be issued for those days during which noncooperation existed.
- C. After homelessness and, when applicable, an exception have been verified, benefits shall be issued on a weekly basis (up to seven days) for a maximum total of 16 consecutive days.
- D. An extension of benefits beyond the initial payment shall be based upon:
 - 1. AU verifying its homelessness within the first three working days
 - 2. AU's continuing need for temporary shelter benefits
 - 3. AU's documentation of search for permanent housing using the CW 74 – Permanent Housing Search Document.
 - a. A minimum of one contact with prospective landlords for each day the AU receives temporary shelter benefits is required unless the AU has good cause for not searching for housing. This contact may be made in person, by telephone, or in writing. (Refer to MPP [42-211.524\(f\)\(ii\)](#) for examples of good cause).
 - b. An AU shall not be issued temporary shelter benefits if the AU has not met the housing search requirement.
 - 1) If the AU subsequently meets the housing search requirement within the 16-consecutive-day period, the AU shall continue to receive temporary shelter benefits for the remainder of the 16 consecutive days.
 - i. No payment shall be issued for those days during which noncooperation existed.
 - 4. The AU shall provide verification of the amount expended for temporary shelter.
- E. The temporary homeless issuance amount is \$85 per day for families with four (4) or fewer people.
 - 1. An additional \$15 per day for each additional person is allowed up to a maximum of \$145 daily.

VIII. Permanent Housing

- A. Permanent housing payments are available to:
 - 1. Help homeless families secure a permanent residence; **or**
 - a. An amount not to exceed two months of an AU's rent is available to pay for the reasonable costs of security deposits when the deposits are a condition of securing a permanent residence.
 - 2. Pay up to two months of rent arrearages to prevent eviction.
 - a. Each month of the rent arrearage payment shall not exceed 80 percent of the Total Monthly Household Income (TMHI) without special needs.
- B. Payment for permanent housing costs is not available to assist recipients to return to their most recent former residence unless there are unusual circumstances beyond the recipient's control.
 - 1. A most recent former residence is the house or the same unit in a duplex or apartment complex in which the recipient lived just prior to being determined homeless.

- C. Permanent housing payments are available to secure a permanent residence only to an AU presenting evidence that it has found permanent housing which does not rent for more than 80% of its TMHI, without special needs, for an AU of that size.
1. If the EW determines that an AU intends to share housing costs, and the AU's share of the total housing cost does not exceed 80 percent of its TMHI, the above shall not apply.
 - a. The EW will only provide payment for the eligible AU's share of the rent arrearage.
 2. Shared housing includes, but is not limited to:
 - a. Two or more AU's residing together
 - b. SSI/SSP recipient(s) residing with Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) recipient(s)
 - c. An AU residing with unaided person(s) providing that the AU's share does not exceed 80% of the TMHI.
- D. A permanent housing payment available to prevent eviction shall be made to an AU when payment of arrearages will prevent the AU from being evicted.
1. In order to be eligible for Permanent HA arrearage payments, the AU must:
 - a. Provide proof of a proposed or pending eviction such as "notice to pay rent or quit" or court eviction papers; **and**
 - b. Provide proof that the eviction is a result of financial hardship and not for other lease or rental violations; **and**
 - c. The financial hardship must have been caused by extraordinary circumstances beyond the AU's control; **and**
 - d. The financial hardship resulting in the AU's eviction must also render the AU homeless.
 2. Examples of expenses that might cause the AU to experience financial hardship include, but not limited to:
 - a. High hospital bills or medical expenses not covered by Medical
 - b. Car Repairs
 - c. Funeral Expenses
 - d. Cost required traveling to visit an ill or dying relative or to attend a funeral.
 - e. High utility bills resulting from unforeseen circumstances, such as weather extremes or repair problems
 - f. Loss of wages due to illness of self or family members or temporary unemployment.
 3. Examples of reasons for financial hardship that would not meet the extraordinary circumstance criteria include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Loss of income due to purchase of non-essential household goods, gambling debts, parties, or vacations.
 - b. Failure to budget appropriately such as overspending on items not related to family need or mismanagement of household funds.
 - c. Normal occurring credit card expenses, not related to unusual or unanticipated expense.
 4. The EW shall provide payment for up to two (2) months of an AU's rent arrearage, provided each month's arrearage amount does not exceed 80 percent of the AU's TMHI without special needs.
- E. Total Monthly Household Income (TMHI) Calculation
1. Income to be counted towards the TMHI includes gross earned and unearned income, including the CW computed grant, CW special need payments, or SSI/SSP.
 - a. An AU's CalFresh benefits do not count as income and are not included in the TMHI.

2. EW must count the income of the AU members and of any other person(s) whose income is currently used in calculating the AU's grant, including, but not limited to sanctioned and penalized individuals and persons who are excluded by law due to being undocumented or fleeing felon status.
 - a. When an AU adds a new AU member mid-period, any income of that person shall be included in the TMHI regardless of when the county will be increasing the AU size.
 - b. When an AU reports that an AU member has left the home mid-period, and that person's income will no longer be available to help the AU pay rent, that person's income shall not be included as part of the AU's TMHI.
 - c. If an SSI/SSP recipient living in the home contributes toward the monthly rent, the family's total monthly rent amount to which the 80% standard is applied shall be reduced by the amount contributed by the SSI/SSP recipient.
- F. Payment for permanent HA may include the actual costs of utility deposits in addition to the amount allowable for security deposits
 1. The payment shall cover deposits (turn-on fees) required for gas, electricity, and/or water.
 2. The payment shall not include the costs of overdue utility bills.
- G. Payment for permanent HA can only be issued as a warrant.
 1. EW creating warrant cannot be the same EW who picks up payment and distributes to the client or landlord/provider.

IX. Program Time limits

- A. All AUs are to be informed that these benefits are limited to once in a twelve (12) month period.
- B. If an AU has already received HA in a twelve (12) month period, it will need to provide verification that an exception criterion is met.

X. Program and Processing Timeframes

- A. HA is to be granted for a continuous period of homelessness and caused by the same specific circumstances.
 1. Temporary HA is to be issued or denied within the same working day in which HA was requested unless other arrangements are made for shelter.
 - 1) When other arrangements are made for shelter, the temporary HA must be issued no later than the close of business on the working day following the request.
 2. Permanent HA:
 - a. Benefits are limited to one payment
 - b. Permanent HA is to be issued or denied by the end of the working day following the day of application.
- B. The period of homelessness begins:
 1. The day the acceptable application is received by the county **and**
 2. When eligibility criteria is met.
- C. The period of homelessness ends when the AU receives the payment for permanent housing unless:
 1. The AU receives a temporary shelter payment after permanent housing has been issued, prior to assuming occupancy (must be within the sixteen (16) consecutive days). This could be done if the permanent housing was not ready for the participant to move into **or**
 2. The participant finds permanent housing whether or not a permanent payment has been issued.

D. An exception request is limited to once in the “standard” twelve (12) month time frame

XI. Application Locations

- A. An applicant/recipient may submit an application during regular business hours for HA at the following locations:
1. Napa Office
 - a. If an applicant/recipient applies for HA at the Napa Office, the Receptionist will follow the steps outlined in Section XII.
 - b. The Screener will determine if the client is an Intake or Continuing Case and check MEDS to determine when AU has last used HA.
 - 1) Intake – Screener will determine if client has completed an intake appointment.
 - i. If yes, Screener will contact the currently assigned EW.
 - ii. If no, Screener will schedule an Immediate Need Appointment with an Intake EW.
 - 2) Continuing – Screener will make phone contact with the currently assigned EW to inform of HA application.
 2. American Canyon Office
 - a. If an applicant/recipient applies for HA at the American Canyon Office, the receptionist will follow the steps outlined in Section XII.
 - b. The Screener will determine if the client is an Intake or Continuing Case and check MEDS to determine when AU has last used HA.
 - 1) Intake – Screener will determine if client has completed an intake appointment.
 - i. If yes, Screener will contact the currently assigned EW.
 - ii. If no, Screener will schedule an Immediate Need Appointment with an Intake EW.
 - 2) Continuing – Screener will make phone contact with the currently assigned EW to inform of HA application.

XII. Receptionist’s Responsibilities

- A. When HA request is received by the receptionist, it is file cleared to determine if case is active (AU receiving CW) or inactive (AU not receiving CW).
1. Active Case Process
 - a. Receptionist gives the CW 42 to participant for completion.
 - b. Receives form back from participant and date stamps.
 - c. Informs the screener that an application for HA has been received.
 - d. Images the CW 42 into C-IV.
 2. Inactive Case Process
 - a. Receptionist gives application packet, and CW 42, to participant for completion.
 - b. Receives forms back from participant and date stamps all copies
 - c. Informs screener that a HA application has been received.
 - d. Images the CW 42 and application materials into C-IV.

XIII. EW Responsibilities

- A. Initial Request - Active cases
1. Upon receipt of paperwork, EW reviews with participant to determine if homelessness criteria is met:

- a. If HA has been received in another County in the last twelve (12) months, the EW shall enter this information into the Other Program Assistance screen in C-IV.
 - b. If not met, take negative action on HA program.
 - c. If does meet:
 - 1) Provides the CW 74 – Permanent Housing Search Document to the client and go over their housing search requirements and consequences for not completing housing search requirements.
 - 2) Inform clients of their Temporary Shelter Options (Refer to Section II.A.5), the requirement to turn in verification (receipts) of each night’s payment and the consequences for not providing verification and/or misusing the HA funds.
 - 3) Schedule appointment time with client to return for next scheduled payment
 - 4) Process the payment request (Refer to C-IV Job Aid) and “rush” benefits on client’s EBT card.
 - 5) Document actions and instructions provided to client in the C-IV journal.
 2. All clients shall be reviewed for participation in the Housing Support Program (HSP). HSP 1 shall be completed and client referred if meet criteria for HSP.
 - a. Refer to the Housing Support Program procedure.
 3. All HA clients shall be referred to SFC to get their name on the shelter waiting list and to explore other housing and shelter information and options.
- B. Initial Request - Inactive Cases
1. Screener interviews applicant and reviews all information to determine if eligible for CW and homeless assistance payment
 - a. If not eligible to HA, the Screener places the HA program into the withdrawal caseload and notifies the EW of the need to deny program and the reason.
 - b. If eligible to HA, the Screener:
 - 1) Schedules the participant an immediate need appointment.
 - 2) Opens a Homeless Assistance Program to the case.
 - c. Completes a C-IV Journal Entry
 2. If eligible to HA, the EW:
 - a. Completes the assessment with the client to determine apparent eligibility to CW and has met all technical conditions of eligibility.
 - 1) Intake completion is not a requirement, however is often beneficial.
 - 2) Issue EBT card to client upon completion of appointment. This may occur prior to authorizing of CW.
 - b. Provides the CW 74 – Permanent Housing Search Document to the client and go over their housing search requirements and consequences for not completing housing search requirements.
 - c. Inform clients of their Temporary Shelter Options (Refer to Section II.A.5), the requirement to turn in verification (receipts) of each night’s payment and the consequences for not providing verification and/or misusing the HA funds.
 - d. Schedule appointment time with client to return for next scheduled payment
 - e. Process the payment request (Refer to C-IV Job Aid) and “rush” benefits on client’s EBT card.
 - 1) If process cannot be completed by 5pm, the EW shall make contact with SFC to see if cots are available.
 - i. Supervisor approval shall be obtained prior to contacting SFC

- f. Documents actions and instructions provided to client in the C-IV journal
 - 3. All clients shall be reviewed for participation in the Housing Support Program (HSP). SSSD 2033 – HSP Referral shall be completed and client referred if meet criteria for HSP.
 - a. Refer to the Housing Support Program procedure.
 - 4. All HA clients shall be referred to Abode to get their name on the shelter waiting list and to explore other housing and shelter information and options.
- C. Return Requests
- 1. Meet with client at scheduled appointment time to review required documents
 - a. Review CW 74 to ensure there is a minimum of one contact with prospective landlords for each day the AU received a HA benefit.
 - b. Review receipts/verification of the amount expended for temporary shelter for each night the AU received an HA benefit
 - 1) If verification of housing search is not turned in, remaining HA will be denied.
 - i. If the AU subsequently meets the housing search requirement within the 16-consecutive-day period, the AU shall continue to receive temporary shelter benefits for the remainder of the 16 consecutive days.
 - 1. No payment shall be issued for those days during which noncooperation existed.
 - 2) If receipts are not turned in or show proof of correct payments, HA shall be reviewed for mismanagement of funds (MPP [44-211.517](#)).
 - 2. Schedule appointment time with client to return for next scheduled payment, if applicable.
 - 3. Provide new copy of the CW 74 to client for housing search tracking, if applicable.
 - 4. Process the payment request (Refer to C-IV Job Aid) and “rush” benefits on client’s EBT card.
 - 5. Image and index CW 74 and verifications.
 - 6. Documents actions and instructions provided to client in the C-IV journal

REFERENCES:

MPP [44-211.32](#)

MPP [44-211.5](#)

ACIN [I-42-03](#) – HA Questions and Answers

ACL [88-55](#) – AFDC Homeless Assistance Questions and Answers

ACL [91-58](#) - HA Regulation Revisions

ACL [95-62](#) – Implementation of the HA Payment

ACL [96-30](#) – Questions and Answers

ACL [96-40](#) – Final Regulations – Post Hearing Changes – Questions and Answers

ACL [06-25](#) – Immediate Implementation of HA changes in the CW Program

ACL [06-58](#) – Implementation of Changes to the HA Program (Including Q&A)

ACL [08-56](#) – HA Questions and Answers

ACL [16-98](#) – CW Homeless Assistance Program (Elimination of Once-in-a-Lifetime Rule)

ACL [16-98E](#) – CW Homeless Assistance Program Errata

ACL [18-34](#) – AB 557 CW Victims of Abuse

ACL [18-71](#) – AB 236 – THA and Family Reunification Cases

ACL [18-78](#) – Implementation of AB 557: Victims of Domestic Abuse and Expanded THA

ACL [18-106](#) – Increase to Temporary Homeless Assistance Daily Payment Amounts
 Bulletin [18-05](#) – Expanded THA for Victims of Domestic Violence
 C-IV Job Aid – Homeless Assistance – Process and Issue Benefits
 Housing Support Program Procedure

FORMS

CW 42 – Statement of Facts for Homeless Assistance
 CW 74 – Permanent Housing Search Document
 SSSD 2033 – HSP Referral

CONTACT PERSON(S):

Shanna Gardner, Staff Services Analyst

END OF PROCEDURE

REVISION HISTORY:

Revision	Date	Description of Change	Requested By
0.0	12-27-10	Biennial Review, Updated to new procedure format and included additional permanent homeless assistance rules. Updated to reflect C-IV as operating system.	S. Gardner, SSA II
1.0	02-13-14	Biennial Review, Updated procedure to have EW's complete follow up appointments for temporary homeless assistance instead of Samaritan Shelter. Placed in 90 day working draft	S. Gardner, SSA II
2.0	12-28-16	Biennial Review. Updated w/AB 1603 (ACL 16-98) and liquid resource regulations (MPP 44-211.32)	S. Gardner, SSA
3.0	04-08-19	Biennial Review. Included ACL 18-106;	S. Gardner, SSA

		ACL 18-71; ACL 18-78; and ACL 18-34	
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Questions and Answers for the Homeless Assistance Program

Question 1A: If there is a SSI person in the household, who is unable to pay their portion of the rent arrearages, is the county expected to pay the AU the entire amount of rent arrearages owed? If so, are we required to verify the SSI person's hardship?

Answer 1A: No. The County is not expected to pay the SSI/SSP person's portion of the rent arrearages because individuals who receive SSI/SSP are not eligible to receive CalWORKs cash aid and their income is never considered in determining an AU's eligibility or grant amount. Consistent with the existing treatment of SSI/SSP family members, the CWD should treat this situation as a shared housing arrangement. If the household is in a shared housing situation, CalWORKs will only pay for the AU's share of the arrearages.

Question 1B: If the CWD is not required to pay for the SSI/SSP person's portion of the rent arrearages and the AU will be evicted because they can't come up with that person's share of the rent, would the CWD deny the AU's request for Permanent HA rent arrearage payments?

Answer 1B: If payment of the AU's portion of rent arrearages would not prevent their eviction, the CWD would deny the request for permanent HA rent arrearage payments.

Question 2: Can Permanent HA be issued for a family to move into Transitional Housing?

Answer: No. A family's period of homelessness does not end when placed in temporary housing and permanent housing is not obtained (MPP 44-211.513(c)). Transitional housing is considered a temporary residence insofar as a family may only reside there for up to 24 months. As such, counties should not issue permanent HA in order to assist families in obtaining transitional housing.

Question 3: If the family is otherwise eligible for payment of permanent HA rent arrearages, but payment of arrearages would not prevent eviction, can we pay permanent HA to the family to move them into another residence? For example, if the AU is required to pay three months of rent arrearages in order to keep from being evicted, can the CWD pay for a new place to live?

Answer: Yes, the CWD could pay the AU permanent HA to secure a new residence under certain conditions. The CWD would first need to ensure that the AU meets all eligibility requirements for HA rent arrearage payments. However, if making these arrearage payments would not prevent eviction, the CWD would not approve HA arrearage payments. Under this set of circumstances however, the AU would be considered homeless for purposes of HA to secure a permanent residence. As long as the AU meets the other relevant conditions, the CWD would pay permanent HA for the AU to secure a new permanent residence. In addition, the AU may also be eligible for temporary assistance if the AU actually gets evicted and they lack a fixed nighttime residence.

Question 4: If actual income is reported during the homeless assistance application process, and it is less than what was used to determine the AU's ongoing benefits, do counties need to act on this information as a Mid-Period report and re-average the income and supplement the case?

Answer: Yes. CWDs must treat the report of decreased income as a voluntary mid-period report and take appropriate action.

Question 5: Do the daily rates for temporary homeless assistance apply to excluded family members, such as Ineligible Non-Citizens, and/or Timed-Out individuals?

Answer: No. The regulations for determining who is entitled to temporary HA were not affected by changes resulting from AB 1808. The daily temporary HA rates only apply to eligible or apparently eligible AU members.

Question 6: Is there a requirement for a written application and approval/denial notice, or can application and notification be verbal?

Answer: Homeless Assistance rules regarding applications, denials and approvals did not change under AB 1808. Applicants/recipients of CalWORKs must complete a separate application for homeless assistance, including permanent HA for the payment of rent arrearages. Counties are also required to notify HA applicants in writing to indicate if their application has been approved or denied. CDSS has modified the CW 42 (HA Statement of Facts) and the HA approval and denial notices to include the recent HA changes.

Question 7: In determining income to be used as part of the AU's TMHI, do we use income from the AU's most recent Semi Annual Reporting (SAR) Report Month (used to determine the cash aid for the SAR Period) or do we also consider current income that may be less than that of the SAR Report Month?

Answer: The determination of TMHI does not rely on income reported on the QR 7 from prior months or income reported on the QR 7 that was anticipated for the future quarter. The CWD must use the current amount of income available to the AU that they list on the CW 42 form at the time of application for homeless assistance.

Question 8: Do CWDs need to verify the available TMHI declared by the AU?

Answer: General CalWORKs verification rules continue to apply. The CWD should verify available TMHI in order to appropriately determine eligibility and payment levels for HA.

Question 9: If gross earned income must be used in the TMHI, how is "available income" defined when the income is self-employment income?

Answer: For purposes of determining gross income TMHI for a self-employed person, the CWD would use self-employment profit income after business expenses have been deducted. Please refer to MPP 44-113.212 (QR) for treatment of self employment income.

Question 10: Is the CWD required to pay the AU the full daily flat rate of \$85 even if the hotel rate is less than the daily rate? What if the CWD issues vendor payments for temporary HA and the hotel charges less than \$85? Does the AU receive the remainder of the daily flat rate?

Answer: Yes. The CWD will pay the AU the daily flat rate of \$85 regardless of the hotel rate. If the hotel rate is less than the daily flat rate, then the AU must receive the difference. If a vendor payment is made on behalf of the AU for temporary HA, the CWD is required to pay the remaining balance of the daily flat rate to the AU.

Question 11: Can a county require a family to reside in a shelter for 3 days prior to applying for HA?

Answer: No. There is no authority in statute or regulations that allows a county to require that families be in a shelter for any period prior to application for HA.

Question 12: HA Once-in-a-lifetime requirement was effective January 1, 2017. What happens to AUs who utilized once-in-a-lifetime HA prior to January 1, 2017?

Answer: Any AU who utilized HA prior to January 1, 2016 will have not used HA in the last twelve (12) months and will therefore qualify for HA. Any AU who used HA after January 1, 2016, however prior to January 1, 2017 are required to wait until 12 months have elapsed from the time of the initial HA payment was issued.

Example 1: An AU began receiving temporary HA on September 9, 2016 and becomes homeless again on January 1, 2017. Unless the AU meets an exception, the AU would not be eligible for additional HA until September 9, 2017.

Example 2: An AU began receiving temporary HA on October 1, 2015, and experiences another instance of homelessness on January 2, 2017. The AU is potentially eligible to receive temporary and/or permanent HA on January 1, 2017, when the new law takes effect, because more than 12 months have elapsed since the last issuance of HA.

Question 13: Since HA is now once in a twelve (12) month period, can an AU still receive additional HA if meet an exception.

Answer: Yes. HA payments based on an exception continue to be allowed only once in a twelve (12) month period, however the method for determining the 12-month period for exceptions is changing. Effective January 1, 2017, HA based on an exception is available once at any point during the 12 month period established for "standard" HA. The issuance of an HA payment based on an exception does not restart the "standard" HA 12-month period.

Example 1: An AU begins receiving temporary HA on March 1, 2017, and located permanent housing later in the month. On September 1, 2017, the same AU becomes homeless again and begins receiving HA based on an exception. The AU's 12-month period continues to be March 1, 2017 through February 28, 2018. The AU would be potentially eligible for HA again starting on March 1, 2018.