

OUT-WAYNE COUNTY CONTINUUM OF CARE

**EMERGENCY SOLUTIONS GRANT (ESG) STANDARDS
OF CARE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

July 2022

ESG Homeless Prevention

PURPOSE

ESG Homeless Prevention is a program that assists clients with rental arrears and rental assistance in the event that they have fallen behind on their rent and are being evicted from their home.

INTAKE, ASSESSMENT, AND ELIGIBILITY

The Out-Wayne County CoC is responsible for providing services to 40 cities and townships in Wayne County, MI. These cities and townships vary from suburban to rural; and public transportation options are not widely available in many of the areas the CoC serves. As such, our Coordinated Entry System calls for robust Access point options for households experiencing homelessness. Households can access homeless services through one of the following options: coordinated entry system phone line, walk-in locations, street outreach team, and community referral.

The assessment process ensures households receive similar screening to determine eligibility for any program funding. Coordinated Entry Staff complete a robust Coordinated Entry Assessment with households that include: a VI-SPDAT tool for singles, families, and transitional aged youth to determine vulnerability, a MSHMIS HARA Screening Assessment, and an Eligibility Screening Checklist that provides the Coordinated Entry Manager the necessary information & documents to determine basic program eligibility. Once a Coordinated Entry Assessment has been completed, the household will be referred to the appropriate resource if funding is available and no other households are on the By-Name List. If funding is not immediately available, then the household will be placed on the Coordinated Entry By-Name List for prioritization.

Basic eligibility requires clients to have a proof of past due balance, an income at or below 30% of the Area Median Income, fall within "Homeless Categories" 2 or 4, or any category under "At Risk of Homelessness", live in a unit that does not exceed the Fair Market Rent, and have a plan in place to maintain their housing post-assistance.

As of October 2021, the Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-housing Financial Assistance Chart lists the allowable assistance at a minimum of 3 months and a maximum of 9 months, with a max rental arrears assistance of 6 months. ESG HP provides an option to also provide 3 additional months of rental assistance to clients, if needed. Total assistance cannot exceed 9 months.

Clients may receive utility assistance for utility arrears in the event that they have a shutoff notice. Utility Deposits are also available, and combined with utility arrears, cannot exceed \$1,500.

This program also offers security deposit assistance, including for first-time voucher holders. Please refer to the MSHDA ESG Policy and Procedures for more in-depth guidelines.

For additional information regarding eligibility and financial assistance, please refer to the chart on page 50 of the [MSHDA ESG Policy Manual](#).

PROCEDURE

After being screened and deemed eligible by the CE Specialist, clients are assigned to a Specialist that will schedule a meeting to complete the required paperwork and gather all necessary documents. Following the meeting, an inspection will be scheduled and performed. Payment will be processed after the unit successfully passes an inspection.

For additional information regarding ESG Policies and Procedures, please refer to the following link: [MSHDA Policies and Procedures](#)

PRIORITIZATION AND ELIGIBILITY - PREVENTION

Households are assessed by homeless status and income level. To be considered eligible for ESG Prevention, households must meet one of the following definitions of homeless and income criteria:

- **HUD Category 2 Homeless** (At Imminent Risk); or
- **HUD Category 3 Homeless** (Homeless Under Other Federal Statutes); or
- **HUD Category 4 Homeless** (Fleeing/Attempting to Flee Domestic Violence); or
- **At Risk of Homelessness**, as defined by HUD;
- Household income is at or below 30% Area Median Income (AMI); AND
- Unit meets Fair Market Rent (FMR) and Reasonableness

Diversion and problem solving practices will be attempted with all households to attempt to identify alternatives to entering the homeless crisis response system, such as staying with friends and family. Households diverted from the system may be eligible for prevention funds to secure and move into permanent housing.

Household needs are evaluated on a case-by-case basis to connect households with the greatest need to programs with the greatest/longest assistance available.

PER ESG GUIDELINES:

A family includes, but is not limited to, the following, regardless of actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status:

(1) A single person, who may be an elderly person, displaced person, disabled person, nearelderly person, or any other single person; or

(2) A group of persons residing together, and such group includes, but is not limited to: (i) A family with or without children (a child who is temporarily away from the home because of placement in foster care is considered a member of the family) 24 CFR 5.403.

(3) Section 576.102(b) of the ESG interim rule prohibits ESG-funded programs from denying a family admission to an ESG-funded program or ESG-funded services based on the age of a child under the age of 18 if the program provides services to families with children. Similar requirements for CoC programs can be found in Section 578.93(e) of the CoC Program Interim Rule.

ESG Rapid Rehousing

PURPOSE

ESG Rapid Re-Housing is a housing program that includes time-limited rental assistance and intense supportive services for individuals and families that previously experienced homelessness.

CoC and ESG-funded permanent housing consists of rental assistance and services. The provision of supportive services, as set forth in § 578.53 and/or short-term (up to 3 months) and/or medium-term (for 3 to 24 months) tenant-based rental assistance, as set forth in § 578.51(c), 576.106, as necessary to help a homeless individual or family, with or without disabilities, move as quickly as possible into permanent housing and achieve stability in that housing.

INTAKE AND ASSESSMENT

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ELIGIBILITY

Total household income must be below 30% AMI, but does not have to be verified at intake. However, completing self-reported income at intake in HMIS is required. Eligible participants must fall within “Homeless Categories” 1 or 4. Once approved, clients are assigned to a Specialist to assist them in finding appropriate housing and for on-going supportive services.

As of October 2021, the Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-housing Financial Assistance Chart (seen below) lists the allowable assistance at a minimum of 3 months and a maximum of 9 months. Clients needing assistance past 6 months will need to recertify to ensure their income is still within guidelines. Clients with income are required to pay 1% of their income toward rent.

Clients may receive up to \$1500 in utility assistance over the course of the program, if needed. For additional information regarding eligibility and financial assistance, please refer to the chart on page 50 of the [MSHDA ESG Policy Manual](#).

HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION AND RAPID RE-HOUSING FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE CHART

	Homelessness Prevention	Rapid Re-Housing
Eligible Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Homeless Category 2: Imminent Risk of Homelessness Homeless Category 4: Fleeing/Attempting to Flee DV At Risk of Homelessness: All Categories <p>Income Requirements: Total household income must be verified and below 30% AMI at intake</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Homeless Category 1: Literally Homeless Homeless Category 4: Fleeing/Attempting to Flee DV (if the individual or family is also literally homeless) <p>Income Requirements: Total household income must be below 30% AMI, but does not have to be verified at intake Note: Completing self-reported income at intake in HMIS is <u>required</u></p>
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To <u>prevent</u> persons who are housed from becoming homeless To help such persons <u>regain stability</u> in their current housing or other permanent housing Establish connections with mainstream resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To help homeless persons living on the streets or in an emergency shelter <u>transition</u> as quickly as possible into permanent housing To help such persons <u>achieve stability</u> as quickly as possible in that housing Establish connections with mainstream resources
Reassessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At a minimum, every 3 months AND Must have income below 30% AMI (verified), AND Establish need based on lack of resources and support network 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At a minimum, every 6 months AND Must have income below 30% AMI (verified), AND Establish need based on lack of resources and support network
Eligible Activities	<p>Housing Relocation and Stabilization Services – Services Costs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing Search and Placement Housing Stability Case Management Mediation (Capped at \$200 per household) Legal Services (Capped at \$200 per household) <p>Housing Relocation and Stabilization Services – Financial Assistance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rent Application Fees Security Deposits (Cannot exceed one and half months’ rent) Utility Deposits (Deposits and Arrears combined are capped at \$1,500 per household) Utility Payments (Deposits and Arrears combined are capped at \$1,500 per household) Moving Costs (Capped at \$250 per household) <p>Short- and Medium-Term Rental Assistance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short-Term Rental Assistance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up to 3 months rent Medium-Term Rental Assistance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 to 9 months rent Rental Arrears <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One-time payment for up to 6 months of rent in arrears, including any late fees on those arrears <p>Note: Any combination of the three types of rental assistance cannot exceed 24 months during any 3-year period</p>	<p>Housing Relocation and Stabilization Services – Services Costs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing Search and Placement Housing Stability Case Management Waiting List Case Management Mediation (Capped at \$200 per household) Legal Services (Capped at \$200 per household) <p>Housing Relocation and Stabilization Services – Financial Assistance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rent Application Fees Security Deposits (Cannot exceed one and half months’ rent) Utility Deposits (Deposits and Arrears combined are capped at \$1,500 per household) Utility Payments (Deposits and Arrears combined are capped at \$1,500 per household) Moving Costs (Capped at \$250 per household) <p>Short- and Medium-Term Rental Assistance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short-Term Rental Assistance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up to 3 months rent Medium-Term Rental Assistance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 to 9 months rent <p>Note: Any combination of the two types of rental assistance cannot exceed 24 months during any 3-year period</p>

PROCEDURE

Following approval, the assigned Specialist will assist clients in locating and securing appropriate housing by providing housing listings and landlord packets to clients. Once a client is stably housed, staff will engage with clients on a monthly basis, at a minimum, to ensure clients maintain stable housing. Staff will also maintain regular home visits, where staff will complete a Service Plan with clients, using a person-centered approach, to identify supportive services the client needs and/or would like to engage in. Service Plans are also used to outline client goals and how to attain them.

For additional information regarding ESG Policies and Procedures, please refer to the following link: [MSHDA Policies and Procedures](#)

PRIORITIZATION

Eligible participants are referred to the Rapid Re-housing program for which they are eligible and prioritized based on the following prioritization:

1. VI-SPDAT Score - in instances where two or more households have equal scores, applicants will be prioritized as follows:
2. DV Status*
3. Disability Status/Medical or Mental Health Vulnerabilities
4. Current Location - sheltered or unsheltered
5. Length of time Homeless
6. Income Status
7. Other Extenuating Circumstances, including but not limited to:
 - a. Veterans Not Eligible for Housing/Health VA Services
 - b. Youth (18 - 24 years of age)

*If not eligible for other Domestic Violence housing programs

Current prioritization based on the below criteria while the Coordinated Entry system works on updating a prioritization tool.

Program Type	VI SPDAT Score (for Prioritization)	Full SPDAT Score (if required to determine Prioritization)	Additional Requirements
ESG Rapid Rehousing (ESG RRH)	4-8 Families	27-39 Families	Singles and families with income under 30% AMI Program assistance: supportive services and rental assistance based on vulnerability, assistance is capped at program regulation, scattered site, client pays 30% of adjusted gross income
	4-7 Individuals	20-28 Individuals	

PER ESG GUIDELINES

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- (2) A group of persons residing together, and such group includes, but is not limited to: (i) A family with or without children (a child who is temporarily away from the home because of placement in foster care is considered a member of the family) 24 CFR 5.403.
- (3) Section 576.102(b) of the ESG interim rule prohibits ESG-funded programs from denying a family admission to an ESG-funded program or ESG-funded services based on the age of a child under the age of 18 if the program provides services to families with children. Similar requirements for CoC programs can be found in Section 578.93(e) of the CoC Program Interim Rule

ESG Emergency Shelter

PURPOSE

Provides a culture of care, safety and support for the most vulnerable residents in Out-Wayne County while they seek to obtain permanent housing.

PROCEDURE

1. Participants contact Coordinated Entry via phone, online, or walk in to a Service Center for assessment
2. Eligible shelter participants are added to the Shelter waitlist
3. Shelter Staff contact participant in the order received to identify their current need for housing
4. Participants needing housing are informed of the shelter rules & policies and an intake is scheduled
5. At intake, participants complete an intake packet

The CoC recognizes that, if feasible, families experiencing homelessness should not be separated when receiving services.

PRIORITIZATION

Coordinated Entry practices a diversion approach to assess for other housing options and in every attempt for households to avoid entering the shelter system. Households are added to the shelter waitlist on a first come, first serve basis, however households are assessed based on individualized vulnerability and risk factors (e.g., living situation).

ALLOWABLE ACTIVITIES

Essential Services - Case Management

The costs of assessing, arranging, coordinating, and monitoring the delivery of individualized services to meet the needs of the program participant is eligible. Eligible services and activities are as follows:

- Using the centralized or coordinated assessment system as required in 24 CFR 576.400(d);
- Conducting the initial evaluation required under 24 CFR 576.401(a), including verifying and documenting eligibility;
- Developing, securing, and coordinating services and obtaining Federal, State, and local benefits;
- Monitoring and evaluating program participant progress;
- Providing information and referrals to other providers;
- Providing ongoing risk assessment and safety planning with victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking*; and
- Developing an individualized housing and service plan, including planning a path to permanent housing stability.

*Denotes specialized services to be provided through domestic violence service agencies.

Note: Direct case management for health, substance abuse, and other related services cannot be provided with MSHDA ESG funds; however, referrals should be provided for these supports.

Employment Assistance and Job Training

The costs of employment assistance and job training programs are eligible up to \$150.00 per person (per grant year), including classroom, online, and/or computer instruction; on-the-job instruction; and services that assist individuals in securing employment, acquiring learning skills, and/or increasing earning potential. Learning skills include those that can be used to secure and retain a job, including the acquisition of vocational licenses and/or certificates. Services that assist individuals in securing employment consist of employment screening, assessment, or testing; structured job skills and job-seeking skills; special training and tutoring, including literacy training and prevocational training; books and instructional material; or job coaching.

Transportation

The transportation costs of travel by staff and program participants are eligible, provided that this travel takes place during the provision of services eligible under this section. These costs include the following:

- The costs of a program participant's travel on public transportation;
- If staff use their own vehicle, mileage allowance for staff to visit program participants; and
- The travel costs of staff to accompany or assist program participants to use public transportation.

Shelter Operations

Eligible costs are the costs of maintenance (including minor or routine repairs), rent, security, fuel, food for shelter guests, furnishings, equipment, insurance, utilities and supplies necessary for the operations of the emergency shelter.

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ESG Street Outreach

PURPOSE

ESG Street Outreach provides essential supportive services necessary to reach out to unsheltered homeless people; connects them with emergency shelter, housing, or critical services; and provides urgent, non facility-based care. Activities conducted under this program include, but are not limited to: engagement, case management, and transportation.

INTAKE, ASSESSMENT, AND ELIGIBILITY

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PROCEDURE

The Out-Wayne County CoC uses MSHDA ESG funds to dispatch the Street Outreach Team that provides in-person access to homeless services six days a week during non-traditional hours. The team regularly canvases tent cities, drop-in centers, parks, bus stops, and any other reported location that is not meant for human habitation. The Street Outreach Team is trained on the Coordinated Entry System and can provide:

- referrals to emergency shelter;
- access to case management services to help clients move into permanent housing;
- and access to completing a Coordinated Entry Assessment for housing programs that exist within the CoC.

PRIORITIZATION

ESG Street outreach prioritizes individuals and families who qualify as homeless under paragraph (1)(i) of the “homeless” definition under 24 CFR 576.2. Program funds may also be used to provide services for homeless youth, victims of trafficking, victim services, and services for people living with HIV/AIDS, so long as the costs of providing these services are eligible.

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