

Pathways to Housing

Case Manager Duties

Case Management under Pathways is an intensive program of assistance to individuals and families in order to enable them to learn the skills and abilities necessary to become stable independent renters. Case Managers under Pathways are expected to ultimately put the overall success of the Program above the risk of any one potential participant.

Case Managers are directed to read the entire Grant Agreement between the Brattleboro Housing Authority and Agency of Human Services; specific sections of the grant are included in these duties because of their importance to the successful provision of case management services.

A. Potential Participant Intake and Screening:

1. Ensure that the potential participant meets the initial eligibility criteria of the Program.
2. Ensure that your Agency will sign the MOU required of Participating Agencies.
3. Initiate the first preliminary review of a potential participant and ensure that the following information is received as soon as possible by the Brattleboro Housing Authority (BHA):
 - a completed pre-application form with all releases for criminal, credit and landlord reference checks signed and;
 - sent to the Brattleboro Housing Authority (BHA).

Delay in submitting these forms can result in delay in acceptance and lease up of a participant. The Program Oversight Committee can only give preliminary approval to an applicant until it has reviewed the information received from the criminal, credit and landlord sources. Applicants are not participants and cannot be leased up until they are fully accepted into the Program by the Oversight Committee.

4. Complete the Intake/Application with the potential participant. In doing so, it is strongly recommended that the lead AHS staff working with the potential participant be contacted and that coordination of services begin.
5. If your Agency determines that they will work with the Pathways Program and potential participant, your Agency will need to evaluate the potential participant's needs and likelihood of success. If positive:
6. Have the Memorandum of Understanding signed by the Agency and BHA prior to the presentation at the POC.
7. Present the Intake/Application to the Program Oversight Committee (POC) with the potential participant.
8. If the potential participant is accepted:
9. Develop the Individualized Service Plan (ISP) with the potential participant. In doing this, the Case Manager will need to coordinate closely with any AHS staff that are working with the individual or family. For those on TANF, this will be a Reach Up Worker. Where there is an existing Reach Up Family Development Plan or similar service plan, the Case Manager must ensure that the Pathways ISP and the other plan are coordinated and complimentary.

B. Duties with a Participant in Program

1. Refine and amend the ISP based on the recommendations of the POC.
2. Meet weekly with the participant throughout the program:
 - For the first three months this must occur in the Pathways apartment.

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- Thereafter, the weekly meetings can be held in the Agency office or at another setting but must be in person, there must be a home visit meeting at least every four weeks.
3. Review the ISP at least weekly with the participant to evaluate progress on goals and actions and update the ISP as needed.
 4. Attend monthly Case Manager meetings with all other Case Managers and BHA representative which are held the first Wednesday of every month at 10:30 a.m. at the CRT conference room on Elm St.
 5. Present a written update on the participant's progress as measured by the ISP at the monthly Case Manager meetings.
 6. Through the monthly Case Manager meetings and additional coordination contacts, ensure that the greatest level of service coordination with existing community programs and reduction of duplication of services is achieved.
 7. Ensure that all service and program providers under the ISP (ISP Team) meet at least every three months to review the participant's progress and modify the ISP if need be.
 8. When the participant has an increase in income that would result in a rent increase, the amount of additional rent that would have been paid must be placed in a saving account established by the BHA. The Case Manager will assist the participant to fully understand the operation of the account, monitoring the funds deposited into it and planning for its use at the end of the program. Acceptable uses for the funds at the end of the program could be, for example, a security deposit on the next apartment or auto repairs to ensure that the participant can continue to work. The funds are not available until the successful end of program participation and will not be released without approval of the Case Manager.
 9. Address money management issues on a weekly basis and report on this monthly using the form included with the ISP.
 10. Assist the participant in obtaining a representative payee and/or vendor payments for rent if needed.
 11. Send ISP Goals, Actions and Progress report to Program Oversight Committee each quarter with an explanation if there are changes or amendments to the initial ISP.
 12. Immediately engage in corrective action on behalf of the program with the participant if necessary.

C. Housing related responsibilities:

1. Ensure that applications are filled out (as applicable) for housing after the term of the Pathways Program (12 months). This includes applications for the Section 8 Voucher Program with the Brattleboro Housing Authority (BHA) and Vermont State Housing Authority; the public housing program with the BHA; and other area affordable housing providers such as the Brattleboro Area Community Land Trust and Westgate Housing.
2. Assist the participant in their Pathways housing search, including making contacts regarding vacancies, completion of applications, presentation to landlords and interviews.
3. Ensure that BHA receives all the required paperwork on time and completed for a lease up or annual review.
4. Assist in finding security deposit funds. [Pathways can assist with this on a limited loan basis.]
5. Ensure that copies of rent receipts and other documents sent by the landlord are received by the participant and Case Manager.

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6. Meet quarterly with the participant and landlord to review tenancy.
7. Work with the landlord, BHA and participant to resolve any tenancy issues that arise. These must be addressed immediately with the full active engagement of both the Case Manager and participant.

D. Sections of the Grant Agreement of particular importance to the Case Manager:

STATE OF VERMONT STANDARD GRANT AGREEMENT

ATTACHMENT A SPECIFICATIONS OF WORK TO BE PERFORMED

1) General Specifications:

- A. The Sub-recipient is responsible for delivering the services described in Attachment I- Program Description and will ensure that program and grant goals are being achieved and meeting TANF requirements where necessary.
- B. The Sub-recipient must designate someone to supervise staff hired under this agreement. This person will:
 - Ensure participation of all staff and partner agencies in any training and/or meetings provided by the Grantor that are applicable and participate in Grantor activities as appropriate.
- C. Information regarding policy and procedure changes, and trainings to be held, will be distributed electronically via e-mail. It is the Sub-recipient's responsibility to keep abreast of these changes.
- D. Sub-recipient is responsible for coordinating services between the various service providers and providing updates to staff on any new services available.
- E. The Sub-recipient shall set up a "Program Oversight Committee", hereinafter referred to as "Committee". The committee shall be comprised of the Vermont Agency of Human Services, Field Division and designees as seen fit, including Economic Services Division; Morningside Emergency Shelter; Brattleboro Area Drop-In Center; Health Care and Rehabilitation Services (community mental health); and Brattleboro Housing Authority.
- F. The Committee shall have representation from the area landlords.
- G. The committee shall have representation from a consumer or program participant.
- H. The Sub-recipient shall conform to all TANF eligibility requirements when serving TANF participants.
- I. The Sub-recipient and area human service agencies are responsible for the acceptance of participants and all program operations.
- J. The Sub-recipient shall submit all forms and requirements for approval to the State Housing and Transportation Director prior to implementation.
- K. The Sub-recipient shall determine eligibility with an approved process from the State.
- L. 60% of the Sub-recipients clients shall be families with a child or children who are receiving TANF cash benefit.
- M. 40% of the Sub-recipients clients shall be youth between the ages of 16 and 21 transitioning from fostercare and women transition from incarceration.

2) Grant Management:

- A. The Sub-recipient shall submit all monthly reports required in Attachment H to the grant manager.
- B. The Sub-recipient shall submit all payment requests to the grant manager.
- C. The State shall provide technical assistance and training as well as any applicable reports and financial information to the Sub-recipient staff.
- D. The Sub-recipient shall maintain a record of each participant's participation in the program and shall furnish these records upon request by the Grantor.
- E. The Sub-recipient shall maintain a record of those who were not eligible for the program and reason for denial and shall furnish these records upon request by the Grantor.

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3) Reporting Requirements:

- A. Monthly reports shall be submitted to the grant manager no later than 30 days following the end of the month using the electronic format below:
 - a. https://www.ahsnet.ahs.state.vt.us/hmis_hud or <http://hmis.vermont.gov>
- B. Information shall include all reporting requirements listed in Attachment H and this document.

ATTACHMENT C CUSTOMARY STATE GRANT PROVISIONS

20. **Abuse Registry.** The Sub-recipient agrees not to employ any individual, or use any volunteer, to provide for the care, custody, treatment, or supervision of children or vulnerable adults if there is a substantiation of abuse or neglect or exploitation against that individual. The Sub-recipient will check the Adult Abuse Registry in the Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living. Unless the Sub-recipient holds a valid childcare license or registration from the Division of Child Development, Department for Children and Families, the Sub-recipient shall also check the Central Child Abuse Registry. (See 33 V.S.A. §4919 & 33 V.S.A. §6911).

ATTACHMENT F Agency of Human Services Rule # 96-23

Final Adopted Rule for Access to Information

Definition.

“Agency” means the Agency of Human Services or any of the offices, departments or programs that comprise the Agency.

“AHS” means the Vermont Agency of Human Services.

“Client” means an individual or family who is voluntarily served by a department, office, program, Grantee or grantee of the Agency of Human Services.

“Grantee” means an individual or entity with whom the Agency or any of its departments, offices, or programs have a Grant to provide personal services.

“Employee” means any person who works in a full-time, part-time, temporary or Contractual position for the Agency or any of its departments, offices, or programs.

1.6 “Grantee” means an individual or entity with whom the Agency or any part thereof has a grant to provide personal services.

1.7 “Program” means a set of services, (such as determining and processing ANFC benefits, verifying and setting up delivery for WIC foods) for which the Agency bears fiscal responsibility.

1.8 “Administrative Obligations” means activities pursuant to federal or state laws or regulations (such as verification of eligibility, verification of service delivery, detection of fraud, monitoring of quality assurance, audit of expenditure reports) which provide for accountability in the use of public funds.

Basic Principles

Presumption of Confidentiality:

All information specific to, and identifying of, individuals and families is presumed to be confidential and subject to these standards. Employees shall not disclose the information unless a specific exception to the presumption applies or the disclosure is authorized by the client, a court or as otherwise authorized by law or rule.

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Existing Statutes:

These rules are not intended to expand or diminish current provisions in law relating to disclosure of confidential information.

Information Collection:

Employees shall collect and record only that information needed to fulfill the goal of serving the client and meeting administrative or legal obligations.

Informing Clients:

At the initial meeting with each client, or within two weeks, employees shall review and offer to provide the rules for access to information to the client.

Permissible Disclosures

Client Consent:

No information about a client shall be released without prior consent from the client, unless directly connected with the administration of a program or necessary for compliance with federal or state laws or regulations.

Sharing "Non-identifiable" Information:

Information that does not identify a client may be used for statistical research, forecasting program needs, or other such purposes.

Public Information:

Information defined as public by 1 VSA & 317 or other applicable statute is available to the public. The procedures in the public records statute shall be followed before public information is released.

Information Sharing for Administrative Purposes:

Employees may share information which is necessary to satisfy the Agency's administrative obligations. Departments will develop written agreements limiting the kinds of information to be shared when programs are jointly administered by different Departments. No information shall be released to a person or entity that is out of state, unless directly connected with the administration of a program or necessary for compliance with federal or state laws or regulations.

Disclosure Without Consent in Limited Circumstances:

Employees must release sufficient information to comply with mandatory reporting requirements for cases involving the abuse, neglect, or exploitation of children and persons who are elderly or who have disabilities. Information may be released without consent when Vermont law creates a duty to warn identified individuals of potential harm to their person or property, in response to court orders, or to investigate or report criminal activity as required by federal or state law or regulation. Only information relevant to the situation shall be disclosed. The employee shall document the date, purpose and content of the report, the name, address and affiliation of the person to whom the information was released, and shall notify the client that the information was disclosed.

Procedures Related to Consent

Obtaining Informed Consent:

Prior to releasing confidential information the Agency shall obtain the client's informed consent. This includes providing information about consent in a language and format understandable to the client. Reasonable accommodations shall be made for special needs based on the individual or family's education, culture, or disability. Employees shall inform clients that granting consent is not a pre-requisite for receiving services, and shall explain that they may apply for services separately.

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Consent of Minors to Release of Information:

Employees shall obtain the consent of a minor client to release information concerning treatment for which parental consent is not required.

Format for Consent to Share Information:

Consent for the sharing or release of information shall ordinarily be in writing. If an emergency situation requires granting of verbal consent, written consent shall be obtained at the next office visit or within thirty days, whichever comes sooner.

Required information will include:

1. Names of the people about whom information may be shared.
 2. A checklist of the kinds of information to be shared.
 3. A checklist of the departments within the Agency to receive the information.
 4. A statement or date covering expiration of consent.
 5. A statement about procedures for revoking consent.
6. Signature of individuals covered by the consent, or their parents or guardians.
7. Signature of the individual explaining the consent process with their position and job title.
8. A space to provide individualized instructions.

**A copy of the consent form shall be provided to all signatories.

Client Access to Records:

Unless prohibited by federal or state law or regulation, clients shall be permitted to view and obtain copies of their records. Each department within the Agency shall have written procedures which permit clients to verify personal information they have provided for accuracy and completeness and for placing amendments to the information in their files. Employees shall take reasonable steps to present records in a form accessible to the client, including but not limited to large type format or verbal review. A fee not to exceed the actual cost of copying may be charged for records exceeding 10 pages. This fee shall be waived if it would prohibit access.

Procedures to Protect Confidentiality

Staff Training:

All AHS employees and all AHS volunteers and interns, shall be instructed in these rules. AHS shall train their Grantees and Grantees, who shall, in turn, provide the same instruction for their employees, interns, and volunteers.

Response to Requests for Information:

An employee shall not respond to requests from outside the Agency for information about clients even to acknowledge that the person is a client, unless authorized. If a client has consented to or requests that information be released, the employee shall comply with the request.

Designated Individual:

Each agency or department shall appoint one or more trained staff members to be responsible for responding to all requests for client information when there is no written consent to release, and no statutory or administrative authority permitting release of the requested information. These individuals shall be specially trained in maintaining confidentiality. A list of the designated individuals for each department and office shall be maintained in the Attorney General's Office, Human Services Division.

Affirmation of Understanding:

Employees shall sign an affirmation that they will comply with these rules. This affirmation shall be part of their personnel files. Supervisors shall review this affirmation during annual evaluations. Violation of these rules shall result in disciplinary action.

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Written Agreements with Grantees or Grantees:

The following assurance, or one similar to it, will be included in all AHS grants/Grants signed after these rules have been approved:

Grantee agrees to comply with the requirements of AHS Rule No. 96-23 concerning access to information. The Grantee shall require all of its employees to sign the AHS Affirmation of Understanding or an equivalent statement.

Client Referrals:

When referring a client to another agency for services, if the referral does not meet the criteria for permissible disclosures under Section 3.4, the initial agency shall obtain the consent of the client for the referral and alert the receiving agency that confidential client information accompanies the referral.

Documentation of Disclosure:

Requests for disclosures of client information shall be maintained in the client's file if the request does not meet the definition of a permissible disclosure under Section 3.4. Employees shall document in writing any information actually disclosed, along with the name of the person/agency to whom it was disclosed and the date of the disclosure. When permissible disclosures are made under Section 3.4, documentation may be limited to the name of the department/agency/program to whom the disclosure was made.

Information Systems

Computerized Information:

When developing a computerized data system, the Agency shall:

1. Develop security procedures consistent with the rule;
2. Instruct staff in the security procedures;
3. Inform clients if a computerized system is being used;
4. Establish written agreements with participating agencies outlining procedures for sharing and protecting information.
5. Develop security procedures in relation to the transmission of information.

Security Procedures:

The Agency shall develop a protocol which is consistent with the requirements of this rule to safeguard confidential client information. Grantees and grantees shall also develop a protocol or shall adopt the protocol of the Agency. The protocol shall be designed to safeguard written information, data in computer systems, and verbal exchange of information. The protocol shall prohibit unauthorized access to records and include an appropriate disciplinary process for violations of the security rules.

Procedures:

Written procedures for implementing these rules shall be used as the basis for employee instruction and shall be available for review in the Agency Central Office.

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ATTACHMENT F

AGENCY OF HUMAN SERVICES
103 South Main Street
Waterbury, Vermont 05676

96-23 AFFIRMATION OF UNDERSTANDING STATEMENT

As a Grantee for the State of Vermont, I affirm that I have read the Agency of Human Services (AHS) Rule No. 96-23 concerning Access to Information, and that I agree to comply with the requirements of AHS Rule No. 96-23.

I shall require all of my employees performing services under this Grant, to sign an affirmation of understanding statement. Employee statements need not be sent to the State. However, they shall remain in Grantee's personnel records. The State can request copies of such documents if necessary.

Name of Company (Print or type)

Date

Authorized Signature

Title

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ATTACHMENT G OTHER GRANT PROVISIONS

6. Child Abuse Reporting: Notwithstanding the provision of 33 V.S.A. section 4913(a) any agent or employee of the Grantee who has reasonable cause to believe that a child has been abused or neglected as defined in Chapter 49 of Title 33 V.S.A. shall report the suspected abuse or neglect to the Commissioner of the Department for Children and Families (DCF) within one working day. The report shall contain the information required by 33 V.S.A. section 4914.

ATTACHMENT H REPORTING REQUIREMENTS AND FORMS

Program Goals:

- Program participants will be successful in their housing while in the Program as measured by their rent paying on time and absence of lease violations.
- Program participants will be active engaged participants in their transitional housing program as measured by the monthly reports from their case manager.
- Fewer families and individuals will live for three months or longer in motels, at the Emergency Shelter or 'bunking in' with family or friends.
- The Hard to House will have an avenue to improve their future and become stable renters as measured by the number of applicants to the Program and participants in it.
- Program participants will go on, after program completion, to being dependable renters or homeowners.

A. The Sub-recipient will ensure that:

Intensive case management support and housing services are provided for up to **12 families and 8 families or individuals transitioning out of fostercare or women transitioning out of incarceration** at any given time and at least 20 during the grant period.

B. Outcome Measures and Reporting:

90% of the families who secure permanent housing will retain their housing for 6 months or more.

100% of the families referred will secure transitional or permanent housing within 60 days of referral.

Data will be provided by the Sub-recipient for the above outcome measures using the monthly electronic reporting system within the Agency of Human Services including universal and program specific data elements as described in Attachment H.

ATTACHMENT I PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

General Specifications

The Sub-recipient is responsible for delivering the services described in the program description and will ensure that program and grant goals are being achieved and meeting TANF requirements where necessary. The Sub-recipient must designate someone to supervise staff hired under this agreement. This person will:

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- Ensure participation of all staff and partner agencies in any training and/or meetings provided by the Grantor that are applicable and participate in Grantor activities as appropriate. Information regarding policy and procedure changes, and trainings to be held, will be distributed electronically via e-mail. It is the Sub-recipient's responsibility to keep abreast of these changes. Sub-recipient is responsible for coordinating services between the various service providers and providing updates to staff on any new services available.

Grant Manager

The grantor will provide technical assistance and training as well as any applicable reports and financial information to the Sub-recipient staff. Technical assistance will include monitoring of all program files for consistency with state and federal policies and procedures.

Sub-recipient should submit all monthly reports and requests for payment to the grant manager.

The Sub-recipient Agency shall maintain a record of each participant's participation in the program, including dates of entry and termination in each activity; and shall retain such records for each participant for a period of three years starting on the last day of the funded program year; and the Sub-recipient Agency shall transfer such records at the end of the three-year retention period to the State for further retention. Should the Grantor institute the option of canceling or not continuing to provide funds to the Sub-recipient, all Sub-recipient participants and grant financial records must be turned over to the Grantor within thirty (30) days of written notification.

Reporting Requirements

Monthly reports will be submitted to the grant manager no later than 30 days following the end of the month using the electronic format within the Agency's web-based reporting system, which include universal and program specific data elements and TANF reporting requirements, at: https://www.ahsnet.ahs.state.vt.us/hmis_hud/ or <http://hmis.vermont.gov>. Satisfactory reports must be submitted in order to receive payment. Information will include:

- the total number served, the percentage of families who were placed in permanent housing as a result of assistance through this grant.
- the number of families placed in permanent housing, the percentage who retained permanent housing for six and twelve months.
- assistance and strategies employed to secure and retain permanent housing. Summary should include the average cost for securing permanent housing.
- Other community resources by type, source, purpose and amount utilized to provide temporary or transitional housing, or gain permanent housing.
- Number of participants denied and reason why

Program Description

The Pathways to Housing Program, administered through the sub-recipient, is a *participant based* transitional housing program using scattered sites. Like a purpose built facility, it will be intermediate length housing, up to 2 years, and combined with intensive case management services. However, it will not group people in similar situations together in either a house or some other shared living arrangement. Participants will be housed in non-profit and private rental housing in the community with financial housing assistance provided through sub-recipient.

The program service area will correspond to that of the Agency of Human Services District and the service area for the Alliance for Building Community.

The Pathways to Housing Program will utilize area agencies to serve as the entry point for participants and to provide case management services. To varying degrees, agencies will be folding existing programs or clients under the Pathways Program.

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The agencies will form a Program Oversight Committee and will meet at least monthly to approve participants for the program, coordinate service delivery and review each participant's progress. The sub-recipient will serve as the administrator of the housing subsidy and ensure that apartments meet minimum health and safety standards before occupancy. The Housing Authority and agency case manager will work together to identify available apartments, negotiate the lease with the landlord and resolve any tenancy issues should they arise.

Program Coordination

The overall administration of the Program will be done through three key mechanisms:

- 1) Program Oversight Committee: A Committee of the key partners involved in the Program. The Agencies represented will be : Vermont Agency of Human Services, Field Services Division and designees as seen fit including Economic Services Division; Morningside Emergency Shelter; Brattleboro Area Drop-In Center; Health Care and Rehabilitation Services (community mental health); and Brattleboro Housing Authority. The Committee will also have representation from the area landlords and a consumer or program participant. The Committee will set overall Program policy, reviewed and approved by AHS Housing and Transportation Director prior to implementation, monitor the program and its finances and handle all other program management and administrative matters. This Committee will review applications to the program and decide on acceptance.
- 2) Monthly Case Manager Participant Review Meetings: A meeting each month of all case managers involved in the Program. The case management review will include discussion of each participant's program needs and progress. Case managers will be encouraged to coordinate service delivery among participants and maximize existing community offerings. For example, the Brattleboro Community Land Trust will be offering programs in "Financial Fitness for Renters and First Time Homeowners". Case Managers would sign their participants up for the Land Trust program and coordinate transportation to it. To the extent needed, case managers will offer group sessions to participants as would be done under a purpose built facility based transitional housing program.

Also present at these meetings will be the program housing administrator to ensure that any and all housing issues are addressed and monitored.

The local Shelter Plus Care Program has been extremely successful in large part because of the communication and coordination that occurs at its monthly case management meetings. Based on this experience, these monthly case manager meetings will be an integral part of the Pathways Program.

- 3) Housing Coordination and Administration: The Pathways to Housing Program will provide a housing subsidy to participants set at 30% of their gross annual income. The Program will generally follow the income determination and administration rules used under the HUD Shelter Plus Care Program.

Finding acceptable rental units will be done by the case manager, participant and Housing Authority working with those who have signed up to provide housing. This same team will monitor all issues relating to participant housing and work out any problems that arise. Through years of working closely together, local landlords, community human service agencies and the Housing Authority have developed excellent relationships and trust which will serve them well in providing the housing services under the Pathways Program.

Any apartment rented under the Program must meet the HUD established Housing Quality Standards which are used in both the Shelter Plus Care Program and HUD Section 8 Voucher Programs. These are standards which the landlords are familiar with and have been in use for years within the community and country.

Program Operation

Participant entry to the Program: Participants will come in through the principal participating agencies (Morningside Emergency Shelter, Brattleboro Area Drop-In Center, HCRS, and the Field Division for the Agency of Human Services) or

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the agency they are working with such as Youth Services or the Offender Re-Entry Program. Using an entrance evaluation process developed by the Program Oversight Committee, agency staff will work with the applicant to complete any paperwork needed for acceptance to the program. The entrance evaluation process will be done in strict conformance with privacy laws and yet endeavor to be as inclusive as possible on behalf of the applicant.

The entrance evaluation process will assess the applicant's background, housing history and identify the problems which prevent the applicant from getting into housing and/or remaining housed. The application will also ask about the applicant's commitment to change in order to be successful in the program. Through the application process, the agency staff will be assessing the applicant's willingness and ability to follow the structure of the program including attending required meetings and following through on assigned tasks. Criminal and credit reports will be obtained as part of the screening process. If the agency staff or Program Oversight Committee feel that a specific type of screening such as with a mental health counselor should be included they will arrange for this with the appropriate agency. In this example it would be HCRS, the participating community mental health agency.

The Sub-recipients staff will consult with other community agency personnel that have worked or are currently working with the applicant.

The Program Oversight Committee will review any required materials, discuss the applicant with the community agency staff and meet with the applicant. Based on this and program wide considerations, the Committee will decide to accept the applicant based on the approved process of acceptance and denial.

Case Management and services: The community agency that is most appropriate for the participant or already providing case management will be the one that provides this service under Pathways. If a community agency recommends a person or family to the Program, that community agency will provide the case management. In situations where this is not possible, then other community agencies involved in the program who have indicated an ability to take on more participants will be contacted to provide the case management. Every attempt will be made to match participants with the community agency best suited to address their needs. Thus, a participant whose overriding need is better housekeeping, rental payments and neighbor relations would be assigned to a case manager from Morningside Shelter or the Drop-In Center, as this is an area of expertise for them.

To remain in the Program, a participant must attend all required sessions, trainings etc. They must demonstrate progress at meeting the goals they have set with the case manager and they must be tenants in good standing. This will be defined by the Program but generally will mean that the participant is complying with all terms of the lease especially with regard to housekeeping, rent payment and relations with neighbors and the landlord.

The Program Oversight Committee will develop a process and receive approval of that process for notification to participants when it is found that they are not complying with either the services or housing components of the Program. This process will involve communication in writing and through the case manager early on so that the participant can change their behavior and remain in the Program. However, it will clearly establish a set progression that will be followed in the event that the participant does not change. Only participants that clearly have no intention of returning to full participation will be removed from the Program, however this must be done in a manner and timeframe which minimizes the detrimental impact of the participant's actions on their neighbors, landlord and overall Program accountability.

Housing assistance: Once accepted into the Program, the participant, their case manager and the Housing Authority will identify potential rental units suitable for the participant and begin the process of looking at units and discussing tenancy with landlords.

Rents in the program will be set at 100% of the HUD established Fair Market Rent (FMR) for the area. The participant will be expected to pay 30% of their gross income towards the rent with the Program contributing the balance. In some cases, it may be necessary to accept a rent that is greater than 100% of the FMR which will be under the purview of the Oversight Committee.

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Generally, the Program will follow the HUD Section 8 provisions for the computation of income and rents. The Program Oversight Committee can make variations to these as it feels necessary for the Program. For example, one deviation from the Section 8 provisions will be that when a participant's income goes up, the amount they pay towards rent will not. However, the additional amount that would have been contributed to rent will be collected and held in an escrow account for the participant. When the participant leaves the program, these funds will be available to them to assist with new or additional housing costs or any other expenses. This is another mechanism that will assist the participant to be able to obtain and retain housing in the community upon completion of the Program.

The apartment and building must pass the HUD Housing Quality Standards used under the Section 8 Tenant based Voucher Program. The inspection of the building and unit will be done by the Housing Authority.

The lease term will be established by the case manager, Housing Authority and landlord. Usually these will be for one year but may be for a shorter duration.

There will also be an addendum to the lease which allows for program specific lease terms. These terms will include a provision so that in the event that the participant leaves or is removed from the program before satisfactory completion, they must vacate the housing. Program rules will specify how this will be handled and give the participant no more than 60 days to vacate the unit.

Landlords will be eligible for compensation for damages and lost rent under program specific provisions. In discussing the Program with area landlords, they cited these and the need to be able to remove a non-compliant participant as important to minimizing their risk in participating in the Program.

Participant Completion of the Program

A participant can only be in the Pathways Program for two years however this grant is a one year grant. Working with their case manager they will identify their housing options and be able to pursue them. With two years of satisfactory housing and a good reference from their landlord, case manager and the Housing Authority, their ability to be accepted into housing will be significantly improved. While in the Program they will have applied to various assisted housing providers and, probably be high enough on the waiting lists to be screen by many of them. They also may be able to remain with the landlord they have had through the Program depending on their income situation and/or if they have or will be shortly receiving a regular Section 8 Voucher.

Further, given other work under the Program, the participant should have additional resources and skills that will help them in all areas of their life including housing such as job training, money management, life skills etc.

Though the housing subsidy ends after two years, a participant's involvement in the supportive services may continue voluntarily for as long as the participant and agency feel is appropriate. This can be of great assistance in the final transition from the Pathways Program to full independence.

The Sub-recipient Agency shall be responsible for ensuring that staff hired to fulfill responsibilities funded by this agreement have sufficient education and experience relative to case management and social work. The Sub-recipient must inform the Grantor of any plans to fill vacant positions. The Grantor shall participate in the hiring of all staff funded in part by this grant.

Fair Hearing. If a participant case managed by the Sub-recipient Agency requests a Fair Hearing, the Sub-recipient Agency must provide information pertinent to the complaint, and attend and testify on behalf of the State at the Fair Hearing if so requested by the State.

Pathways to Housing

Case Manager Duties

Participant Eligibility

Pathways is principally funded from General Assistance dollars, therefore 60 % of its participants must be families with a child or children which are receiving TANF cash benefit. The remaining 40% are to be youth between the ages of 16 and 21 transitioning from foster care and women transitioning from incarceration.

Families are defined as one or more adults with one or more children 17 years of age or younger. The adult must be the legal parent or guardian of the youth. The family must be receiving TANF cash benefit or about to be. A family which has applied for TANF, been accepted and is waiting for payment to begin qualifies for the Program. They must be receiving the benefit by the time they are actually housed. The Department of Economic Services will certify TANF benefits.

TANF families, youth leaving foster care and women leaving incarceration must be having difficulty with finding or retaining housing. This can be as a result of a poor landlord reference, debt or having no references at all. Additionally, they must be homeless or about to be. Families living in area hotels are considered homeless under this program. The Agency working with the participant will need to determine what the reasons and extent of homelessness are in each instance.

Agency Eligibility

Any human service agency in the Brattleboro Agency of Human Service District is eligible to participate in the Program. There are no funds for case management provided under the Pathways Program. The Agency must sign the Pathways Memorandum of Understanding before a Case Manager can bring a participant to the Program Oversight Committee for acceptance.

Housing Assistance

Housing assistance under Pathways is in two forms: financial assistance similar to that under the Federal Section 8 Voucher Program and assistance with finding and retaining an apartment in the private and non-profit housing market. The financial assistance will generally limit the participant's contribution to rent to not more than 30% of their adjusted gross annual income. The Fair Market Rent levels for Windham County apply as do TANF income limits.