Metro Denver CoC
Rapid Re-Housing Standards Webinar
July 2018
AGENDA

Overview of RRH and Goals of standards

Programs that are affected and who needs to be involved

Overview of the RRH standards

How to get started

Next Steps
WHAT is Rapid Re-Housing?

Rapid re-housing provides short-term rental assistance and services to households that are literally homeless. The goals are to help people obtain housing quickly, increase self-sufficiency, and stay housed. It is offered without preconditions (such as employment, income, absence of criminal record, or sobriety) and the resources and services provided are typically tailored to the needs of the person.
NAEH Rapid Re-Housing Core Components:

1. Housing Identification
2. Rent and Move-in Assistance
3. Case Management

- These components apply to all RRH programs, regardless of funding source
- RRH programs should make all three components available to participants.
- It is not required that a single entity provide all services or that a household utilize them all.
Goals of Metro Denver CoC RRH Written Standards

1) To merge key elements of the HUD regulations with the processes and priorities of the CoC and guarantee that RRH funding is administered consistently, transparently, and as effectively as possible.

2) To ensure that people experiencing homelessness are treated similarly regardless of funding source and county of origin.
TH and RRH CoC NOFA Funding 2013-2017

![Graph depicting the amount awarded for CoC NOFA Competition Year from 2013 to 2017. The graph shows the increase in funding over the years with a significant rise from 2014 onwards.]
Continuum of Care (CoC) and Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) RRH providers met throughout 2017 to discuss the need to standardize RRH programs in our CoC.

MDHI developed the RRH standards document, received public comment, and in May 2018 the MDHI Board of Directors approved the standards.

CoC and ESG Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) funded programs in the Metro Denver Continuum of Care must adhere to the standards.

Other RRH programs in our CoC are encouraged to adopt the standards.
Common RRH Programs in Metro Denver

- Continuum of Care RRH
- Emergency Solutions Grants RRH
  - MDHI
  - City of Aurora
  - City and County of Denver/DDHS
- Supportive Services for Veterans and their Families (SSVF)
- Colorado Division of Housing/DOLA:
  - Rapid Re-Housing Next Step
  - Rapid Re-Housing Re-entry
The Written Standards are intended to be basic minimum standards that can be applied to all RRH programs.

Each RRH program depending on the funding source has different target populations, eligibility and specific project requirements.
Metro Denver CoC RRH Written Standards

The Written Standards is a document that include policies and procedures for:

- Evaluating a household’s initial and continued eligibility for assistance
- Prioritizing which eligible families and individuals will receive RRH assistance
- Determining the type, amount, and duration of assistance
- Determining participant contribution toward rent and utility costs
- Providing standards for Case Management, Housing Search & Placement and other services
Housing First

An approach to quickly and successfully connect individuals and families experiencing homelessness to permanent housing without preconditions and barriers to entry such as sobriety, treatment, or service participation requirements.

Supportive services are offered to maximize housing stability and prevent returns to homelessness as opposed to addressing predetermined treatment goals to permanent housing entry.
Eligibility & Prioritization

- All referrals for CoC and ESG RRH placement must be accepted from OneHome, and OneHome will prioritize households according to our community’s criteria.

- RRH programs should have well-defined written intake procedures that “screen-in” households.

- There are no minimum or maximum income requirements to receive RRH assistance for initial eligibility.

- RRH participants must meet HUD’s Category I definition of homeless or Category IV definitions of homelessness to be eligible for RRH assistance:
  - Category I – literally homeless
  - Category IV – fleeing or attempting to flee Domestic violence
Eligibility & Prioritization

• To **remain** eligible for RRH assistance the household must lack the financial resources and support networks to remain in their current housing
  • RRH Rule of Thumb: “**But for**”, that without RRH assistance the household would become homeless again
• A participant’s need for continued assistance should be documented according to the program “re-certification” schedule and project specific requirements
Standards for Re-certification of Eligibility

Re-certification Requirements

- Obtain 3rd party verification of participant’s income resources
- Update housing stabilization plan/case plan
- Document that the participant continues to lack the income and support networks to remain in housing
- Re-determine type and amount of assistance needed

“Enrollment Date” vs “Move-in Date”

- Enrollment date: date that program determines the participant’s eligibility
- Move-in date: date that the participant moves into housing
Standards for Re-certification of Eligibility: How often?

3 months after “move-in date” and every month after the first 3 months in the program

RRH participants can receive up to a maximum of 9 months of assistance

If the household needs additional assistance after 9 months providers should work with MDHI and other partners in the community on finding a subsequent housing option
Determining the Type & Amount of Assistance: What to Assess?

- Total monthly income resources
- Total monthly expenses
- Contribution toward housing and utility costs
- Other housing retention barriers
Determining a Participant’s Contribution Toward Rent and Utility Costs

Rental assistance should be *just enough* to ensure the household does not become homeless again.

Assistance should be provided in a flexible and progressive manner, tailored to the household’s needs.

To the extent possible, rental assistance should decrease the longer the participant is enrolled in the program.
Initially offering a “light touch” vs. providing a “menu of services”

Adding supports to those households who struggle to stabilize and cannot maintain housing without assistance

Flexible and individualized assistance
Minimum requirements for Housing Search and Placement

• Engage and recruit landlords/property owners
• Search for the most affordable housing option and provide households with a choice in their housing placement
• Offer support to landlords who lease to program participants.
• Provide participants with basic tenant rights and lead-based paint hazard information
• Review the responsibilities and requirements of the participant’s residential lease
Minimum requirements

Case Management

- Monthly home visits
- “Housing Stabilization Case Plan” for all participants
- Be trained on RRH case management and evidence-based practices
- At enrollment or within 72 hours of enrollment, programs must conduct a “tenancy barriers” assessment
- Work directly with the household and landlord to resolve tenancy issues
- Regularly assess “housing retention” barriers
- Make referrals to appropriate community and mainstream resources
- Connection employment and income programs
RRH & MDHI Employment Committee

The MDHI Employment Committee works to cultivate strong employer networks based on relationships between job seekers who have experienced homelessness, employers, and employment specialists who support these job seekers to obtain and retain employment.

Emphasis on long-term employment needs to begin from the first provider-participant interaction, and RRH providers cannot do it alone!

RRH Providers: Friday October 5, 2018, 9am - 11am
RRH Participants: Friday October 19, 2018, 8:30am - 2:30pm
ESG and CoC RRH Projects Should Integrate Written Standards Into...

- Policies and procedures for determining the amount and type of financial assistance provided to RRH participants
- Policies and procedures for determining a participant’s contribution toward rent and utilities
- Intake and “screen-in” procedures
- Initial certification of eligibility and re-certification
- Maintaining files according to HUD’s Recordkeeping requirements
- Termination policies and defining objectives for when assistance should come to an end
- Emergency transfers as defined under Violence Against Women’s Act (VAWA)
Getting Started

• Identify who needs to be involved
• Identify the areas of your RRH program that will be most affected
• Identify training needs
• Create a space for ongoing communication – what’s working, what’s not working
• Update and/or establish RRH program policies and procedures
• Reach out to MDHI and other community partners for assistance
Identifying RRH Program Staff

Program Directors/Managers:
- Hiring/writing job description
- Program Budget
- Policies and Procedures
- Program evaluation and setting internal goals
- Case Management supervision

Case Managers, Intake Staff, Housing Navigators:
- Exit plan from “Day One” of the program
- Evaluation/re-certification schedule & requirements
- Change amount and type of assistance when appropriate
- Communicate effectively with participants and landlords
- Active in housing search and placement

Administrative Staff/Accountants:
- Checks processed in a timely manner
- Flexible procedure for adjustments to financial requests
- Regular cross checks of program budgets
Next Steps

• **RRH Self Assessment** – Complete and submit to MDHI by August 22, 2018

• **Establish or update RRH policies and procedures** – Policies and procedures should be established or updated by October 1, 2018

• **RRH and Employment:**
  • Provider training – October 5, 2018,
  • Participant training – October 19, 2018

• **RRH Deep Dives with MDHI, Focus Strategies and others** – TBD
  • Jackie.Hernandez@mdhi.org
RRH Studies

- https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/HennepinCounty.pdf
Resources

• National Alliance to End Homelessness Toolkit
  https://endhomelessness.org/resource/rapid-re-housing-toolkit/

• Emergency Solutions Grants – HUD Exchange
  https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/esg/

• Rapid Re-Housing: ESG vs. CoC
  https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/Rapid_Re-Housing_ESG_vs_CoC.pdf

• USICH: Core Principles of Housing First
  https://www.usich.gov/tools-for-action/webinar-core-principles-of-housing-first-and-rapid-re-housing