California Rapid Re-Housing Webinar Series #3

Rapid Re-Housing:
Rent and Move-In Assistance

Tom Albanese, Abt Associates
Heather Carver, VOA of Northern CA & Northern NV
Veronica Gonzalez, U.S. VETS Inc.
Today’s Webinar

• Webinar #3 in a 4 part series for California RRH providers

• Please note that all lines are on mute.

• We will be taking questions at the end of the presentation. Please pose questions at any time in the Questions box.

• The webinar and slides will be posted following the presentation at endhomelessness.org.
Agenda

• Welcome
• Overview of RRH *Rent and Move-In Assistance* (Move-In; Ongoing Assistance)
• Program Strategies for Move-In Assistance
• Program Strategies for Time-Limited Housing Assistance
• Questions
Overview:
Rent and Move-In Assistance

Two primary activities:

1. Financial assistance for housing start-up/move-in costs
2. Time-limited financial assistance for housing costs after move-in
Why?

• If you lost your previous housing because you were $500 short on the rent, it’s not likely you will have $2-3000 for the start-up expenses of obtaining new housing.

• If you lost a significant source of income, it will probably take some time to replace it and you’ll need some help to cover the gap while housing is stabilized.
The Practice Standards

• Standards identify the program design, policy, staff training, and quality assurance tasks for RRH programs
• Methods are determined by each program
• Creativity is encouraged!
• Programs can adapt or adopt methods from each other
• Today’s models:
  – Volunteers of America of Northern CA & Northern NV
  – U.S. VETS Inc.
1. Financial Assistance for Housing Start-Up/Move-In Costs

Potential Costs

• Application Fee
• Arrears for utilities or rent -- when justified/necessary
• Utility connect fee
• Transportation for housing search
• Security Deposit -- doubled only when necessary
• First Month’s Rent -- and Last Month, if necessary
• Storage and moving costs, if applicable
• Basic furnishings, supplies, food -- if needed
• **Eligible Expenses and Criteria:** What costs will you pay and under what circumstances? What documentation do you need?

• **Approval Process:** What level of approval will you require for particular cost types or costs exceeding a specific level?

• **Flexibility:** How can you assure that assistance is individualized? That it can flex up or down for changes?

• **Progressive Assistance:** How will you pay only for essential expenses that the household/individual cannot pay or secure by other means.

• **Avoid delays in payment to landlords!** What will it take to cut a check as soon as a lease is offered?

**Note:** Certain costs might not be eligible for some funding sources (e.g., ESG, HSP). Providers should look at funding limitations and consider obtaining and braiding other public and private funding.
Housing Start-Up Costs:
To Pay or Not to Pay

1. Virtually everyone will need help with security deposits and first month’s rent
2. Ask yourself what else is needed and be creative
3. If your partner landlord insists, you need to find a way to pay: your partner landlords are a long-term investment!
4. Bargain for a lower cost where possible: utility fees? Arrears if necessary? Tenant Screening company fees?
5. Solicit cash or material donations from local or chain stores, faith communities, clubs/associations: furniture, kitchen equipment, bedding, a week’s worth of groceries...
2. Time-Limited Financial Assistance After Move-In

Potential Costs:

• Rent: subsidy range from 0 to 100%
• Utilities: subsidy range from 0 to 100%
• Other financial assistance needed to increase income and/or stabilize housing
  (to be discussed during Case Management and Services Webinar #4)
Program Planning/Design

- **Program Participant Payments:** How do you decide how much the household will contribute to rent and utilities?

- **Ending Financial Assistance:** How do you transition a household off financial assistance without jeopardizing their housing (“Cliff Effect”)?

- Are these policies and procedures consistent with individualized, flexible, progressive assistance?
## Rental Subsidy Strategies: Pros and Cons

### Defined Amount

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Incentive to select lower-cost housing</td>
<td>Doesn’t allow flexibility if HH income changes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If amount is equivalent to deep subsidy, HH could pay off arrears and debts with own income, freeing more income for rent</td>
<td>If amount is equivalent to deep subsidy, ending subsidy risks Cliff Effect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simplifies agency budgeting</td>
<td>If amount is too low, HH may not be able to pay rent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can program assist HHs with zero income?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If amount is too low, HH may not be able to pay rent.
## Rental Subsidy Strategies: Pros and Cons

**HH pays only 30%--Subsidy pays balance**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HH may be able to pay off some debts or arrears with own income</td>
<td>HH may want to select higher-priced unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inherently flexible since subsidy is based on HH income</td>
<td>HH may not have opportunity to develop and practice a budget based on more realistic rent burden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allows up to 100% subsidy when needed</td>
<td>Could result in Cliff Effect: HH may be unable to sustain rent without subsidy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>May over-subsidize some HHs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Rental Subsidy Strategies: Pros and Cons

Declining/Step Level Subsidy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Predictability of rent subsidy</td>
<td>HH’s income may not increase in lock-step with declines in subsidy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>May over-subsidize some HHs or under subsidize others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How can agency assist zero income HHs?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lacks flexibility, individualization</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Other Options?

- Blended Model?
- Select subsidy that is progressive—only as much subsidy as needed by *this* HH at this time
- Build in re-negotiation of subsidy amount as HH circumstances change
RRH programs share successful strategies for Initial Housing Start-Up Costs & Time-Limited Financial Assistance

Heather Carver
Rapid Re-Housing Program Director
Volunteers of America
Northern CA & Northern NV

Veronica Gonzalez
SSVF Program Coordinator
U.S. VETS
LA & Orange Counties
Best Practices

• Understand program limitations based on funding source
• Tailor services to individual needs
• Collaborate and coordinate with other RRH providers including HSP to provide the same services and financial assistance
**Financial Assistance**

**Client/Household Name:** B Smith  
**File Number:** F302

Number of people in household: 4  
Gross Annual Household Income from AIC tabs: $10,668

**Unit size(s) eligible:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eligible?</th>
<th>Unit Type</th>
<th>Max Monthly Assistance</th>
<th>Min Occupancy</th>
<th>Max Occupancy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Efficiency</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 person</td>
<td>2 people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 bedroom</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 person</td>
<td>3 people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>2 bedroom</td>
<td>$896</td>
<td>2 people</td>
<td>5 people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>3 bedroom</td>
<td>$1,030</td>
<td>3 people</td>
<td>7 people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>4 bedroom</td>
<td>$1,164</td>
<td>4 people</td>
<td>9 people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 bedroom</td>
<td></td>
<td>5 people</td>
<td>11 people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6 bedroom</td>
<td></td>
<td>6 people</td>
<td>13 people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7 bedroom</td>
<td></td>
<td>7 people</td>
<td>16 people</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Financial Assistance

Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency (Agency)
Agency Income Calculation Sheet (AICS) effective 2/1/2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Legend: Complete colored cells</th>
<th>Frequency:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Property Name</th>
<th>Unit Number</th>
<th>Head of Household Name</th>
<th>Information Re: Household Member Name</th>
<th>Member #</th>
<th>Completed By Owner/Manager</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Employment #1

**Company/Business Name**

**Complete Parts I, II and III**

## Employment #2

**Company/Business Name**

**Complete Parts I, II and III**

### Part I: VOE Regular Income

1. **Base Pay Calculation (BPC) - Use 1a or 1b**
   - **Rate:**
   - **Average Hrs per Week:**
   - **Frequency:**
   - **1a Sub-total:**
   - **Pay Period Dates:**
   - **Gross Amount:**

2. **Rate:**
   - **Current Rate:**
   - **Frequency:**
   - **1b Sub-total:**
   - **BPC:**

3. **Overtime (OT) Rate 1**
   - **Average OT Hrs per Week:**
   - **Frequency:**
   - **B Sub-total:**

4. **Addition Pay (AP) Amount**
   - **Frequency:**
   - **Sub-total:**

### Part IV: Paystub Average

- **Paystub total:**
- **# of Paystubs:**
- **Average:**
- **Frequency:**
- **Paystub total:**
- **# of Paystubs:**
- **Average:**
- **Frequency:**

### Anticipated Rate Increase (ARI) - Use 4a or 4b

- **Paystub total:**
- **# of Paystubs:**
- **Average:**
- **Frequency:**
- **Paystub total:**
- **# of Paystubs:**
- **Average:**
- **Frequency:**
# Financial Assistance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Units Types</th>
<th>2016 FMR</th>
<th>0-9% AMI</th>
<th>10-14% AMI</th>
<th>15-24% AMI</th>
<th>25-30% AMI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Efficiency</td>
<td>$707</td>
<td>$566</td>
<td>$424</td>
<td>$354</td>
<td>$283</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Bdrm</td>
<td>$815</td>
<td>$652</td>
<td>$489</td>
<td>$408</td>
<td>$326</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Bdrm</td>
<td>$1,026</td>
<td>$821</td>
<td>$515</td>
<td>$413</td>
<td>$410</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Bdrm</td>
<td>$1,495</td>
<td>$1,199</td>
<td>$897</td>
<td>$748</td>
<td>$598</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Bdrm</td>
<td>$1,791</td>
<td>$1,433</td>
<td>$1,075</td>
<td>$986</td>
<td>$716</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Bdrm</td>
<td>$2,060</td>
<td>$1,648</td>
<td>$1,236</td>
<td>$1,030</td>
<td>$824</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Bdrm</td>
<td>$2,328</td>
<td>$1,863</td>
<td>$1,397</td>
<td>$1,164</td>
<td>$931</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Bdrm</td>
<td>$2,597</td>
<td>$2,078</td>
<td>$1,558</td>
<td>$1,298</td>
<td>$1,039</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Fair market rents as determined for Sacramento County by HUD. Assistance levels will calculate off the market rents as follows: 0-9% AMI = 80% of market; 10-14% AMI = 60% of market; 15-24% AMI = 50% of market; 25-30% AMI = 40% of market. To update on an annual basis, change market rents only in yellow cells.*
Check Request Process

• Documents are reviewed by Housing Specialist, Program Director, Compliance Director and Finance director prior to disbursement of checks
• Check approval 3-5 days
• Special requests for those checks needed sooner
• First check is hand delivered; other months are mailed
• Monthly check in’s with property management
Staff Training

- Reassessment dictates if longer services are needed and monthly assistance changes
- Case Manager can advocate
- All reassessments approved by Program Director and Compliance Director
- PD conducts weekly supervision with case managers
- Monthly case conferencing with other RRH providers
Average length: 7.5 months (this includes zero income HH)

Average financial assistance: $5400

Our 3 grants allow us to provide up to 24 months. We tailor to what the household needs; averaging 7.5 months. In 3 years, we have had 5 HH receive over 12 months.
Exiting the program

• Reassessments conducted every 90 days: must be below 30% AMI

• Case management conducted weekly to link HH to services, increase income and maintain monthly budget
Move-In & Rental Assistance

Housing First Approach

- Homeless individuals should be assisted in accessing housing as quickly as possible
- Direct support through Case Management (depending on need of household)

Housing is a choice not a placement

- Input on preferences and presented with a range of housing options (Iain De Jong, Excellence in Housing-Based Case Management)
- Ensure housing is affordable/sustainable
Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA)

- Ongoing assessment of “But for” criteria
- Process for TFA
- Flexible to the needs of household
- Tailored to clients barriers to housing
- General Household items
- Gradual Reduction of TFA
Move-In & Rental Assistance

TFA Requests process

- Case Manager completes Housing Plan
- Lease or Intent to Rent completed (Promissory Note)

Supportive Services Request

- Number of Requests/Previous Funds Disbursed
- How funds support housing stability
- Checklist – Housing Stability Plan Completed/Rent Reasonableness
- Submitted through Case Manager > Coordinator > Financial Department
Move-In & Rental Assistance

Rapid TFA Assistance
• TFA processed in 3-5 days
• Security Deposits - No limit (within CA limits)
• Rental Assistance (6-9 months)
• General Household Items ($1500 per household)
• Utility Assistance (Deposit and Arrears)

Flexible to the needs of clients
• Some households may need additional assistance to remain stably housed
• Security deposits for clients with credit issues
• Rental assistance for prorated portions (mid month move-in)
• Utility Deposits/Enrolling in low income rates
General Household Items

- Refrigerator/Stove
- Beds with linen
- Plant/Picture Frames
- Cleaning Supplies
- Toiletry items
- Plates/Pots and Pans
- **Connect household with community partners to fill the gaps**
Move-In & Rental Assistance

Gradual Reduction of TFA

• Case Manager begins the conversation of cost sharing during enrollment

• Creates a Housing Plan with cost sharing

• Following move-in create a new budget

• Ensure they are connected to community resources in their communities
Move-In & Rental Assistance

Staff Training

- All staff attend collaborative training/orientation program
  - Weekly tasks/phone conference/best practices
- In-house orientation/training
  - Supervisor monitors progress
  - Learn program from screening to exit

Determining length of financial assistance

- Weekly case conference meetings/Individual

Supervision

- Team Meetings
- Review household budget
- Ensuring client meets “But for” criteria
QUESTIONS?
RESOURCES

Rapid Re-housing Performance Benchmarks and Program Standards

Rapid Re-housing “Know-How” Series
http://www.endhomelessness.org/library/entry/rrh-know-how

Rapid Re-housing: A History and Core Components
RRH WEBINAR SERIES: SAVE THE DATE!

RRH: Case Management and Services
Thursday, June 23, 2016, 11:00 a.m. – Noon
Register at:
https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/2017092938405814275