

## Draft Policy & Procedure: PSH to PSH Transfers

### PSH Transfer Policy:

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) is intended to be permanent. Transfers should not be used to exit participants from PSH, but rather as a way to ensure they have access to the appropriate housing and services. Transfers should occur only in times when a participant needs a different type of housing, a more appropriate service level, or if the current housing program is no longer available to the client. **Participants should be involved in the decision-making process** and have a clear understanding of the reasons for the transfer.

Transfers have been broken into four categories Administrative, Maintenance, Service level and Safety Related and are defined as follows:

- Administrative: transfers are transfers that are necessary based on the clients eligibility or needs outside of the property that are not behavior related. Reasons for these include a change in clients household size, client is ineligible for program/property they were referred to or there is a need to be in a specific service area or location related to clients medical/behavioral health insurance coverage/medical benefits.
- Service Level: transfers are related to client needing a intervention or program change to better serve the serve needs. This may include transferring from a single site to tenant based program or vice versa. It may also include a change in provider who may better serve their unique disability.
- Safety Related: Transfers include Violence and Against Women's Act (VAWA) transfers, safety concerns to a conflict onsite with another resident or staff, and safety "other" which allows for more explanation on the behalf of the serving program.
- Maintenance Issues: If the current housing unit requires extensive repairs or renovations that cannot be accommodated, a transfer may be necessary.

### Procedure:

- To initiate a transfer, the exiting program should work with the client to complete the PSH to PSH Transfer. During this process the exiting program should discuss clients needs and preferences in housings/programs utilizing the Program Menu as a resource and as a way to identify potential barriers transfer.
- Exiting program should attach Enrollment PSH packet, which includes any previously obtained vital documents, and a release to complete a background check is also required to be attached to the transfer request.
- Once PSH form is completed with all required documents these should be sent to [rehousingsupport@austinecho.org](mailto:rehousingsupport@austinecho.org).

- ECHO staff will evaluate transfer to determine need for PSH to PSH Committee Review. Administrative and VAWA related transfers do not require a full committee review, unless otherwise deemed necessary by ECHO.
- ECHO staff will provide an update on transfers completed on an Administrative level every month as a standing agenda item.
- All other transfer types must be evaluated by the PSH to PSH transfer committee.
- ECHO will update the PSH Menu and notify programs as new projects roll out/or sunset.

### **Committee Structure/Process:**

The committee will meet virtually one time a month, unless an adhoc meeting is requested by ECHO or the transferring program.

- The **goal of the committee** is to establish a consensus decision making process that:
  - Provides a supportive environment for technical assistance and creative problem solving in complex cases.
  - Determines if the program transfer is appropriate, and if so, discuss which programs may have openings for new referrals and which provider may be the best fit to serve the client
  - Evaluates how the PSH transfer will assist the client in succeeding in permanent supportive housing.
  - Provides support to Programs in cases where a PSH exit may be the most appropriate outcome.

**Members Should Include:** 1 Representative from all PSH Providers, 1 Persons with lived experience, and 1 ECHO Staff member. All participants should have access to the homeless management and Information System and have a signed confidentiality agreement. Providers should only share information that is relevant to housing status or information needed to determine outcome of transfer request. Voting members should self-identify conflicts of interest.

### **Standing Agenda items shall include:**

- Updates from ECHO on Administrative Transfers since Prior Months,
- Updates from Providers on upcoming or available units/program openings, Updates/Outcomes of Prior months approved transfers (if applicable),
- Current client transfer requests.

Possible outcomes options for transfers is as follows:

- **Approved:** The transfer should move forward. ECHO should provide an update on the receiving program within 14 days of approval. This may be done in the staffing itself or via email to community members.
- **Approved with Conditions:** The transfer is approved based on a specific request of the participant and/or exiting program.
- **Denied:** The consensus of the group is that a transfer should not be considered based on several factors including: safety, transfer likely not to result in assisting the client in succeeding in PSH, the consideration for a move up instead of transfer, patterns of behavior/time in PSH, or any other identified concern.

If a transfer is denied, the program can decide to continue to work with the client based on recommendations of the group OR may move forward with a program exit based on their program policy and procedures.

#### **Prioritization:**

- Prioritization of transfers is managed by the coordinated entry system. Considerations for prioritization include the order in which the transfers were received, the need to triage a transfer due to safety, administrative need, and/or the availability of receiving program to enroll a new client.

#### **Coordination:**

If a transfer is approved, transfers should be carefully planned and coordinated to minimize disruption for the participant and ensure a smooth transition to the new location. As a rule of thumb, programs should follow the process below. If not able to assist in the ways outlined below, it is the exiting programs responsibility to coordinate with receiving program on what assistance needed.

| Transferring Program   | Receiving Program   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Complete transfer form with client</li><li>● Obtain Signature for background check form</li><li>● Attach PSH packet from Program Enrollment</li><li>● Assist In obtaining needed items for transfer (IDs, Income docs etc.)</li><li>● Complete any needed documentation, like mutual rescission, to end current lease agreement if applicable.</li><li>● Exit from program in HMIS</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Review Background to ensure client meets property/program criteria.</li><li>● Complete Orientation, property tours, enrollment process as outlined by program procedures</li><li>● Complete Property Applications, required documentation for lease.</li><li>● Coordinate HQS inspection</li><li>● Assist with obtaining funds for move-in costs like app fees and deposits</li><li>● Coordinate lease signing and move ins</li></ul> |

|  |   |
|--|---|
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enroll into new Program in HMIS</li> </ul> |
|--|---|

### Timelines:

Within 30 days of ECHO assigning the program referral in HMIS, if the transferring participant has not completed the program enrollment process for the receiving program, the receiving program may request a new referral from ECHO for this opening and the participant can be offered the next available program vacancy.

If a program enrollment is not completed within 60 days the transfer will be cancelled and must be resubmitted for approval by the PSH Transfer Committee.

### Attachments:

- New PSH to PSH Attachment From
- PSH Menu

### Austin/Travis County CoC Transfer Request Form

A completed Austin/Travis County Continuum of Care Transfer Request Form must be submitted to the Coordinated Entry Lead Agency, ECHO, per the Austin/Travis County CoC Transfer Request Policy and Procedure, for consideration of participant transfer between programs. All persons are encouraged to reference the policy and procedure for full understanding of the adopted process. Participant Transfers should be rare, and reasoning that the participant or agency is advocating for a transfer to address identified needs and necessary accommodations should be fully described herein.

|   |                          |
|---|--------------------------|
| Participant HMIS #  |                          |
| Currently Enrolled Project  |                          |
| Enrollment Date:  |                          |
| Does the Client have Notice to Vacate/Eviction Notice/Non-Renewal? If so, date of expiration?   |                          |
| If yes to above, when does the notice selected above expire?  |                          |
| Has this client had a PSH Transfer Before?  |                          |
| How long has the client been enrolled in a PSH Program? (Original PSH enrollment)   |                          |
| How many apartments has the client lived in since original enrollment?  |                          |
| <b>Current Unit Info:</b>   |                          |
| Lease Start Date:   | Lease End Date:          |
| Participant Rental Amount:  | Are all bills paid?      |
| Identify Reason for transfer  | Individual safety - VAWA |
| Current Household Size:   |                          |
| Voucher/Rental Assistance Issuer:   |                          |
| <b>Participant Housing Needs/History</b>  |                          |
| Please describe why the transfer is requested and how it will address the participants unique needs and ongoing housing stability?                  |                          |
|   |                          |
| Which options and solutions have been discussed with the participant? What has been the level of engagement with the offered options and solutions? |                          |
|   |                          |
| Which options and solutions have been discussed with Property Management to resolve the concerns with the Participant/Program?                      |                          |
|   |                          |

|  |                |
|--|----------------|
|  |                |
| <b>New Program/Unit Preferences:</b>   |                |
| What Program(s) is the client interested in?   | 1.<br>2.<br>3. |
| What Program(s) would the client like to Avoid?  | 1.<br>2.<br>3. |
| What known Barriers does the client have that may make a transfer difficult? (Rental Debt, Criminal Background, Eviction, Pets, lack of IDs, Income docs Etc). |                |
| Is PSH Packet Attached?  |                |
| Is Background Check Release Attached?  |                |

For Review Panel Only:

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Transfer Denied

Transfer Approved

Conditional Approval

## Client Responsibility in Transfer Program FAQ

### **Q: What is a PSH transfer?**

**A:** A PSH (Permanent Supportive Housing) transfer is when you move from your current housing program to another one that may better fit your needs or goals.

### **Q: Why would I consider a PSH transfer?**

**A:** Transfers are considered when:

- You need a different type of housing or service level.
- Your current program is no longer safe (e.g., due to VAWA-related or other safety issues).
- Your current program is ending or you no longer meet eligibility requirements.
- You need to change providers.
- You need to add a household member.

### **Q: Who is eligible for a PSH transfer?**

**A:** You may be eligible if your current case manager can help demonstrate that your existing PSH program cannot meet your ongoing needs.

### **Q: What are my responsibilities as a PSH transfer applicant?**

**A:** You are expected to:

- Provide updated income documentation within 14 days of request.
- Complete the application/enrollment process within 30 days of being referred to a new program.
- Be actively involved in the transfer process.
- Understand that you may be responsible for some costs related to the move (e.g., deposits, utilities, moving expenses).

### **Q: Should I transfer programs?**

**A:** Consider the following:

- Expectations and services may differ between programs.
- Your rent or utility responsibilities may change.
- Not all moving costs may be covered by the program.
- You may not qualify for every program due to barriers like credit, background, or documentation.

**Q: What is the transfer process?**

A: You and your case manager will:

1. Complete the PSH Transfer Request Form.
2. Submit required eligibility documents.
3. Sign a background check release form.
4. Identify programs you are interested in and those you'd like to avoid.

The request is reviewed by a committee including providers and individuals with lived experience. The final decision will be communicated to you by your referring program, typically within 14 days of the review.

**Q: Where will I be transferred to?**

A: You'll review a PSH Program Menu with your case manager to identify preferred and non-preferred options. While the committee aims to match you to your preferences, availability may limit options.

**Q: Why might my transfer be denied?**

A transfer may be denied if:

- You have exhibited behavior that caused safety concerns (e.g., violence, arson, drug manufacturing).
- There have been repeated transfers without progress in addressing concerning behaviors.
- There has been serious or intentional property damage.

**Q: What happens if my transfer is denied?**

A: If your request is denied:

- Your current program may continue to support you based on internal policies.
- If you received a Notice to Vacate or Eviction, speak with your landlord to see if staying is possible.

**Q: Will my current or new program pay for my moving expenses?**

A: Resources vary by program. Discuss with your case manager and the new program to understand what support (e.g., deposits, application fees, furnishings) is available.

**Q: Will my current program provide my documents? What if I've lost some?**

A: Yes, your current program will submit all documents it has on file and may assist you in replacing lost documents.



**Q: Will my new program require additional documentation?**

A: Possibly. Each program may have its own intake and documentation requirements. The new program will inform you of what is needed and work with you to collect it.

**Q: Who finds my next apartment?**

A: Typically, the receiving program will assist you in locating and securing your next housing unit, though this may vary.