

Austin/Travis County Rapid Re-Housing Best Practices Week 3

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What We Do



Policy and Programs

- Carries out the vital work of educating policymakers and the field about key strategies and policies for ending and preventing homelessness.
- Keeps federal policymakers and legislators informed of the needs of people experiencing homelessness and the programs serving them.
- Leads advocacy efforts on a grassroots level.

Capacity Building

- Supports efforts to end homelessness by offering training and technical assistance tailored to communities' unique needs.
- Helps design and implement crisis systems, improve systems' performance, and utilize data to end homelessness, particularly with an equity lens.
- Provides online courses, trainings, and webinars to inform the field of best practices to end homelessness.

Homeless Research Institute

- Analyzes data to identify homelessness trends on national, local, and Continuum of Care levels.
- Publishes research that ensures policymakers, practitioners, the media, and the public have the best information about trends and emerging solutions to the problem.
- Uses an equity lens to identify disparities in homelessness data.

Lived Experience Innovation + Strategic Communications

National Alliance to End Homelessness Statements for Participation

The Alliance works to ensure that diverse voices are included as facilitators, attendees, and guests in our training forums. All voices are welcome.

The organization has a zero-tolerance policy for any form of discrimination or abusive behavior. The Alliance is committed to ensuring that all its events are safe and respectful for all participants.

Participants acknowledge that any form of discrimination, violence, or abusive behavior may result in removal from an office hour or forum depending on the situation.

If any discrimination is witnessed or experienced during the training, or if you feel unsafe, please notify any member of the Alliance staff.

The National Alliance to End Homelessness strives to create a diverse, inclusive, accepting, and safe space for everyone.

Training Series Overview

Week One

- Effective Homeless Response Systems
- Role of Rapid Re-Housing
- Foundations of Effective Rapid Re-Housing
- Core Components of Rapid Rehousing

Week Two

- Housing First Principles
- Importance of housing identification in client success
- Creative housing solutions in a difficult housing market
- RRRH Rent and Financial Assistance Principles and Program Standards

Week Three

- Role of the Case Manager in providing financial assistance using an individualized and flexible approach
- Progressive Engagement
- Rapid Re-Housing Case Management Principles and Program Standards
- Role of RRRH Case Manager in housing stabilization
- Effective and Empowering RRRH Case Management Practices

Week Four

- Principles and Program Standards of RRRH data collection
- Using system and program data to inform practice
- How to collect and measure program level data, understand the “story” that it tells, and use it to inform performance improvement
- Develop Action Plans for continuous improvement and Wrap Up



10/15/2024

Virtual Session Logistics



Mute Button



Comment and Ask Questions in Chat



Slides will be provided at the end of the series



Participation encouraged



Camera's On





"Good, better, best. Never let it rest. Until your good is better and your better is best." —Tim Duncan

Breakout Rooms Who's Here?

- Your name
- Identities, Pronouns
- Role/Organization
- Something you did regarding “finding” housing after hearing last Tuesday’s session ...
- Any Aha moments?

Aha!



REVIEW

Remember Session Two?



Housing First

HOUSING FIRST IS NOT

Just one type of program (not just PSH)

One-size fits only

Housing only

Setting people up for failure

A way to prioritize one population over another

HOUSING FIRST IS

A system-wide philosophical approach to many types of homeless assistance interventions

A philosophy that values flexibility, individualized supports, client choice, and autonomy

Supportive services that people choose for themselves are a critical part of a Housing First approach

The provision of a foundation of stability and health through permanent housing

A way to provide a housing intervention for everyone regardless of the severity of their needs

Core Components

- Not linear
- Each piece is critical
- Cannot work in silos
- RRH Case Management is an integral part of housing identification and financial assistance



FIND: Housing Identification and Practice

Philosophy

- Everyone is ready to be housed immediately
- Households need assistance to locate housing
- Landlord recruitment is essential to successful rapid re-housing

Practice

- Actively recruits and retains landlords
- Provides support during housing search
- Identifies and mitigates barriers to entering housing
- Ensures “good fit” between landlord and client
- Assists client to realistically identify the “right” housing option
- Facilitates shared housing

Pay: Financial Assistance

Philosophy

- Individualized assistance helps house more people
- Clients are resilient and can figure it out
- Financial assistance is to pay for housing, not alleviate poverty
- **NOT a one-size-fits-all**



Practice

- Individualized assessment to determine the “right” individual financial assistance (only what’s necessary)
- Encourages client contribution from the start
- Focuses on the \$\$ amount that household needs to pay for rent
- Identifies all potential resources of \$\$ to pay towards rent
- Client assumes maintaining housing – identifies and pursues what is needed

Financial Assistance in Practice

Summary

- Individualized assessment to determine the “right” individual financial assistance (only what’s necessary)
- Encourages client contribution from the start
- Focuses on the \$\$ amount that household needs to pay for rent
- Identifies all potential resources of \$\$ to pay towards rent
- Client assumes maintaining housing – identifies and pursues what is needed

TIP: Your job is to help them obtain housing – their job is to keep it; involve them in paying for housing from the start to increase *RAPID SUCCESSFUL EXITS*

RAPID RE-HOUSING CORE COMPONENTS

STAY IN HOUSING: The Standards



FIND HOUSING

Help people quickly find housing within one month or less.

PAY FOR HOUSING

Help people pay for housing short term; longer-term help an option.

STAY IN HOUSING

Help access services so people can stay in housing.



Pay for security deposits, move-in expenses...

HELP PAY RENT AND MOVE-IN ASSISTANCE



... and/or rent and utilities.



Length of assistance varies, but often **4 to 6 months**.

Language Intentionality

- Person- Centered Language
- Utilizing the term "Case Management"

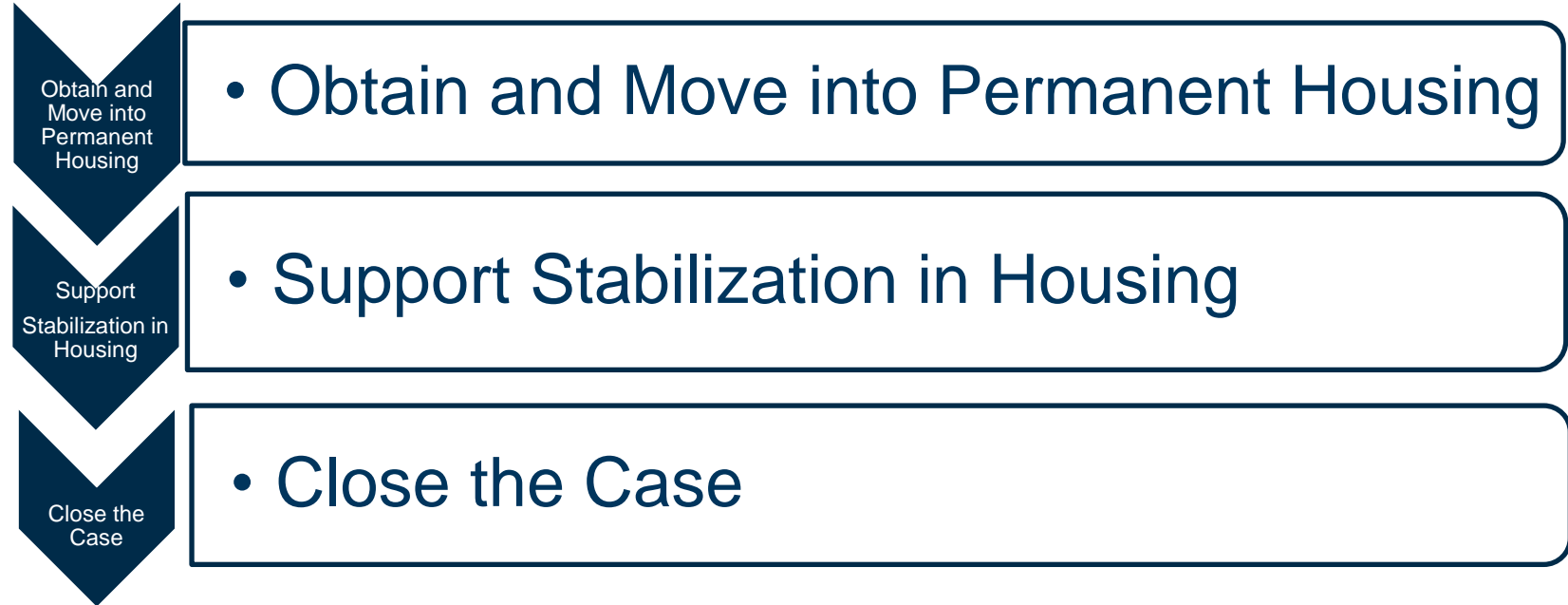


RRH Case Management: Principles

- Rapid re-housing case management should be **client-driven**.
- Rapid re-housing case management should **be flexible in intensity—offering only essential assistance** until or unless the participant demonstrates the need for or requests additional help.
- Rapid re-housing case management uses a **strengths-based** approach to empower clients.
- Rapid re-housing program case **management reflects the short-term nature of the rapid rehousing assistance**, which is to focus on housing retention and helping a household build a support network outside of the program.

Twenty-Four Standards

Case Management and Services Standards



Housing Plans: Think Multiple Plans!

Initial Emergency Needs and Housing Search Plan:

- Emergency health and safety needs
- Steps for housing search

Housing Retention Plans

- Sequence of plans, updated as goals are:
 - - achieved
 - - added;
 - - are too ambitious and need to be scaled back; or
 - - when circumstances change

Exit Plan

- Follow-up options
- Plans for possible future housing emergencies

4. Stay: Rapid Re-Housing Case Management

Focus on exiting program, not “staying in the program” successfully

Philosophy

- RRH case management should be **client-driven** and **voluntary**
- RRH case management should be **flexible in intensity**
- RRH case management uses a **strengths-based** approach to empower clients
- RRH case management reflects the short-term nature of the rapid re-housing assistance

Practice

- Acts as a “service broker” and “connector” to other supports – provides warm handoffs
- Assists to identify a support network
- Focuses all interaction on housing plan
- Engages household in problem solving and assuming rent quickly
- Every conversation is housing focused, with exit planning from day one



Role of “Case Manager”: Housing Stabilizer/Housing Specialist

Case management is the most critical component to the households maintaining housing and:

- Acts as a service broker
- Engages household to create their own housing **sustainability** plan
- Every conversation is **housing focused for maintaining the lease** (not focused on staying in the program)
- Assists to identify informal support networks within the community
- Provides warm handoffs to other providers

Warm Handoffs:

- Connections Critical for Rapid Rehousing
 - Rental/utility assistance
 - Furniture/household supplies
 - Faith Community
 - Mainstream benefit programs
 - Employment
 - Legal Services
 - Transportation
 - Health and wellness
 - General community engagement
 - Food security
 - Other

ROLE OF RRH CASE MANAGEMENT

The Practice: Phase One Obtain Housing



Role of Case Management and Services Standards Phase One

Obtain and
Move into
Permanent
Housing

Obtain and Move into Permanent Housing

- Resolve tenant screening barriers
- Obtain identification
- Resource move-in and furniture
- Review the lease

Active Engagement

Strengths-based case management



Foster hope by focusing on what is or has been historically successful for the person, setting the groundwork for realistic expectations



Inventory the positive building blocks that already exist that can serve as the foundation for growth and change



Reduce the power and authority barrier between the household and case manager by promoting the person to the level of expert in regard to what has worked, what does not work, and what might work in their situation and allows case manager to be a partner or guide

RRH Case Management in Practice



Case Management Communication Style



Case Management Standards of Practice

Rapport building

Be a real person

*Be nonjudgmental
about behaviors*

*Believe that
change is possible*

*Remember
positive
reinforcement*

*Get meaningful
supervision and
peer support*

*Be flexible and
creative*

*Make all your
appointments*

*Don't make
unrealistic claims*

Celebrate victories

*Build on
individuals'
strengths*

Breakout

10 minutes

Identify 2-3 ways RRH Staff can effectively support the client to sustain their housing long term.

Pick your best idea and be ready to report out.

“

If your services are meaningful to participants' goals, they will choose engagement.

Staff Observation from the HomeFree rapid re-housing program in Portland, OR

Stretch Break!!!!



ROLE OF RRH CASE MANAGEMENT

The Practice – Phase Two: Housing Stability



Role of Case Management and Services

Phase Two: Stabilization



Support Stabilization in Housing

- Home-based
- Identify and access family and friend support
- Identify and access culturally responsive community supports, services, employment, and income
- Help resolve disputes with the landlord or neighbors
- Help participants test and develop tenancy skills

Rapid Re-Housing Case Management and Services Standards...

- ❑ Actively engage participants in **voluntary** case management and service participation.
- ❑ Case plans are focused on addressing **barriers to housing retention**
- ❑ Case plans summarize the steps both the case manager and the participant will take to achieve **the participant's immediate and short-term goals**.
- ❑ Case managers use a **strengths-based** approach empower clients.
- ❑ Help participants **build a support network** outside of program and connect with community resources and service options that continue beyond program's duration.

Housing Retention Focused Services

- ❑ Housing plan goals focused on **compliance with lease**
- ❑ Focus on short-term goals
- ❑ Housing Stabilizer (RRH Case manager) updates plan regularly
- ❑ Intensity increases if needed (remember progressive engagement)
- ❑ Encourage client to test and learn problem solving skills with landlord
- ❑ Housing plan goals are SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-limited

Assessing Housing Retention Barriers

Patterns in a person's history that have resulted in housing crisis or housing loss **AND** could recur and jeopardize new housing: non-payment of rent, lease violations, property damage, conflict with other tenants, poor landlord references

DO NOT assess characteristics, such as poverty or a disability, unless they have a clear relationship to past housing instability

DO NOT make assumptions; look at facts!

Home Based Services

- ❑ Meetings occur in the home or a location of the client's choosing
- ❑ Case managers (housing specialist) respect a program participant's space as their own
- ❑ Policies and procedures include clear safety procedures for home visits



Voluntary Services

- ❑ Client decides when visits occur, not how often
- ❑ Identify and support household strengths
- ❑ Client identifies goals for how they will keep their housing



RRH CASE MANAGEMENT

The Housing Plan



Housing Plans to Maintain Housing

Remember the Lease

How will the case management plan assist the household to:

- Pay the rent on time?
- Treat the building with respect?
- Treat other people with respect?
- Follow and maintain the lease?

**If your clients can do these things,
they can maintain their housing!**

1. Pay Rent on Time

Understanding the Lease

Paying for my apartment	
How much rent do I pay each month?	
When is my rent due each month?	
Where do I send my rent payment?	
If the rent is late, is there a late fee? How much is the late fee?	

Review the lease
regularly, what
does it mean?

- Tenant responsibilities
- Living arrangements
- Healthy Boundaries
- Resourcefulness

Standard budgets don't work for most people

Honest Monthly Budget: OrgCode

The Honest Monthly Budget Sample

Client: Chris	Version: 1	Date: February 6
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Things that I have to spend money on:		Formal ways I get money:	
Rent	\$604	Job	\$0
Utilities	\$0	General Welfare	\$731
Food	\$100	Disability	\$0
Arrears	\$300	Pension	\$0
Repairs	\$0	Inheritance	\$0
TOTAL	\$1004	TOTAL	\$731

Other money that comes in goes toward:		Informal ways I get money:	
Child Support	\$0	Binning/Bottle Collecting	\$100
Debts	\$50	Odd Jobs	\$75
Cigarettes	\$100	Treasure Hunting	\$0
Coffee	\$0	Baby Sitting	\$50
Alcohol	\$200	Sex Work	\$0
Other Drugs	\$0	Drug Running/Dealing	\$0
Health Stuff	\$30	Day Labour	\$200

Source: [OrgCode](#)

2. Treat the Building with Respect

- Some program participants have never had their own housing and may not be familiar with knowledge/skills
- Ensure client has what they need to resolve common issues
- If there is a history of damage, find out how it occurred, then deal with the cause
- Skills are taught most effectively where they will be used—in this case, in the tenant's own unit

Common
Issues

Common
Solutions

3. “Peaceful/Quiet Enjoyment”

- A clause in most leases: Tenant shall not disturb the peaceful /quiet enjoyment of the premises
- Intentionally vague language allows landlord to evict for almost any problem behaviors such as failure to control trash, children, guests and noise, and/or conflict with other tenants
- Tenants are often not aware of this lease requirement; explain it to them!
- Watch for violations when visiting the home and ask about any problems when you talk with the landlord

4. Follow the Lease – Long tenancy

Maintain housing

- Read and explain—in **simple terminology**—the client’s lease (or have a tenant/legal service provider “translate”).
- If the language is too obscure, consult a legal services or tenant advocacy resource to identify the critical requirements.

What are the rules about noise?	
What pets are allowed?	
Are there rules about housecleaning?	
Can the landlord enter my apartment?	

BE PROACTIVE: Anticipate Problems

- Plan ahead, with your participant, about how to respond if it looks like a previous rental problem is recurring.
- For example...
 - How will you prevent your friends from using your apartment as their party room?
 - What will you do if you know you won't have all the rent on time?
 - How can you stop your friends or visitors from making noise in common areas that bothers the neighbors?
 - What can you say if someone in your family wants to borrow the rent money—and you don't think they can pay you back by the first of the month?

Culturally Responsive Resources/Services

- How do we ensure equity & Justice....
 - Who are our partners?
 - How and who do we hire?
 - How do we train?
 - How do we know?

RRH CASE MANAGEMENT

Closing the Case



Case Management and Services Standards

Phase Three: Closing the Case



- Close the case when participant is no longer going to be imminently homeless
- Case management can continue after financial assistance ends
- Warm hand offs to mainstream and community-based services

OrgCode Exit Planning Tool

EXCELLENCE IN HOUSING

Exit Planning

Client:	Version:	Date:
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About Us

Family Name:	
Head(s) of Household:	
Address:	
Health Insurance	

Emergency/Medical Contacts

Role/Relationship	Name	Telephone Number
Emergency	Emergency Services	9-1-1
1.		
2.		
3.		

Our Plan to Maintain Housing

I will continue to **pay our rent** by making sure we do the following things:

I will make sure that **we don't get kicked out of the apartment** by doing/not doing the following things:

Remember...

Start with the end in mind...

Exit planning starts at program entry

Every engagement is focused on successful exit to sustain housing (not program compliance)

Breakout Discussion

7 minutes

How do we determine when to close a case?

What does sustainability mean?

Ideas on preparing households to sustain housing

Large group debrief!

Str

Family

Name: _____
Contact Info: _____
Type of help: _____

Name: _____
Contact Info: _____
Type of help: _____

Name: _____
Contact Info: _____
Type of help: _____

Community Assistance Programs

Name: _____
Contact Info: _____
Type of help: _____

Name: _____
Contact Info: _____
Type of help: _____

Name: _____
Contact Info: _____
Type of help: _____

Friends

Name: _____
Contact Info: _____
Type of help: _____

Name: _____
Contact Info: _____
Type of help: _____

Name: _____
Contact Info: _____
Type of help: _____

Strengths: _____

May need support with _____

Other Community Resources

Name: _____
Contact Info: _____
Type of help: _____

Name: _____
Contact Info: _____
Type of help: _____

Name: _____
Contact Info: _____
Type of help: _____



Remember – When Working With High Barrier Households

- Working with high barrier households is not much different than any household - No assessment for client resiliency
- Individualize, individualize, Individualize - Not one size fits all intervention
- We can't tell who will and won't be successful
- Belief that Rapid Re-Housing can and will work for each household

Strategies for Substance Abuse

Does it interfere with housing?

- Harm reduction
- Budgeting
- Weekly rent payments
- Find understanding landlords
- Discuss natural consequences of actions
- Representative payee
- Motivational Interviewing

Case Management for Clients with Challenges

- Identify strengths and natural supports
- Progressive engagement/Critical Time Intervention
- Focus on plans for stability
- Practice problem solving
- Re-teach coping skills
- Partners, partners, partners
 - PATH, SOAR
 - Know who does what and make warm connections
- Motivational interviewing
- Identify safety issues, for both client and staff

Case Management: Self Care

- **Individual Self-Care:**
- Share the ways you prioritize and practice self-care.
- **Organizational Self-Care:**
- Share how your organization supports and promotes self-care

Summary

An effective engagement starts with the first meeting

Focus on positive exit for sustainability from day one, NOT program compliance

Role of Case Manager is to help client problem solve

Every meeting is focused on maintaining the lease and taking over housing costs – “how will you pay the \$1500 for your rent in December”

Strengths and positive reinforcement

Belief in everyone’s ability to make it

Live in reality

NEXT STEPS



Practice Activity:



Re-Housing Case Management

- How will we incorporate the idea of start with an exit plan.
- How do we engage clients and get their “buy-in” to rapid re-housing? How do we ensure the “short term” nature?
- How do we promote a client driven, strengths-based approach? What training do will or will we provide to staff?
- Are home-based services a requirement for our case managers? Do clients determine when those visits occur: What safety training do we provide?
- Is financial assistance contingent on participation in certain services?
- Do our job descriptions reflect the rapid re-housing approach of homebased, strength-based case management?
- How do we communicate their responsibility for maintaining housing?
- How are clients assisted in mapping a support network?
- Do we maintain a list of community resources? How do we ensure warm handoffs?

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Q&A

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