

2-550 Myriam's House CoC Programs (includes Myriam's House Permanent Housing Program and St. Vincent de Paul Permanent Housing Project)

I. Population Served and Grant Requirements

The HUD Supported Housing Program serves men, women and children who are Level 1 homeless. The current St. Vincent de Paul grant targets single women and single women with children where the head of household has a disability for which they receive a disability check from the Social Security Administration.

A. HUD requirements

1. Must meet the HUD definition of literally homeless, use Literally Homeless form and/or required signed documentation from shelter or homeless outreach provider.
2. Meets HUD CoC disability criteria.
3. Current rent has to meet Fair Market Housing rent guidelines and Rent Reasonableness guidelines.
4. No income threshold at initial evaluation.
5. Clients receiving rental assistance must pay a portion of the rent as required by HUD CoC rule.
6. Uses a Housing First model.
7. Referrals received only through the Coordinated Entry process, as soon as it is up and running. Referrals must be approved by the Shelter/Residential Director.
 - a. Chronically homeless clients receive first priority.
 - b. If an open bed/slot cannot be filled with a person/family who is chronically homeless within two weeks, a person/family who meets all criteria except chronically homeless, can receive services.

B. Meet the specific guidelines of grant application and/or funding for this rental assistance.

1. Current grants target single women and women with children.
2. Current grants applications require that clients receive a disability benefits from the Social Security Administration.
3. St. Vincent de Paul cannot provide CoC services to house a client at One Stop rental units. They may be eligible for another agency's COC housing services, or may choose another rental unit.

These programs provide long-term rental assistance, case management and supportive services within HUD CoC guidelines for an indefinite period of time or as long as funding for program lasts. The St. Vincent de Paul COC grant contract may further limit, but not expand, the services we are allowed to provide.

II. Goals

1. To help program participants obtain and remain in permanent housing;
2. To help participants increase skills and/or income. Meeting this goal will allow the participants to secure an income to live as independently as possible; and
3. To help participants achieve greater self-determination, goals are client driven.. The condition of homelessness itself can be damaging to one's self-determination; achieving a greater sense of self-determination enables the participant to gain needed confidence to make the transition out of homelessness.

III. Program Elements are:

1. Provide supportive services to maintain housing and income goals and achieve greater self-determination.
 - a. St. Vincent de Paul uses the community based and mainstream services from diverse funding streams for housing and supportive services.
 - b. Usually through case management, and sometimes through direct service, St. Vincent de Paul enables a wide array of community supportive services to meet the multidimensional needs of clients.
 - c. Our service delivery approach emphasizes community-based, client-driven services. Client self-determination is a foundational component of all these services.
 - d. Our case manager is there to provide ongoing and responsive case management and support along with crisis services for the client.
2. Direct services supporting program goals, such as rental assistance and other concrete services such as furniture, transportation, and other St. Vincent de Paul and CoC direct services.
3. Case management and advocacy such as linkages to mainstream and community resources.
4. Supportive and crisis counseling such as motivational interviewing and de-escalation services.
5. Teaching and modeling life skills.

IV. Housing First Model

Housing First offers individuals and families experiencing homelessness immediate access to permanent affordable or supportive housing. Housing First permanent supportive housing models are designed for individuals or families who have complex service needs, who are often turned away from other affordable housing settings, and/or who are least likely to be able to proactively seek and obtain housing on their own. Clients must continue to be eligible for CoC services in order to maintain their participation in the program.

The core components of Housing First are:

1. Low barrier entry; high barrier exit.
2. Admission/tenant screening and selection practices promote the acceptance of applicants regardless of their sobriety or use of substances, completion of treatment, and participation in services.
3. Applicants are seldom rejected on the basis of poor credit or financial history, poor or lack of rental history, minor criminal convictions, or behaviors that indicate a lack of “housing readiness.”
4. Housing accepts referrals directly from shelters, street outreach, drop-in centers, and other parts of crisis response system frequented by vulnerable people experiencing homelessness.
5. Supportive services emphasize engagement and problem-solving over therapeutic goals. Services plans are highly tenant-driven without predetermined goals. Participation in services or program compliance is not a condition of permanent supportive housing tenancy. Rapid re-housing programs may require case management as condition of receiving rental assistance.
6. Use of alcohol or drugs in and of itself (without other lease violations) is not considered a reason for eviction from program.

7. Tenant selection plan for permanent supportive housing includes a prioritization of eligible tenants based on criteria other than “first come/first serve” such as duration/chronicity of homelessness, vulnerability, or high utilization of crisis services.
8. Tenants in permanent supportive housing are given problem solving services, support and advocacy in working with their property owner in paying their tenant share of rent (after subsidy) on time. They are also offered assistance with financial management, including identifying representative payee resources for them in their family or community.
9. Services are informed by a harm reduction philosophy that recognizes that drug and alcohol use and addiction are a part of tenants’ lives, where tenants are engaged in non-judgmental communication regarding drug and alcohol use, and where tenants are offered education regarding how to avoid risky behaviors and engage in safer practices.
10. Case management will help client identify building and rental unit that may include special physical features that accommodate disabilities, reduce harm, and promote health among tenants.
11. Every effort is made to offer a transfer to a tenant from one housing situation to another, if a tenancy is in jeopardy. Whenever possible, eviction back into homelessness is avoided.

V. How a Client Enters the Program

1. The COC Case Manager meets with the referral source to discuss the referral case and basic client and program information. The COC Case Manager makes an appointment with the client directly or through the referral source.

2. Initial Meeting

- a) Verbally confirm that client is literally homeless.
- b) Verbally confirm that client (Head of Household) receives SSA benefits.
- c) Tell client about program
- d) Does client want to participate and is program the appropriate program for the client.
- e) If client does not meet the HUD or St. Vincent de Paul grant criteria, inform client they do not appear to be eligible for CoC rental assistance program. Most clients will not want to apply for assistance when told they do not appear to qualify. If client still wants to apply for the COC program, schedule appointment with them to do eligibility assessment.
- f) The initial meeting and eligibility assessment can be and often are combined.

3. Eligibility Assessment

Obtain the following either from the client or with the client’s assistance. The case manager should assist the client when this is needed. A release of information is needed to communicate with other agencies. Some of these can sometimes be gotten on-line if client has and can manage their on-line SSA account. St. Vincent de Paul staff do NOT get or use the client’s log-in and password. Staff can assist printing once the client has logged in.

a. Homeless Verification

- i. Verification of Level 1 homelessness. Use forms: Intake – Literally Homeless, Intake - Domestic Violence, Intake - Homeless And Institution LT 90.
- ii. Documentation should usually include third party verification. A letter from shelter or Outreach service provider documenting literally homeless status. This letter often comes from the shelter.

- iii. Self-certification can be used if third party documentation cannot be obtained. This requires Shelter/Residential Director approval.
- iv. Use the Chronical Homelessness Documentation Checklist for verification.
- b. CM should make sure that there is a current VI-SPDAT. If none is completed, the CM shall complete a new VI-SPDAT. A current VI-SPDAT is one completed for the current homeless episode.
- c. Disability Documentation
 - i. Myriam's House Project - A copy of the Benefit Award letter from the Social Security Administration (SSA) for the SSI and/or SSDI disability.
 - ii. SVDP PH Project - A copy of the Benefit Award letter from the Social Security Administration (SSA) for the SSI and/or SSDI disability, OR a completed HUD VERIFICATION OF DISABILITY form.
- d. A copy of the DCFS budget slip, if the client receives any economic assistance from the state. FITAP, Child Support, SNAP, and Kinship Care information can be found on this budget slip. This is often called the "Food Stamps budget slip", and can be printed on-line.
- e. Other income verification(s).
- f. State ID/Driver's License and Social Security cards.
 - i. If minor children are part of the client household, identification documentation may be birth certificates, social security cards, or budget slip from DCFS. Other identification documentation must be approved by the Shelter/Residential Director.
- g. Staff make decision about client eligibility into program with prior approval of the Shelter/Residential Director. The client is "admitted" to be program on the date the Shelter/Residential Director approves the clients for admittance. The Shelter/Residential Director may "admit" the client before all documents are gathered. Staff give/send a letter of acceptance or denial to client.

4. Enter Client Into Program

- a. Initial Forms
 - i. Client signs Homeless/Residential/Shelter Services Agreement form.
 - ii. Client signs LSNDC Release of Information (ROI) form.
- b. Housing Search Services**
- 1) Finding an rental unit
 - a) SVDP Myriam's Permanent Housing Project - SVDP Myriam's Permanent Housing Project is a scattered site, rental assistance program. Clients may need assistance finding an rental unit.
 - i) Case manager provides list of rental unit property owners St. Vincent de Paul is aware of that might fit client needs. Our case management also supports the client with rental unit information and referrals along with concrete services like rental unit search, transportation, etc. to help the client find a home they like in an area and price that will work for them.
 - ii) Case manager assists client to consider location, etc, in relation to work, schools, bus, and other concerns.

- iii) Once a potential rental unit is found, the client gets a letter from property owner saying that the client is accepted into rental unit. The case manager helps client with this process as needed.
 - iv) Case manager gets a release signed so St. Vincent de Paul staff may share information with the property owner.
 - v) Assist client with obtaining utility services. St. Vincent de Paul may pay (as allowed by grant funding and budget) for utility deposits and utility arrears to enable a client to move into a COC permanent housing rental unit.
 - vi) CM contacts and discusses SVDP COC program with property owner to make sure the property owner is willing to work with SVDP and the client.
 - b) The SVDP Permanent Housing project is a project based program. Clients will live in the St. Vincent de Paul owned rental units at 1411 W. Chimes rental unit building. Clients are accepted into this program only when there is a vacancy in this building. Utilities are included in the rent for these rental units.
- 2) Approving the Rental Unit
- a) Complete Rent Reasonableness and Fair Market Rent forms. This can be done using SVDP Excel form.
 - b) Complete Resident Rent or Occupancy Charge Calculation form
 - c) SVDP Myriam's Permanent Housing Project – Complete the SVDP Resident Rent Calculation form. Client signs off on and receives a copy of the Resident Rent Calculation form.
 - i) SVDP Permanent Housing Project – Complete the SVDP Resident Occupancy Charge Calculation form. Client signs off on and receives a copy of the Resident Occupancy Charge Calculation form. Currently, the SVDP Occupancy Charge is \$0.00.
 - d) CM inspects rental unit. Completes HPRP Housing Habitability Standards Inspection Checklist and the HPRP Lead Screening Worksheet.
 - e) Check if housing company, vender and/or property owner is considered to be a “Debarred Company”. Go to https://www.sam.gov/portal/SAM/?portal:componentId=da4318dc-6b96-4dc1-be67-739ce150f67f&interactionstate=JBPNs_r00ABXc0ABBfanNmQnJpZGdlVmlld0lkAA AAAQATL2pzZi9mdW5jdGlvbmlkLmF1dD0kAA&portal:type=action##11
 - i) Click on **Search Records** button.
 - ii) Click on **Advanced Search - Exclusion**
 - iii) Read the pop-up message and Click **OK**
 - iv) Click the box for **Single Search**.
 - v) Type in name of property owner into QUICK SEARCH. Click on Search button. Print results and place in case record.
 - vi) Repeat search for owner's name, company name or other different names for property owner, if you have it.
 - vii) If disbarred, St. Vincent de Paul may not provide rental assistance to this client with this property owner.
 - viii) Print out the results, sign and date the results, and file in record.
 - f) Determine if there are grant funds available to pay for the deposit.
- 3) Obtain Shelter/Director approval for client entry into program and into a rental unit.

- 4) Enter client into HMIS.
 - a) Review and update
 - i) Client Profile tab including entering emergency contacts and client phone number.
 - ii) Household tab.
 - iii) Complete ROI tab.
 - iv) Complete Entry/Exit tab.
 - (1) Enter client (and household members) into the MYRIAM'S HOUSE PERMANENT HOUSING PROGRAM (19731) or SVDP PH Project and complete all fields. The project entry date is the date that client(s) were admitted to the project as indicated by the Shelter/Residential Director note date approving admission.
 - (2) Complete move-in in HMIS. Move-in means a lease arrangement has been made, the client has a key or entry ability to the unit and that the client has physically slept in the unit. The program entry date is usually an earlier and different date than the move-in date.
 - (3) Exit client (and household members) from any existing SVDP programs, including SVDP Coordinated Assessment program. A client can be in a shelter and a permanent housing program, only as long as they have not moved in.

Payment Process for Rental Unit

The following is the Initial Payment and lease signing process.

- 1) Myriam's House Permanent Housing Project
 - a) Complete Purchase Order for rent, and get Shelter/Residential Director's signature.
 - b) Complete Purchase order for deposit (when applicable), and get Shelter/Residential Director's signature.
 - c) Bring Purchase Order(s) to Bookkeeping for check writing. When check(s) is ready, the bookkeeper gives case manager the original check, a copy of check, and the original purchase order.
 - d) The client, case manager and property owner meet to sign lease and complete the first month's rent and deposit payment process.
 - i) The case manager has to carefully review the lease to make sure it is filled out correctly and meets the CoC lease policy requirements.
 - ii) Client and property owner sign lease. Client and St. Vincent de Paul get copy of lease.
 - iii) Client pays their portion of the rent (if applicable). Property owner gives receipt to client and copy of receipt to St. Vincent de Paul.
 - iv) The case manager gives check to property owner for SVdP portion of rent.
 - e) Place copies of checks, receipts and purchase orders in record.
- 2) St. Vincent de Paul Permanent Housing Project
 - a) Case manager uses the standard St. Vincent de Paul lease. The case manager prepares the lease for signature with a standard lease period of one year.
 - b) The client, case manager, Bookkeeper and Shelter/Residential Director meet to sign lease and complete the first month's occupancy charge and deposit payment process.
 - i) Client pays their portion of the occupancy charge (if applicable). Occupancy charges are paid by Money order made out to St. Vincent de Paul. The SVDP Bookkeeper

receives the money and provides a receipt to the client. A copy of the receipt is kept in the case record.

- ii) The lease is signed by the client and the Shelter/Residential Director for St. Vincent de Paul.

The following is the monthly Ongoing Payment process.

- 1) Myriam's House Permanent Housing Project
 - a) Complete Purchase Order for rent, and get Shelter/Residential Director's signature.
 - b) Complete Purchase order for deposit (when applicable), and get Shelter/Residential Director's signature.
 - c) Bring Purchase Order(s) to Bookkeeping for check writing. When check(s) is ready, the bookkeeper gives case manager the original check, a copy of check, and the original purchase order.
 - d) The case manager coordinates with the client and landlord to ensure the client pays their portion. The case manager must obtain their rent receipt before the case manager mails (delivers if necessary) the SVDP rent check.
- 2) SVDP Permanent Housing Project
 - a) The client pays their occupancy charge (if any) by Money Order to the SVDP Bookkeeper, located at 220 St. Vincent de Paul Place. The Bookkeeper will give the client a receipt with a copy to the case manager.

Initial Services

- 1) Assist with client move into rental unit as needed. Staff are not expected to physically move clients' belongings into the rental unit.
- 2) Initial Home visit on/after day client moves in.
 - a) Assess how the client is doing.
 - b) Assists the client with any difficulties or issues.
 - c) Case Plan
 - i) Develop a client driven Case Plan with the client, based on assessments and current strengths/needs.
 - ii) The case plan must contain at least one goal in each of the following goal areas (called **Classification** in HMIS):
 - (1) **Housing Stability** – Steps the client takes to maintain permanent housing.
 - (2) **Employment** or **Economic** or **Financial Stability** - develop goals and action steps to maintain or increase income.
 - (3) Linkages to Mainstream Resources/Supportive Services – There are numerous Classification areas that would be used in case plan as a supportive service. The case plan must have at least one, although most clients may have more than one.
 - iii) If applicable, the case plan must include a plan for children attending school. The case manager is the identified staff person responsible for assisting the client in getting homeless services for any school aged children in the family. As the client becomes permanently housed, the case manager assists the family to move children from homeless-based school services to regular school services.
 - iv) The case plan is signed by the client, Case Manager and Shelter/Residential Director. A copy is given to the client and placed in the case file.

3) Ongoing Services

Case management services are not a client requirement of the program. Through the use of engagement strategies, St. Vincent de Paul anticipates eventually engaging all of its clients in case management services.

Case management services are all the activities that support the client through the case plan. Additionally, case management assists the client in managing day to day needs and emergencies.

1) Concrete services

2) Case management visits are face to face visits.

The case plan typically drives the topics needing discussion each month, with the exception of day to day needs and emergencies. Staff will use problem solving, supportive counseling, crisis management, de-escalation, Motivational Interviewing, and harm reduction strategies.

3) Other services as needed

5. Annual Reassessment

- a. Debarment search.
- b. Fair Market Rent and Rent Reasonableness calculation worksheet.
- c. HPRP Housing Habitability Standards Inspection Checklist.
- d. HPRP Lead Screening Worksheet.
- e. Complete income assessment with all income verification documents.
- f. Complete Resident Rent or Occupancy Charge Calculation form.
- g. Case plan update.
- h. HMIS interim annual update.
- i. New lease signing.

Discharge

Complete the HMIS Exit Assessment.

Client Non-Payment of Contribution Toward Rent

The HUD CoC rule requires that each program participant, on whose behalf rental assistance payments are made, must pay a contribution toward rent consistent with the requirements of the interim rule.

If a client does not pay his/her portion of rent by the due date each month, the case manager will work supportively with them to facilitate payment. Included in this support, the case manager will remind client that payment of their contribution portion is required to maintain eligibility in the program. The case manager will assist the client with budgeting skills, resource identification and negotiation with the landlord. If the client does not pay the required client portion of the rent by the due date of the subsequent month, an eligibility assessment will be redone.

Documentation

See 1-207 for Records policy. Every case contact is documented in the Client Notes on the Client Profile tab of HMIS.