

**Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Continuum of Care (CoC)  
CoC Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) Assistance and Prioritization  
Policies and Procedures**

These policies and procedures shall apply to CoC Program-funded PSH programs, which also include programs previously known as Shelter Plus Care. CoC-funded PSH programs shall operate in compliance with HUD's CoC Rule at 24 CFR 578.

**I. Policies:**

The following policies shall apply to HUD-funded CoC PSH programs in Winston-Salem/Forsyth County:

- A. All CoC PSH beds shall be dedicated or prioritized to chronically homeless persons through the CoC grant application process, until the program year after which the CoC declares that chronic homelessness has effectively been ended in the CoC.
- B. CoC PSH programs will be targeted to serve persons with the highest needs and greatest barriers towards obtaining and maintaining housing rather than on a "first-come, first-serve" basis and/or based on selection of those who are deemed most likely to succeed.
- C. CoC PSH shall be operated as a Housing First model and will not place preconditions or eligibility requirements beyond HUD's eligibility requirements and will not require participants to participate in supportive services or be subject to other rules such as sobriety as a condition of housing.
- D. All CoC Program-funded PSH programs will accept referrals only through a single prioritized list of potential participants maintained by the Community Intake Center (CIC).
- E. As required by the HUD CoC Rule at 24 CFR 578.3, the CoC will use a standardized assessment tool for coordinated intake and assessment, including use for initial assessment PSH referrals; however, as the basis for CoC PSH tenant selection, the CoC shall use the order of priority encouraged in HUD Notice CPD-14-012, which is summarized in Table 1, which is found at the end of this document.
- F. If two households present for assistance and fall under the same order of priority, but one is a veteran household, the veteran household should be prioritized first.

**II. Key Definitions**

**A. Housing First.** Housing First is an approach in which housing is offered to homeless people without imposing preconditions (such as sobriety, mental health treatment, or a minimum income threshold) or service participation requirements and in which rapid placement and stabilization in permanent housing are primary goals. PSH projects that use a Housing First approach promote the acceptance of applicants regardless of their sobriety or use of substances, completion of treatment, or participation in services.

**B. Chronically Homeless** persons are defined in the HUD CoC Rule at 578.3. In summary, chronically homeless persons are individuals or families who meet all of the following criteria:

1. Are coming from the streets or emergency shelter

2. Have been homeless in the streets or in shelter 1 year continuously or 4 times in the last 3 years
3. Are diagnosed with a disabling condition

**C. Severe Service Needs**—Persons with severe service needs are described in HUD Notice CPD-14-012. In summary, persons having the most severe service needs:

1. Have a history of high use of crisis services such as emergency rooms, jails, and psychiatric facilities
2. Have significant health or behavioral health challenges that require support to stay in housing
3. Can have their severe service needs identified and verified through administrative data of the CoC or other systems (e.g. the mental health system, hospitals or jails) and/or the use of the standardized assessment tool used for coordinated intake and assessment

**D. Permanent Supportive Housing** means permanent housing in which supportive services are provided to assist homeless persons with a disability to live independently.

**E. Dedicated PSH Bed**—A bed in a unit in a CoC PSH program which has been funded specifically by HUD as a bed dedicated for use only by chronically homeless persons.

**F. Prioritized PSH Bed**—A bed in a unit in a CoC PSH program for which the CoC has made an annual commitment to prioritize the program for chronically homeless persons, even though the program was not originally dedicated to chronically homeless persons.

### **III. Eligibility**

Subject to the prioritization requirements described in this document, eligible persons for CoC PSH may include homeless, disabled persons coming directly from emergency shelter or places not meant for human habitation. Persons coming from other locations shall not be eligible.

### **IV. Services**

Under the HUD CoC Rule, PSH projects must provide supportive services for the residents to enable them to live as independently as is practicable throughout the duration of their residence in the project.

### **V. Special Populations**

CoC Program-funded PSH shall follow the order of priority shown in Table 1 while also considering the goals and any identified target populations served by the project. For example, a CoC Program-funded PSH project that is funded to target homeless persons with HIV/AIDS will prioritize its turnover beds to persons as shown in Table 1 to the extent to which persons with HIV/AIDS meet the criteria in Table 1. If no homeless persons with HIV/AIDS are on the CIC priority list and meet priorities 1 to 4, then the program may select a homeless participant from the CIC priority list who has HIV/AIDS and who does not meet any of priorities 1 to 4.

## **VI. Documentation**

PSH programs must collect, maintain and retain documentation to substantiate each participant's status in relation to the criteria in Table 1. Programs must include a summary statement of eligibility determination in each participant file.

- A. Homelessness**—Evidence must be documented to show that the head of household is currently homeless and is living in an emergency shelter or a place not meant for human habitation. To properly document the length of time homeless, it is important to document the start and end date of each occasion of homelessness.
  
- B. One Year Homeless**--To document chronic homeless status for homeless occasions that were continuous for at least one year, an individual or head of household must have been living in emergency shelters or in places not meant for human habitation for one year without a break. A “break” is considered to be at least seven or more consecutive nights not in an emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation. At least 9 months of the year must be documented by (1) HMIS data, (2) a written referral or (3) a written observation by an outreach worker.
  
- C. Homeless Four Times in Three Years**-To document chronic homeless status based on at least four episodes of homelessness in three years, at least three of the occasions must be documented by either (1) HMIS data, (2) a written referral or (3) a written observation by an outreach worker.

A single encounter with a homeless service provider on a single day within 1 month that is documented through third-party documentation is sufficient to consider an individual or family as homeless for the entire month unless there is any evidence that the household has had a break in homeless status during that month (e.g., evidence in HMIS of a stay in transitional housing).

**D. Disabling Condition**—Evidence of a disabling condition may include:

1. Written verification of the condition from a professional licensed by the state to diagnose and treat the condition;
2. Written verification from the Social Security Administration, such as an award letter;
3. Copies of a disability check (e.g., Social Security Disability Insurance check or Veterans Disability Compensation).

**E. Prioritization**—PSH programs must document that the CoC's prioritization policy and procedures have been incorporated into program intake procedures. Furthermore, intake records for each participant must show that the prioritization procedures have been followed.

## **VII. Housing Placement and Eligibility**

Once a chronically homeless household has been determined to be eligible and is accepted into a CoC PSH program, the household remains eligible even if they do not remain in emergency shelter or places not meant for human habitation while awaiting housing placement. Such persons may stay with friends or family or in hotels and retain eligibility for the PSH program. They may also stay in transitional housing temporarily, as long as no transitional housing requirements are placed on the program participants and as long as the PSH program is actively assisting the participant to be permanently housed as soon as possible. This provision does not extend to persons enrolled in transitional housing that were considered chronically homeless prior to entry into the transitional housing program. Such persons lose their chronic homeless status by staying in transitional housing.

## **VIII. Ending Chronic Homelessness**

If at any time there are no chronically homeless persons in the CoC, priorities for selection of participants for dedicated and prioritized PSH beds will be revisited in the context of HUD Notice CPD-14-012 and other HUD guidance.

**Table 1: CoC Permanent Supportive Housing Priorities**

<b>Priority Order</b>	<b>Chronically Homeless</b>	<b>Severe Service Needs</b>	<b>Other Requirement</b>
1	Yes	Yes	At least 12 months continuous or at least 12 months cumulative across 4 episodes in three years
2	Yes	No	At least 12 months continuous or at least 12 months cumulative across 4 episodes in three years
3	Yes	Yes	Less than 12 months cumulative across 4 episodes in three years
4	Yes	No	Less than 12 months cumulative across 4 episodes in three years