Rebuilding Lives Eligibility Determination:
Criteria, Verification and Documentation Standards

Rebuilding Lives permanent supportive housing (RL PSH) projects are intended to provide service-enriched permanent housing for single men, women and families with identified special needs that experience long-term homelessness. The following criteria, verification standards, and documentation requirements are intended to guide the eligibility determination process for long-term homeless men, women, and families seeking a Rebuilding Lives housing unit.

Persons interested in applying to live in Rebuilding Lives permanent supportive housing must first complete an Eligibility Determination form to verify that they meet RL PSH criteria. Forms must be completed and signed by both the client and either a representative of a referring program or the RL PSH program which is processing a referral. RL PSH programs must verify eligibility at the time of admission (i.e. move-in) to the RL PSH program to ensure applicants are eligible at the time of admission. Eligibility documentation, as described below, must be attached to the Eligibility Determination form and kept in the applicant/tenant file.

Definitions

Rebuilding Lives (RL) defines an eligible individual as a currently homeless individual with a disabling condition who has either been homeless for at least 120 days OR has had at least four (4) episodes of homelessness.

(RL) defines an eligible household as a household with a disabling condition who has a history of homelessness and is either currently homeless or is living in a direct housing/rapid re-housing unit currently supported by Community Shelter Board for at least 120 days OR has had at least four (4) episodes of homelessness. A household is defined as at least one adult and one child under the age of 18.

HUD defines a Chronically Homeless (CH) person as an unaccompanied homeless individual with a disabling condition who has either been continuously homeless for a year or more OR has had at least four (4) episodes of homelessness in the past three (3) years. HUD updated the CH definition to include families – a single adult, part of a household, that meets the chronic homeless definition automatically qualifies the family as chronic homeless.

A. Criteria

To be eligible for Rebuilding Lives housing, individuals or families must meet the following criteria:

1. Be **homeless** (or living in a direct housing/rapid re-housing unit for families) at time of admission into Rebuilding Lives supportive housing
2. Have experienced **long-term homelessness**
3. Be **disabled**

Note: The criteria above, applies for chronic homeless housing as well.

1. **Homeless at Time of Admission**

Rebuilding Lives clients must be **homeless at the time of admission** into the program.
Rebuilding Lives Homeless Definition

The term “homeless individual or family” includes persons who, immediately prior to admission, come from:

- places not meant for human habitation, such as cars, parks, sidewalks, and abandoned buildings;
- an emergency shelter; or
- transitional housing for homeless persons and who originally came from the streets or emergency shelter. **Rebuilding lives long-term homelessness criteria prior to the admission in the transitional housing must be met and documented (transitional housing stay does not count towards meeting the required number of homeless days or count of episodes).**
- for families, direct housing/rapid re-housing units currently sponsored by Community Shelter Board

Note: Transitional housing for homeless persons is not an eligible prior residence for HUD funded units serving clients required to meet HUD chronic homeless criteria.

Note: If a person is in one of the four categories listed above, but most recently spent less than 91 days in a jail or institution, he/she qualifies as coming from one of these three categories.

Examples of Institutions:

- Prison
- Jail
- Inpatient Psychiatric Hospital Public (TVBH) or Private (OSU Upham Hall, Ohio Hospital for Psychiatry, Riverside, etc.)
- ADAMH Netcare Crisis Stabilization Unit (CSU)
- ADAMH Netcare Miles House
- ADAMH Residential Care Facility (RCF)
- Nursing Home

Note: For emergency shelter, date of shelter exit must be no more than 7 days prior to RL PSH entry date. In these instances, the living situation immediately prior to RL PSH entry may be defined as ‘Emergency Shelter’.

Who is NOT Considered Homeless?

Persons who are:

- in housing or the housing is substandard and in need of repair or the housing is crowded, with the exception of families living in rapid re-housing/direct housing units currently sponsored by the Community Shelter Board
- incarcerated
- living with relatives and friends
- living in an adult congregate living facility or similar place
- being discharged from an institution which is required to provide or arrange housing upon release
- utilizing housing vouchers

2. Long-Term Homelessness

Rebuilding Lives clients must have experienced **long-term homelessness** and meet the long-term homeless criteria as defined in the Rebuilding Lives Plan.

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1 Based on the Stewart B. McKinney Act definition
Rebuilding Lives Long-Term Homeless Definition
Long-term homeless refers to either the length of time spent homeless or the total number of separate homeless episodes.

〈 Length of Stay
A homeless individual is characterized as a “long-term stayer” under Rebuilding Lives when their cumulative length of time spent homeless, whether in shelter or on the street or a combination of the two, is equal to or greater than 120 days.

A homeless family is characterized as a “long-term stayer” under Rebuilding Lives when their cumulative length of time spent homeless, whether in shelter or on the street, or in a rapid re-housing/direct housing unit currently sponsored by the Community Shelter Board or a combination of the three, is equal to or greater than 120 days.

Note: For HUD funded projects, individuals may be considered “chronically homeless” if they have been continuously homeless for a year or more.

〈 Episodes
Long-term homeless under Rebuilding Lives can also be defined by at least four (4) separate episodes of homelessness. A homeless episode refers to time spent either on the street or in shelter for at least seven (7) days. Separate homeless episodes are separated by at least thirty (30) days.

Note: For HUD funded projects, individuals may be considered ‘chronically homeless’ if they have experienced at least four (4) separate episodes in the past three (3) years. HUD defines an episode of homelessness as a separate, distinct, and sustained stay on the streets and/or in an emergency homeless shelter. The local interpretation of the episode of homelessness is that the time spent either on the street or in shelter has to be for at least seven (7) days and distinct episodes are separated by at least thirty (30) days.

Eligibility may be determined and documented using CSP records, 3rd party verification or a combination of the two. Verification must (1) be in writing on homeless service agency letterhead, (2) include as much information as possible (i.e. dates and locations, including zip codes) about places the potential Rebuilding Lives client currently stays and has formerly stayed, and (3) is signed and dated by the homeless services staff.
If the client comes from a place not meant for human habitation, such as cars, parks, sidewalks and abandoned buildings, the 3rd party verification must come from an outreach provider.

3. Disability
Rebuilding Lives clients (or a member of the family household) must be disabled.

Rebuilding Lives Disability Definition
Disability refers to any one or combination of multiple special needs that substantially impede the success of a client obtaining or maintaining housing. Such disabilities include serious mental illness, diagnosable substance use disorder, a long-term health disorder or developmental disability, including the co-occurrence of two or more of these conditions. A disabling condition limits an individual’s ability to work or perform one or more activities of daily living.

〈 Serious Mental Illness:
The person has a substantial history of a mental disability which also has required recent hospitalization; or multiple or lengthy hospitalizations in the past; or extensive community treatment and support services over a sustained period of time; or the persons exhibits signs and symptoms of a mental disability of sufficient severity to limit the person’s ability to perform one or more activities of daily living.

\( \text{Substance Use Disorder:} \)
The person has a substantial history of at least one year of physiological dependence upon mood-altering chemicals, with or without prior treatment episodes, and evidence of substantial life losses to the extent that it interferes significantly with social, economic and/or physical functioning, inclusive of suitable living arrangements, as a result of substance abuse.

\( \text{Persons with Long-term Health Disorders or Developmental Disabilities:} \)
The person has a long-term health disorder which (1) is expected to be of long-continued and indefinite duration, (2) substantially impedes his/her or their family’s ability to live independently, and (3) is of a nature that such ability could be improved by more suitable housing conditions, including individuals who are disabled as a result of HIV infection or AIDS; or the person has a developmental disability.

Note: For HUD funded projects, individuals may be considered “disabled” if they are diagnosed with one or more of the conditions listed above.

B. Documentation and Verification Standards

Homelessness and Long-Term Homelessness

Use the following standards and verification process to determine appropriate eligibility documentation to secure. All documentation must meet these standards and must be attached to the RL or CH Eligibility Determination form.

Note: CSP record verification is preferred over 3\textsuperscript{rd} party letter verification. If client stayed in a shelter or outreach program that enters CSP data, provide CSP record as verification of current homelessness and/or long-term homelessness or note that emergency shelter data is incorrect and provide 3\textsuperscript{rd} party letter as alternative verification.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Living Situation Immediately Prior to RL PSH Entry</th>
<th>Homeless per RL Criteria?</th>
<th>Long-Term Homeless per RL Criteria?</th>
<th>Acceptable Verification Types</th>
<th>Standards and Verification Process</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Emergency Shelter                                | Yes                      | Depends                             | A. CSP record of shelter stay, OR B. Letter from third party shelter provider that does not use CSP (e.g. Choices). | A. CSP:  
  ( Print CSP “Entry/Exit” page showing shelter stay/records with past shelter stays and current shelter exit date. CSP record must document shelter exit date that is no more than 7 days prior to RL PSH admission (entry date).  
  ( Attach CSP page printout to the RL or CH Eligibility Determination form.  
  B. 3rd Party Letter – providers that do not use CSP:  
    ( Obtain letter from shelter provider.  
      ( Letter Must:  
        o Be on shelter provider letterhead  
        o Identify shelter program  
        o List past and current shelter stays including entry and exit dates  
        o Document shelter exit date that is no more than 7 days prior to RL PSH admission (entry date).  
        o Be signed and dated by shelter provider  
    ( Attach 3rd party letter to the RL or CH Eligibility Determination form. |
| Homeless on the Street                           | Yes                      | Depends                             | A. CSP record of outreach engagement. OR B. Verification of Street Homelessness Form (csb.org) | A. CSP:  
  ( Print CSP “Entry/Exit” page showing active outreach record.  
  ( Attach CSP page printout to the RL or CH Eligibility Determination form.  
  B. Verification of Street Homelessness form:  
    ( Form verifies:  
      o Client name  
      o Contact dates with outreach worker  
      o Client’s length of time living on the streets  
      o Zip codes of where client has been living  
      o Locations (i.e. car, sidewalk) where client is living  
      o Outreach worker name, signature, and date  
      o Outreach agency name  
    ( Attach Verification of Street Homelessness form to the RL or CH Eligibility Determination form. |

Homeless on the Street Outreach Providers include:  
Capital Crossroads,  
Maryhaven Outreach, Mt. Carmel Mobile Unit, Southeast PATH and HOST Outreach, Veterans Administration (VA) Outreach Unit.
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| **Transitional Housing**                         | Depends                   | Depends                             | A. CSP record of transitional housing stay. | A. CSP:  
| Friends of the Homeless: New Horizons Program (only if homeless prior to admission) |                           |                                     |                               |
| Huckleberry House: Transitional Living Program (only if homeless prior to admission) |                           |                                     |                               |
| Maryhaven Women’s Program at Noe Bixby (only if homeless prior to admission) |                           |                                     |                               |
| Southeast Bridge to Success (only if homeless prior to admission) |                           |                                     |                               |
| YMCA/ADAMH Transitional Housing (only if homeless prior to admission) |                           |                                     |                               |
| Volunteers of America: Support, Recovery & Education Program (only if homeless prior to admission) |                           |                                     |                               |
| **Rapid Re-housing/Direct Housing**               | Yes                       | Depends                             | A. CSP record of stay. | A. CSP:  
| Homeless Families Foundation Direct Housing |                           |                                     |                               |
| VOAGO Transition in Place |                           |                                     |                               |
| The Salvation Army Direct Housing |                           |                                     |                               |
| The Salvation Army Job2Housing |                           |                                     |                               |

The transitional housing stay does not count towards meeting the long-term homelessness criteria (required number of homeless days or count of episodes).
<table>
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</table>
| Institutions                                       | Only under specific conditions | Depends                             | A. CSP record of emergency shelter or transitional housing stay.  
OR  
B. Verification of Street Homelessness Form (csb.org)  
AND  
C. Exit paperwork from the institution. | Must have met the definition of literal homelessness prior to entry and have resided in the institution less than 91 days.  
A. CSP:  
\{ Print CSP “Entry/Exit” page showing emergency shelter or transitional housing stay/record or active outreach record with exit date.  
CSP record must document exit date that is less than 91 days prior to RL PSH admission (entry date).  
\} Attach CSP page printout to the RL or CH Eligibility Determination form.  
B. Verification of Street Homelessness form:  
\{ Form verifies:  
o Client name  
o Contact dates with outreach worker  
o Client’s length of time living on the streets  
o Zip codes of where client has been living  
o Locations (i.e. car, sidewalk) where client is living  
o Outreach worker name, signature, and date  
o Outreach agency name  
\} Attach Verification of Street Homelessness form to the RL or CH Eligibility Determination form.  
C. Exit Paperwork:  
\{ Obtain exit paperwork from the institutional care facility clearly documenting entry, admission and exit/discharge dates.  
Must document exit date that is less than 91 days prior to RL PSH admission (entry date).  
\} Attach exit paperwork to the RL or CH Eligibility Determination form. |
| Hospital                                          |                          |                                    |                             |                                    |
| Jail                                              |                          |                                    |                             |                                    |
| Nursing Home                                      |                          |                                    |                             |                                    |
| Psychiatric Facility                              |                          |                                    |                             |                                    |
| Treatment Center                                  |                          |                                    |                             |                                    |
| Columbus Area Next Gen Homes – ADAMH RCF          |                          |                                    |                             |                                    |
| Columbus Area Kendall Manor – ADAMH RCF           |                          |                                    |                             |                                    |
| North Central Next Gen Homes – ADAMH RCF          |                          |                                    |                             |                                    |
| North Central North Central Norwich – ADAMH RCF   |                          |                                    |                             |                                    |
| North Central North Central Fowler House – ADAMH RCF |                          |                                    |                             |                                    |
| SouthEast Redmond – ADAMH RCF                     |                          |                                    |                             |                                    |
| SouthEast Carpenter House – ADAMH RCF             |                          |                                    |                             |                                    |
| Netcare Miles House                               |                          |                                    |                             |                                    |
| Netcare Crisis Stabilization Unit                 |                          |                                    |                             |                                    |
| Living with Family Member or Friend               |                          | Not Eligible                       |                             |                                    |
| Owns Home                                         |                          | Not Eligible                       |                             |                                    |
| Renting (apartment, etc.)                         |                          | Not Eligible                       |                             |                                    |
| Living in Substandard or Overcrowded Housing      |                          | Not Eligible                       |                             |                                    |
Disability
Eligible documentation includes: A signed Certification of Disability form or a SSI/SSDI award letter showing receipt of benefits. For any unit receiving a CMHA or HUD subsidy, Certification of Disability forms must be signed by an “Authorized Professional,” which is defined as a physician, advanced nurse practitioner (CNP or CNS), or a state licensed clinician. State licensed clinicians must be independently licensed by the Ohio Counselor, Social Worker and Marriage and Family Therapist Board and can include counselors and/or social workers (LPCC, LICDC or LISW). For CMHA housing, disability based solely on any drug or alcohol dependence is not acceptable. For non-CMHA or non-HUD subsidized units an LSW signature is acceptable as well.

The certification (1) identifies the physical, mental or emotional impairment, why it is expected to be of long-continued or indefinite duration, how it impedes the individual’s ability to live independently, and how the individual’s ability to live independently could be improved by more suitable housing conditions; (2) identifies a developmental disability; or (3) identifies AIDS or related conditions.

Note: Disability Documentation may be dependent on the specific subsidy requirements for a project/unit.

Note: Projects that are funded through HUD must maintain documentation of disability per HUD standards.

C. Rebuilding Lives vs. HUD Chronic Homeless eligibility

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Rebuilding Lives</th>
<th>HUD Chronic Homeless</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Homeless at time of admission</td>
<td>Individuals or families who, immediately prior to admission, come from:</td>
<td>Individuals or families who, immediately prior to admission, come from:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>{ places not meant for human habitation, such as cars, parks, sidewalks, and</td>
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<td></td>
<td>abandoned buildings;</td>
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<td>{ an emergency shelter; or</td>
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<td></td>
<td>{ transitional housing for homeless persons who originally came from the streets</td>
<td>{ Rapid re-housing/direct housing (for families only)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>or emergency shelter</td>
<td>{ Institution, if less than 91 days and homeless at admission to institution.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>{ Rapid re-housing/direct housing (for families only)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>{ Institution, if less than 91 days and homeless at admission to institution.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Long-term homelessness</td>
<td>Cumulative length of time spent homeless, whether in shelter or on the street</td>
<td>Continuously homeless, whether in shelter or on the street or a combination of the</td>
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<td></td>
<td>or a combination of the two (for families includes rapid re-housing/direct</td>
<td>two, for a year (365 days) or more.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>housing), is equal to or greater than 120 days.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Episodes</td>
<td>At least four (4) separate episodes of homelessness. A homeless episode refers to time spent either on the street or in shelter for at least seven (7) days. Separate homeless episodes are separated by at least thirty (30) days.</td>
<td>At least four (4) separate episodes of homelessness in the past three (3) years. A homeless episode refers to time spent either on the street or in shelter for at least seven (7) days. Separate homeless episodes are separated by at least thirty (30) days.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Disability | Documented:  
- Serious Mental Illness  
- Substance Use Disorder  
- Long-term Health Disorders or Developmental Disabilities | Documented:  
- Serious Mental Illness  
- Substance Use Disorder  
- Long-term Health Disorders or Developmental Disabilities |