

# **Housing Support Services Policies and Procedures**

## **Introduction**

Housing Support Services assist Medicaid service consumers with either maintaining or obtaining tenancy in an in-home setting. Perhaps a consumer's housing is at risk because of the consumer's interactions with the landlord. Coaching may assist the consumer with landlord communication and maintaining tenancy. Or a consumer may want to live in an in-home setting, yet not know where to start or understand the process for applying for housing. Assistance can help the consumer to obtain housing. These are just a couple examples of how Housing Support Services can benefit consumers.

## **Housing Navigators**

Housing Support Services are provided by Housing Navigators. A Housing Navigator in each district and Type B Transfer Area Agency on Aging (AAA) is focused on consumers' housing goals and assist with:

- Conducting tenant screenings and housing assessments to identify preferences and barriers related to successful tenancy.
- Developing individualized housing support plans to identify barriers and measurable short and long-term goals.
- Developing housing support crisis plans to include prevention and early intervention services when housing is jeopardized.
- Identifying and sharing resources.
- Assisting with application processes and move details.
- Offering education and training.
- Coaching, providing assistance and advocating.

To best serve consumers, Housing Navigators work in cooperation with other Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) programs and community partners to offer Housing Support Services, focusing on:

- Coordinating supports and avoiding duplication;
- Regular networking; and
- Relationship building.

Housing Support Services are not intended for Complex Case referrals or Diversion and Transition supports. Case Managers should follow existing processes for those services and supports.

## Eligibility

Housing Navigators are available to help consumers meet their housing goals. A referral for Housing Support Services is appropriate for Medicaid service consumers who:

- Meet Service Priority Level (SPL) 1-13 or Extended Waiver Eligibility (EWE) and are receiving or want to receive services in-home.
- Need assistance with maintaining or obtaining tenancy in an in-home setting.
- Have care needs that can be met in an in-home setting.
- Have housing goals that meet Oregon Administrative Rule (OAR) for:
  - An allowable in-home service living arrangement, [OAR 411-030-0033](#).
  - Consumer-Employer Responsibilities, [OAR 411-030-0040\(4\) through \(5\)](#), if not using an In-Home Care Agency.
- Want to participate in working toward housing goals.
  - Some consumers may not have an interest.

- Some consumers who are houseless may not be interested in working toward housing goals.

## **Referral Process**

Case Managers can make a referral for Housing Support Services using the Housing Support Services Referral Form. The referral form asks for the type of assistance requested, which can help the Case Manager to determine if a referral is appropriate. Housing Navigators assist in the following ways.

- Consultation/Assistance – Housing related research or resources supplied back to the Case Manager to assist a consumer.
- Direct Assistance – Direct assistance to a consumer, such as assisting with a tenant screening and housing assessment or a housing application.

Upon receiving a referral, a Housing Navigator will arrange a time to speak with the Case Manager to ensure eligibility and that a consumer's care needs can be met in an in-home setting. The Housing Navigator will then determine whether the referral will be accepted or denied. See below.

- Denied – The Housing Navigator will notify the Case Manager as to why and narrate the referral and outcome in Oregon ACCESS (OA).
- Accepted – The Housing Navigator will communicate to the Case Manager the specific assistance to be provided whether it be consultation/assistance and/or narrate the referral, outcome and assistance to be provided in OA.

## **Housing Navigator Assistance**

Once a Housing Navigator accepts a referral, the Housing Navigator will either:

- Provide requested housing information or resources back to the Case Manager to share with the consumer, or
- Offer direct assistance to a consumer by reaching out to the consumer to begin the process to identify and work toward the consumer's housing goals, as a consumer's goals will determine the housing supports offered.

While assisting a consumer, the Housing Navigator will narrate in OA. For consumers the Housing Navigator provides direct assistance to, the Housing Navigator will have, at minimum, weekly contact with the consumer.

## **Referral Status**

Housing Navigators will track referrals in four ways.

- Active – The Housing Navigator is actively working with a consumer and progressing toward housing goals.
- Pending – The Housing Navigator is working with a consumer, yet progress has come to a halt because of something that requires a consumer's involvement or action(s).
  - When a case is pending, the consumer will receive a letter or another form of communication identifying what is needed to move forward.
  - The consumer will have 30 days to act.

- Complete – The Housing Navigator notes the assistance as complete because a consumer's housing goals have been met.
- Inactive – The Housing Navigator marks the assistance as inactive due to no response to a pending request or the consumer is no longer interested in assistance.

For referrals marked as complete that involved a Housing Navigator assisting a consumer to secure housing, the Housing Navigator will monitor case management contacts for any reported issues for 90 days.

## **In Summary**

Oregon's Housing Support Services are for Medicaid service consumers who meet SPL 1-13 or EWE, are interested in maintaining or obtaining tenancy in an in-home setting, and whose situations meet applicable OAR. Housing Navigators assist consumer to reach their housing goals either through consultation/assistance with the Case Manager or direct assistance to the consumer. Please make a referral if Housing Support Services could be of help to a consumer.