**Oregon Housing Opportunities (OHOP) in Partnership Temporary Policies**

**related to COVID-19 Response – *effective 4/15/20 unless otherwise noted***

Federal and State guidance, as well as community needs are constantly evolving. As needs for policy revisions arise, OHOP and HIV Community Services will respond as quickly as possible.

**Initial HQS Inspections**

While in-person inspections are inadvisable due to social distancing measures, or until 6/30/21 (whichever comes first), initial inspections must be conducted virtually.

* Live stream video will be utilized when possible; a combination of photos and phone check-ins are acceptable when live video is not an option; photos and videos will be deleted, as inspection is provisional.
  + If visual inspection is not available, HCs can conduct inspections by phone only, ensuring that all HQS questions are answered to the best of the HC and client’s ability.
* When health officials determine special measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 are no longer necessary, the Housing Coordinator will schedule a time to physically inspect the unit within 90 days.
  + At physical re-inspection, Housing Coordinator will revise as necessary and re-sign HQS with physical inspection date.
  + Inspections which were conducted via phone only, with no visual documentation will be prioritized.

**Annual HQS Inspections**

Annual inspections will be postponed during COVID-19 response. When inspections are due:

* Housing Coordinator will call or otherwise connect with client to inform them of postponed inspection and ask about immediate needs; will follow-up with supervisor and team and/ or case managers and/ or landlords about needs as necessary.

**Initial Certifications and Annual Recertifications**

Housing Housing Coordinator will mail certifications to clients who will fill out, sign, and mail back in enclosed self-addressed envelope.

If **income documentation** is not available, households may self-certify their income.

* If households self-certify, they must provide source documentation of income eligibility within 90 days of public health officials determining no additional special measures are necessary to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

If physical or electronic **signatures** cannot be obtained, Housing Coordinator may sign on client’s behalf, noting client agreement over the phone or email.

**Initial Assessment**

From date of referral, Housing Coordinators will complete an initial assessment and send to the Central Waitlist within one month (extended from two weeks). No Policy Exception is needed. If longer than one month is needed, Housing Coordinator will submit a Policy Exception.

**Housing Search**

Housing Searches will be extended beyond the 120-day limit per Policy Exception submitted by Housing Coordinator, in 30- to 60- day increments.

Housing Coordinators will remain in contact with landlords and property management companies to stay abreast of available units and move-in abilities. They will also remain in contact with clients throughout their search, especially with clients who are unsheltered or in unsafe or unhealthy living situations.

**Rent Reasonableness Standard**

For OHOP clients in or entering the housing search as of 4/15/20, or for whom rent is increased above FMR after this date, the rent reasonableness standard may be used rather than FMR and paid by eligible HUD grant funds until 6/30/21, per approval from Housing Coordinators majority and Program Manager.

Note that per HUD rent reasonableness policy, rent charged for a unit must be reasonable in relation to rents currently being charged for comparable units in the private unassisted market and must not be in excess of rents currently being charged by the owner for comparable unassisted units.

**Hotel/Motel Stays – Effective 6/1/20**

OHOP will provide relocation and temporary lodging services through hotel/motel stays or short-term rentals for COVID response. Vacation rentals Airbnb and VRBO are also permitted. Payment for hotel/motel stays will be for the purpose of isolation and quarantine to support the health of a PLWH who is vulnerable to COVID-19.

Services are funded through CARES Act grant and will be available until funds are expended.

OHOP will fund short term hotel/motel stays for:

a) unhoused HOPWA-eligible individuals or households with an urgent need to stabilize their health and wellness, *or*

b) current OHOP clients (receiving TBRA) or their household member, regardless of HIV status, who need to quarantine separately from their household per the recommendation of their medical provider, *or*

c) unhoused individuals or households with an urgent need to stabilize their health and wellness, or who need to quarantine separately from their household per the recommendation of their medical provider, who are HOPWA-ineligible but Ryan White eligible.

**OHOP Eligibility – Effective 11/15/20**

OHOP eligibility is extended to all clients and households who are HOPWA-ineligible but Ryan White eligible, with income at or below 80% AMI. HOPWA-ineligible clients will be placed in OHOP’s Secure program.

**OHOP Re-referral Eligibility – Effective 11/15/20**

All OHOP clients who have been terminated from services due to program violations will be eligible for re-referral after a period of 6 months from date of termination. If clients have received two terminations due to program violations, they will be eligible for re-referral after a period of 12 months (1 year). Under no circumstances will a terminated client be in-eligible for re-referral. Referrals must meet requirements outlined in OHOP Policies & Procedures.