Community Alliance
FOR THE HOMELESS

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish a clear and consistent process for prioritizing participants within the Coordinated Entry System (CES) in Memphis/Shelby County based on their level of vulnerability and need. The policy ensures that those who are most in need receive appropriate housing and supportive services in a timely manner, according to the Continuum of Care's (CoC) established prioritization standards.

FORMS

There are no forms related or required for this Policy

POLICY

After a person experiencing a housing crisis has been assessed, the CES determines their priority for housing and supportive services. This prioritization is based on the person's level of vulnerability or need, which is evaluated by comparing the information from their assessment against the CoCs prioritization standards.

The CES encompasses individuals and families of all ages and compositions. Different populations hold meetings or follow specific program procedures to allocate available housing units within CoC Housing Projects.

CES By-Name List Meetings:

All CES by-name list meetings involve the following activities:

- Client Case Updates: Recording all updates in the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).
- Identifying Barriers: Recognizing challenges that prevent clients from accessing housing and services.
- Spotting Emerging Trends: Observing new patterns, such as an increase in single fathers experiencing homelessness.
- Process Questions: Addressing any questions related to CES processes.
- Provider Collaboration: Facilitating cooperation among homeless service providers.

- Resource Sharing: Sharing available resources among providers.
- Client-Related Topics: Discussing any other matters related to clients.
- Health and Behavioral Challenges: Addressing significant health or behavioral challenges that require substantial support for clients to maintain permanent housing.
- High Use of Emergency Services: Noting high use of crisis services such as emergency rooms, jails, and psychiatric facilities.
- Unsheltered Status: Understanding the extent to which individuals, particularly youth and children, are unsheltered.
- Vulnerability to Illness or Death: Considering the risk of illness or death.
- Risk of Continued Homelessness: Assessing the risk that clients may remain homeless.
- Vulnerability to Victimization: Evaluating the risk of clients being victimized, including risks of physical assault, trafficking, or sex work.
- Community-Determined Factors: Considering other factors identified by the community based on the severity of needs.

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) Prioritization:

The prioritization for PSH aligns with HUD's guidelines. Available units are allocated based on the following order:

1. 1st Priority: Chronically homeless individuals and families with the longest history of homelessness and the most severe service needs.
2. 2nd Priority: Chronically homeless individuals and families with the longest history of homelessness but without severe service needs.
3. 3rd Priority: Chronically homeless individuals and families with the most severe service needs.
4. 4th Priority: All other chronically homeless individuals and families not included in priorities 1 through 3.
5. 5th Priority: Homeless individuals and families who are not chronically homeless but have a disability and severe service needs.
6. 6th Priority: Homeless individuals and families who are not chronically homeless but have a disability and a long period of continuous or episodic homelessness.
7. 7th Priority: Homeless individuals and families who are not chronically homeless but have a disability and are coming from places not meant for human habitation, Safe Havens, or emergency shelters.

8. 8th Priority: Homeless individuals and families who are not chronically homeless but have a disability and are coming from transitional housing.

Tie-Breaker: When two households in the same priority category have equal scores on the Prioritized List, the following tie-breakers are used in this order:

- Longest length of homelessness
- Lowest household income
- MVA's score(s)

Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) Prioritization for Youth (18-24):

Prioritization for RRH follows the CoC's scoring criteria for need and vulnerability related to RRH youth projects. Additionally, the CoC prioritizes the following youth for RRH:

1. Experiencing or at risk of domestic violence/violence
2. Vulnerability to illness or death
3. High utilization of crisis or emergency services, including emergency rooms, jails, and psychiatric facilities to meet basic needs
4. Risk of continued homelessness

Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) Prioritization for Families:

Prioritization for RRH follows the CoC's scoring criteria for need and vulnerability related to RRH family projects. Additionally, the CoC prioritizes the following families for RRH:

1. Households are experiencing domestic violence.
2. Pregnant member of the family
3. Single parent and three or more dependent children under the age of six.
4. Length of time homeless

Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) Prioritization for Individuals:

Prioritization for RRH follows the CoC's scoring criteria for need and vulnerability related to RRH projects. Additionally, the CoC prioritizes the following Individuals for RRH:

1. Experiencing domestic violence & other safety concerns
2. Deteriorating/potentially deteriorating health
3. Length of time homeless

<u>Transitional Housing (TH) Prioritization:</u> *(youth only)*

The prioritization for TH is consistent with the CoC's scoring criteria for need and vulnerability related to TH projects. The CoC prioritizes the following individuals for TH:

1. Households fleeing or experiencing domestic violence as the primary cause of their current housing crisis.
2. Households consisting of unaccompanied youth.
3. Participants seeking treatment services for behavioral health conditions such as mental illness and/or substance use disorders.

KEY TAKE AWAYS

- **Prioritization Based on Vulnerability**: The policy emphasizes that individuals and families are prioritized for housing and services based on their level of vulnerability, as determined through CES assessments. Factors such as severity of service needs, length of homelessness, and risk of victimization are considered to ensure those in the greatest need are prioritized.
- **Population-Specific Prioritization**: The CES captures data across all ages and family compositions. Prioritization processes and meetings are tailored to the needs of different populations, including youth, families, veterans, and those with severe health or behavioral challenges.
- **Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) Prioritization**: PSH prioritization aligns with HUD's guidelines, focusing first on chronically homeless individuals and families with the longest histories of homelessness and most severe service needs. Subsequent priorities consider the duration of homelessness and the presence of disabilities.
- **Transitional Housing (TH) Prioritization**: TH prioritization is targeted at households fleeing domestic violence, unaccompanied youth, and individuals seeking treatment for behavioral health conditions. The prioritization process is consistent with the CoC's scoring range for TH projects.
- **Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) Prioritization**: RRH prioritization is directed towards vulnerable households, including single-parent families with young children, those experiencing domestic violence, unaccompanied youth, and households with recent episodes of homelessness. The policy ensures these groups are given priority for RRH resources.
- **Collaborative CES Meetings**: CES prioritization meetings involve collaboration among homeless service providers, focusing on client case updates, identifying barriers to

housing and services, sharing resources, and addressing emerging trends in homelessness.

- **Tie-Breaking Criteria**: In cases where two households have the same prioritization score, tie-breakers such as veteran status, longest length of homelessness, and lowest household income are used to determine who receives priority.

This policy ensures a transparent, equitable, and needs-based approach to allocating housing and supportive services within the CES, helping to efficiently and effectively serve those experiencing homelessness in Memphis/Shelby County.