

ATLANTA EMA QUALITY MANAGEMENT STANDARDS AND MEASURES

HOUSING SERVICES

Purpose

The purpose of the Ryan White Part A quality management standards and measures is to ensure that a uniformity of service exists in the Atlanta Eligible Metropolitan Area (EMA) such that the consumers of a service receive the same quality of service regardless of where the service is rendered. If an agency is unable to meet a particular standard, the agency must document why the standard was unable to be met and explain the steps it is taking to meet that standard.

Definition

Housing provides transitional, short-term, or emergency housing assistance to enable a client or family to gain or maintain outpatient/ambulatory health services and treatment, including temporary assistance necessary to prevent homelessness and to gain or maintain access to medical care.

Allowable activities include:

- Emergency Lodging (*hotel/motel vouchers*)
- Short-term Housing Rental Assistance (*3-6 months of rental subsidy*)
- Medium-term Housing Rental Assistance (*6-12 months of rental subsidy*)

Activities within the Housing category must also include the development of an individualized housing plan, updated annually, to guide the client's linkage to permanent housing. Housing may provide some type of core medical (e.g., mental health services) or support services (e.g., residential substance use disorder services).

Housing activities also include housing referral services, including assessment, search, placement, and housing advocacy services on behalf of the eligible client, as well as fees associated with these activities. Housing activities cannot be in the form of direct cash payments to clients and cannot be used for mortgage payments or rental deposits¹ although these may be allowable costs under the HUD Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS grant awards.

Housing Assistance must be provided by a qualified professional with a minimum of high school diploma or equivalent. Staff must also have at least 1-2 years of experience in the field of social services or similar field.

Standards Development Process

The standards were developed through extensive background research on quality management standards, a review of existing standards from other Ryan White Part A EMA's, and meetings with the Ryan White Part A Recipient.

Application of Standards

These standards apply to any agency receiving Part A funds to provide OAHS services. These funded agencies must administer the case management, mental health, substance abuse, and legal screening questions; however, assessment, case management, and treatment services are

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required to be provided only by agencies funded to provide these services. All other agencies are required to provide appropriate referrals and linkages to services per the standards.

Mental Health, Substance Abuse, Case Management, and Legal Standardized Screening Questions

The screening process includes utilization of the Atlanta EMA Screening Tool, standardized Case Management, Mental Health, Substance Abuse, and Legal questions, which all agencies must use if receiving Part A funds to provide Outpatient Ambulatory Health Services, Substance Abuse, Mental Health, Case Management (medical or non-medical) or Referral for Health Care and Support services. The purpose of the tool is to provide a uniform way to identify persons living with HIV (PLWH) who need an assessment conducted. Given this standardized approach, clients will receive the same follow-up for assessment, treatment and/or referrals based on their responses, regardless of the agency. Please note that agencies may decide to add more questions to their screening tool; however, the questions listed in these standards must be asked first before an agency's additional questions.

Acknowledgements

Fulton County would like to thank all of the EMAs that shared their standards, as well as the primary care providers who gave generously of their time to provide valuable input to the development of these quality management standards and measures.

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I. Policies and Procedures	
Standard	Measure
A. Agency must have policies and procedures in place that address confidentiality (HIPAA), grievance procedures and supervision requirements per federal and state law and local regulations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy and procedure manual • Grievance procedure posted in visible location
B. Agency has eligibility requirements for services in written form. This is inclusive of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Clients rights and responsibilities ✓ Release of information/confidentiality ✓ Eligibility for services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy on file
C. Agency is licensed and/or accredited by the appropriate city/county/state/federal agency.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current licensure on file from appropriate city/county/state/federal agency.
D. Agency has written policies and procedures in place that protect the physical safety and well-being of staff and clients. This is inclusive of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Physical agency safety management and public health emergencies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meets fire safety requirements • Complies with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) • Is clean, comfortable and free from hazards • Complies with Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) infection control practices • Follows recommendations of Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) during pandemics and outbreaks • Maintains and updates an emergency preparedness plan ✓ Crisis management and psychiatric emergencies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to assess emergent/urgent vs. routine need • Verbal intervention • Non-violent physical intervention • Emergency medical contact information • Incident reporting • Voluntary and involuntary inpatient admission ✓ Refusal of services ✓ Personnel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy on file • Program Review

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roles and responsibilities of staff, including supervision responsibilities and caseload ✓ Client/Parent/Guardian Rights and Responsibilities (see Section IX) ✓ Health Record Storage and Maintenance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complies with DHHS, Office of Civil Rights HIPAA requirements • Business Association Agreements on file 	
<p>E. Agency has private, confidential office space for seeing clients for outpatient ambulatory health services (e.g. no half-walls or cubicles, all rooms must have doors).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program Review/Site Visit
<p>F. Agency will have all inactivated client records in a confidential locked location for a period as stipulated by law.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site Visit/Program Monitoring
<p>G. Agency is required to maintain documentation of the following which shall be made available to the Recipient and HRSA upon request and during site visits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Services provided including number of clients served, duration of housing services, types of housing provided, and housing referral services ✓ Ensure staff providing housing services are case managers or other professionals who possess a comprehensive knowledge of local, state, and federal housing programs and how to access those programs ✓ Maintain client records that document: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Client eligibility determination ○ Housing services, including referral services provided ○ Individualized housing plans for all clients that receive short-term, transitional, and emergency housing services ✓ Provide documentation and assurance that no Ryan White funds are used to provide direct payments to clients for rent or mortgages¹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site Visit/Program Monitoring • Chart audits

¹ HRSA RWHAP recipients and subrecipients, along with local decision-making planning bodies, are strongly encouraged to institute duration limits to housing activities. HRSA HAB recommends recipients and subrecipients align duration limits with those definitions used by other housing programs, such as those administered by the Department of Housing and Urban Development, which currently uses 24 months for transitional housing.

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<p>H. Agency should have mechanisms in place to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ allow newly identified clients access to housing services. ✓ develop and maintain housing policies and procedures that are consistent with this Housing Policy ✓ provide assistance to clients to help them obtain stable long-term housing ✓ assess and document the housing status and housing service needs of new clients, and at least annually for existing clients. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy on file
II. Program Staff	
Standard	Measure
<p>A. Agency staff are trained and knowledgeable about HIV/AIDS and current housing resources.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resume in personnel file • Credential verification in personnel file • Training records
<p>B. Agency will ensure staff providing housing services are case managers or other professionals who possess a comprehensive knowledge of local, state, and federal housing programs and how to access those programs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personnel records
<p>C. Agency staff administering screening questions must have completed training for using the Atlanta EMA screening tool.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personnel records • Training records
<p>D. Agency staff shall receive a minimum of 1 hour of monthly supervision.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written job description that includes roles and responsibilities and a statement of having been informed of agency policies and procedures in file signed by staff and supervisor
<p>E. Agency staff will participate in at least 6 hours of education/training annually.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy on file • Program Review
III. Access to Services	
Standard	Measure
<p>A. Agency is accessible to desired target populations. Accessibility includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Proximity to community impacted by HIV ✓ Proximity to mass transit ✓ Proximity to low-income individuals ✓ Proximity to underinsured/uninsured individuals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program Review

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B. Agency is compliant with ADA requirements for non-discriminatory policies and practices and for the provision of reasonable accommodations to address communication needs (e.g. sign language interpreter).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy on file
C. Agency demonstrates the ability to provide culturally and linguistically appropriate care according to the Atlanta EMA standards for desired target population.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personnel and training records • Program Review/Site Visit • Client satisfaction survey • Policy on file
D. Agency demonstrates input from clients in service design and delivery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client Satisfaction Survey, or other documented mechanism. • Existence of Consumer Advisory Board
E. Agency is accessible using HIPAA-compliant applications to provide telehealth services with healthcare-specific features and security.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy on file • Personnel and training records • Program Review
IV. Eligibility Determination/Screening	
Standard	Measure
A. Upon initial contact with client, agency will determine if client meets criteria for housing assistance, as detailed in their policy and procedures. In order to determine financial assistance equitably for all households served, service providers should use income calculation standards for short-term or medium-term rental assistance ² .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client record
B. Provider determines client eligibility for services. Client eligibility will be reassessed every 6 months. The process to determine client eligibility must be completed in a time frame so that screening is not delayed. Part A Eligibility assessment must include at a minimum: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Proof of HIV status ✓ Proof of income not greater than 400% Federal Poverty Level ✓ Proof of residency ✓ Proof of active participation in primary care or documentation of the client's plan to access primary care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client record • Policy on file • Agency client data report consistent with funding requirements • Self-attestation form

² <https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/HOPWARentalAssistanceGuidebook.pdf>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 1 visit with a primary care provider every 6 months • For affected children < 4, at least 1 primary care visit within 12 months. 	
<p>B. Clients are informed of the client confidentiality policy and grievance policy at first face to face contact.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client record • Client satisfaction survey
<p>C. New and re-enrolling clients will be screened for case management, mental health, substance abuse and legal needs using the standardized Atlanta EMA screening tool per screening protocol during a face to face contact from appropriate program staff immediately following eligibility determination. All clients will be rescreened annually to address any new client needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client record with Atlanta EMA Screening tool • Client data entered consistent with funding requirements (CAREWare) • Client record - if client disagrees with the screening disposition, the client record must include signature of client noting this and the scheduled appointment time with the identified agency grievance staff person
V. Rapid Re-Housing Model	
Standard	Measure
<p>A. Agency designates staff to work with landlords and case managers to work with clients.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy Review • Training Records
<p>B. Agency should have written policies and procedures for landlord recruitment activities, including screening out potential landlord partners how have a history of poor compliance with legal responsibilities and fair housing practices.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy Review
VI. Assessment and Individualized Housing Plan	
Standard	Measure
<p>A. Initial assessment of service needs will be completed within 5 business days of enrollment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client Record
<p>B. Agency staff will collaborate with client to develop a comprehensive individualized housing plan (IHP) to guide the client's linkage to permanent housing needs within 10 business days of assessment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client record
<p>C. Individualized housing plan should be updated annually and as significant changes occur. Each client should receive an initial and exit housing plan. An appropriate housing plan must include goals, action steps and a timeline for linkage to permanent housing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation from client that he/she received a copy of their IHP

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation the housing plan was reviewed and agreed upon by client and staff.
VI. Service Coordination and Referrals	
Standard	Measure
<p>A. Rapid re-housing is an intervention designed to help individuals and families to quickly exit homelessness, return to housing in the community, and not become homeless again in the near term³. Agency should have policies and procedures in place to support the core components of a rapid re-housing program such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Housing identification ✓ Move-in and rent assistance ✓ Rapid re-housing case management and services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy Review • Personnel records
<p>B. Agency staff shall acts as a liaison between the client and other service providers to enable a client or family to gain or maintain outpatient/ambulatory health services and treatment, including temporary assistance necessary to prevent homelessness and to gain or maintain access to medical care. Housing activities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Assessment ✓ Search ✓ Placement ✓ Housing Referral Services ✓ Housing Advocacy Services on behalf of the eligible client 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client record
<p>C. Agency staff will provide a “warm handoff” (including transfer documentation) and follow-up for referrals to ensure client receives needed assistance,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client record
<p>D. Clients will have direct contact with agency staff every month throughout service provision. Direct contact is defined as phone interaction (messages left</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client record • Agency client data report consistent with funding requirements

³ <https://endhomelessness.org/resource/rapid-re-housing-performance-benchmarks-and-program-standards/>

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do not qualify), face-to-face contact, telehealth communication or secure email correspondence (messages sent to and received from client).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client satisfaction survey
E. Clients receiving telehealth services should have a face-to-face visit at least once a year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client record
F. Agency staff must document the following; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Number of clients served ✓ Duration of housing services ✓ Types of housing provided ✓ Housing referral services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client record
G. A client may be terminated from receiving Housing services for any of the following reasons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Death ✓ Client request ✓ Client's actions put the agency, staff, or other clients at risk ✓ Client no longer requires Housing interventions ✓ Client fails to contact the agency for a period of 6 months despite at least 3 documented attempts to contact the client by agency staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy on file • Client record • Agency client data report consistent with funding requirements
IX. Clients' Rights and Responsibilities	
Standard	Measure
A. Client confidentiality policy exists for all service settings and is accessible to client.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy on file
B. Grievance policy exists and is readily accessible to clients.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy on file
C. Clients have the right to expect fair treatment and service provision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy on file
D. A current release of information form exists for each specific request for information and each request is signed by the client.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client medical record
E. Clients will be informed of the client confidentiality policy, grievance policy, their rights and responsibilities and their eligibility for services annually.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client medical record • Documentation in client chart initialed or signed by client (may include electronic signature)