

Housing Stabilization Frequently Asked Questions

11.17.2022

1. **What is the period of performance for this program?**
There are several commitment deadlines, but all clients will have to be enrolled by the end of **September 2023**.
2. How long does the client have to be homeless?
The client has to satisfy one of the eligible housing statuses at the time of entry. **While documentation is not required for length of time a person is homeless, navigators are certifying that the client meets both the spirit and definition of homelessness and would not be able to obtain housing without assistance.**
3. Do navigators have to verify income or criminal history?
No. The navigator determines client eligibility at the time of entry. The client must affirm that their income is below 80% area median income, but they do not have to provide documentation. There are no restrictions for criminal or credit history but the navigator may have to work with the client to find appropriate housing if the client has housing barriers in their history.
4. Is there going to be any requirement that participants must actively look for work?
No.
5. Is the \$8,000 per household for rent and other household expenses for one year of support?
\$8,000 is available for supportive services that directly assist the household to obtain or maintain housing. **Additionally each household has up to \$3,000 in moving expenses to assist with deposits and moving expenses. This fund is only available for the first move in and may not be accessible for a second unit. Currently the budget for rental assistance, a separate fund, is up to \$1,100 per month for 12 months. This cap may be adjusted for communities who experience higher rents.**
6. Can these funds be used in combination with other AHFC Programs?
Yes. With the caveat that the client will need to meet the criteria for other programs.

7. Are there any restrictions on using the assistance to pay rental arrears or other back debt to assist a client to obtain housing?

Any past due rental assistance would count towards the months of program assistance used and must be tied to the specific needs of the client to obtain housing (ie back utility payments to obtain new services, etc.) Specifically back debts must be directly related to obtaining new housing and must have occurred after March 13, 2020.

8. The wait list for other housing subsidies may exceed the deadline for applying to this program. How does this fit with the 15 months of rental assistance?

The Navigator should assist clients in securing housing and apply for all eligible housing programs to provide support if the client is waiting for placement at a specific housing type/location.

9. Would this program support financial arrangements with family members for difficult to house clients?

Navigators will be supported for family reunification or other ways to establish healthy households. AHFC will work with the navigators to establish appropriate procedures and limits for assistance that may be provided to parties related to the tenant.

10. How flexible is the program on out of the box thinking to house someone?

Very flexible as long as the clients are being housed in units that are fit for human habilitation. Hotel rooms with long-term leases or rental agreements are eligible if the unit is safe and sanitary.

11. If a client is exited from the program before they have utilized all assistance available to them, will they be able to be enrolled again if they come back seeking housing services?

Yes. However, the client will have to start over (i.e. at the bottom of the waitlist) and their previous funding and months of assistance used will be counted towards their total.

12. What is your suggestion for participants that are not housed within 15 months? Do you anticipate more assistance?

Federal Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) is a one-time award for the state of Alaska. The funds have an expiration date and will be returned to Treasury if the state

is unable to spend them. We do not anticipate another award of rental assistance at this time.

13. If the client has already received regular rent relief, then became homeless, will that exclude some assistance for them?

Yes. It is all ERA funds, Treasury has limited the amount of assistance available to each recipient.

14. Is there any fast track or alternate route for Section 8 vouchers?

Housing Choice vouchers are HUD-funded. Some applicants who are eligible for the treasury funds may not be eligible for HUD-funded assistance. AHFC staff will be working internally with our public housing division to help navigators identify appropriate resources within AHFC that might benefit the client. We anticipate that all eligible households will apply for any assistance that might be available to them through our public housing division once they have been stabilized by the navigator(s).

15. Is each organization a Navigator?

Yes. Each organization will have to determine if they are able to run this program, and how they will function in the community.

16. Several prospective employees are ready to go. Would it be ok to hire immediately and prep for our official start date?

You cannot draw funds for reimbursement until you have a completed grant agreement, but if you are confident that you will be participating in this program and can assume the risk, then you may hire for anticipated positions.

17. Is this "use it or lose it" funding, or would unused resources be spread to other organizations with higher demand?

AHFC will work with organizations to determine appropriate spending and enrolment benchmarks as part of the grant agreement process. If resources are not fully utilized by a navigator, AHFC will work with other organizations within the service area to determine if (a) a re-allocation within the service area is practicable or (b) funds cannot be utilized within the primary service area, they can be re-allocated outside of the primary service area.

18. Does each organization report their own data to you?

The navigator creates the client record and maintains the stabilization and service

information. They are responsible for updating their current information into our system.

19. Is the 10% Admin expense paid out automatically when a client is enrolled?

The admin budget will be awarded through your grant agreement and you can start drawing from it as soon as the agreement is fully executed.

20. Why are there so many insurance requirements for this program?

The insurance requirements for this program are standard for all AHFC grant programs. The Risk department within AHFC is available to answer specific questions and review individual grantee activities.

21. Will you be able to provide a running FAQs list that will be publicly available to all of us?

Yes. FAQ's are available at <https://www.ahfc.us/tenants/housing-stabilization/housing-stabilization-faq>.

22. Will client information be accessible across all community records?

No. There will be various levels of access to client records. AHFC admin staff tasked with treasury reports and quality control will be reviewing for duplicate applicants or other issues. Team Leads and admin staff will be able view all records and payments by organization.

23. Is case management required for the entire length of the program including while the client is housed?

Case management is only required for as long as it takes to stabilize clients in safe housing and enroll them in rental relief. Some clients may require additional case management to remain in housing.

24. Will the intake portal be available for smart phones or tablets?

The website won't be optimized for mobile, however tablets are recommended.

25. Can stabilization funds be used for someone housed who has received an eviction notice?

No, the program is restricted to families or individuals currently experiencing homelessness.

26. Are mileage reimbursement and vehicle expenses allowable Admin costs?
Yes, if included in your grant agreement.
27. Would someone who is couch-surfing, or staying at a hotel, be eligible for the program?
The client must meet the definition of literal homeless.
28. Will the client be enrolled in AHFC public housing programs?
Navigators will work with clients to submit applications for additional assistance through public housing, adult public assistance, food stamps etc.
29. If we have two program participants that agree to be roommates, can we place them together?
Yes, the program will accept roommates. Separate leases are best practice. Clients who do not secure separate leases will only be able to access up to \$3,000 in moving costs.
30. Will stabilization and move-in funds cover pet deposits?
Move-in funds are available to cover reasonable move-in deposits.
31. Rental Relief vs. Stabilization
- a. Once a client is stable can we transfer the renewal emails directly to the client or do Navigators continue to renew rent relief? Navigators continue to renew rent relief and confirm that the lease is still valid.
 - b. Can Navigators negotiate the lease payments with clients so that the rental assistance is capped at a specific amount and the client is responsible for any amount of rent that exceeds the cap? At this time Rental Relief payment will have to match what is on the lease.
32. Can Stabilization clients that have been exited from the program file an appeal?
Navigators can request re-introduction of clients who have been exited through the stabilization@ahfc.us email. AHFC admin will review individual requests. Clients who are exited by the grantee must follow the grantee policies and procedures to request a review of their circumstances.
33. Once a client's moving expenses are exhausted, are there additional funds that can be used from the program to cover the security deposit?
No.

34. Who qualifies for the program based on if their current housing status is in a shelter?
Clients need to be staying in a congregant shelter or sleeping outside. Clients who are able to access non-congregant shelters are not eligible for this program while they are in non-congregant shelter.