



## COVID-19 Shelter-in-Place Hotel Program Rehousing Participation Policy

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## SIP Hotel Rehousing Overview

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San Francisco's Shelter-in-Place (SIP) Hotel Program was set up to provide non-congregate shelter to individuals and families at high risk of severe illness from COVID-19. It is a temporary program only.

The SIP Hotels will eventually close.

Housing assistance is available for eligible guests (the "Rehousing Cohort"). Please see the SIP Rehousing Plan for details about which guests are eligible for the Rehousing Cohort.

This Policy governs how the Rehousing Cohort can access services and what decisions each eligible guest will be able to make throughout the process.

The Rehousing Participation Policy has overlap with other policies across HSH programs. This policy will identify overlap and applicability when relevant. In particular, certain elements of this policy will apply to placements made via the Community Queue.

## Policy Description: Overview

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### ***Rehousing Participation Policy distribution to guests***

Staff shall work together to present and explain this Rehousing Participation Policy and its impact on guests' receipt of Rehousing services.

### ***Steps guests must take to participate in Rehousing***

#### Step One: Complete the Primary Housing Assessment ("Coordinated Entry Assessment")

If they have never done so or if their assessment was completed prior to 4/1/2020, guests must complete a Coordinated Entry Assessment. Guests have **at least three opportunities to complete the Coordinated Entry Assessment at their SIP Hotel**. Additionally, they can reach out to a Coordinated Entry access point at any time to complete this assessment. If guests decline the three offers and do not communicate with the team to plan to take this assessment, they will no longer be eligible for Rehousing services through their SIP Hotel. They will lose Pandemic Prioritization associated with their status as a SIP guest and must leave the SIP Hotel upon request once DPH determines it is safe to do so.

#### Step Two: Sign a Rehousing Participation Agreement

Once a guest completes a Coordinated Entry Assessment, the guest must sign a Rehousing Participation Agreement to show that they understand and accept the available Rehousing services. Guests will have **at least three opportunities to sign the Rehousing Participation Agreement**. If the guest does not sign the policy after three chances to do so, the guest will no longer be eligible for Rehousing services through their SIP Hotel. They will lose Pandemic Prioritization associated with their status as a SIP guest and must leave the SIP Hotel upon request once DPH determines it is safe to do so.

### Step Three: Accept Housing Options

After the guest signs the Rehousing Participation Agreement accepting Rehousing services, the guest **may select from three housing options**. If the guest says no to all three choices, the guest will no longer be eligible for Rehousing services through their SIP Hotel. They will lose Pandemic Prioritization associated with their status as a SIP guest and must leave the SIP Hotel upon request once DPH determines it is safe to do so.

Acts of refusal may be active (in-person refusal of services) or passive (failure to respond to repeated attempts to outreach within three business days). Service providers will document each act of refusal using the SIP Guest Act of Refusal Form. They will physically deliver form to the guest (in person, if possible), and upload it to the guest's profile in the ONE System.

### ***How Staff Will Contact Guests***

Staff will contact guests to discuss their Rehousing options by one or more of the following methods:

- **Knocking on the guest's door.** Staff always will announce themselves first and explain that they would like to speak with the guest about Rehousing. They will not enter a guest's room without permission, including if the guest is not present.
- **Calling the guest.** Staff may call the guest hotel room phone and/or cell phone if they have shared their number. They will leave the guest a voicemail if they do not answer.
- **Scheduling an appointment with the guest.** Staff will help the guest remember when the appointment is.
- **Giving the guest printed contact information.** If the guest is not present when staff come by, they will leave printed information under the door.

### ***Definition of an "Attempt"***

- An attempt shall be considered complete if it results in getting a "yes" (agree to receive Rehousing services); or "no" (do not agree to receiving services) from the guest.
- A failed contact attempt occurs when a City or provider representative cannot make contact with a guest because the guest is not home, refuses to open the door, or does not answer the phone.
- In the event of a failed contact attempt:
  - The service provider must leave a notice of why they are trying to reach the guest.
  - The notice must include
    1. The attempt number
    2. Date and time of outreach attempt
    3. The step in the Rehousing process and the action needed
  - The guest has 3 business days to indicate interest in continuing the Rehousing process in one of four ways:
    1. Using the contact information provided on the notice
    2. Reaching out to the HSH Rehousing Support Line

3. Making contact with a care coordinator at their site
  4. Making contact with a resource coordinator at their site
- Unless there is a documented extenuating circumstance (such as a medical emergency), if the guest does not reach out in within 3 business days, it will be considered an act of refusal.

Service providers must wait a minimum of three business days between each attempt. At least two attempts must be in person.

### ***Care Coordination During the Rehousing Process***

Guests can expect the following as part of the Rehousing process.

- Staff will help guests gather documents (such as photo ID and proof of income if available) and will promptly upload these forms into a guest's ONE System profile
- If photo ID is not available, the Rehousing Documentation Policy requires providers to accept alternative forms of identification documentation including Copies of Government ID and Social Security cards from HSA's iFiles system, MEDS printouts verifying social security numbers, and ONE System or Changes profile pictures identifying the guest. Staff will support guests in obtaining this alternative documentation if necessary.
- Staff will assist guests in scheduling and accessing appointments to review housing options
- Staff will support guests through the Rehousing process, including serving as a resource for any questions a guest may have
- Staff will work to connect guests with their health and benefits providers to support them in transitioning care to their next shelter opportunity.

### ***Tracking Guests' Rehousing Responses***

Care Coordinators, Resource Coordinators, and Coordinated Entry staff shall work together to outreach to guests as outlined above.

Acts of refusal may be active (in-person refusal of services) or passive (failure to respond to repeated attempts to outreach within three business days). Service providers will document each act of refusal using the SIP Guest Act of Refusal Form. They will physically deliver form to the guest (in person, if possible), and upload it to the guest's profile in the ONE System.

### ***Ineligibility***

There are five decisions that can end a guest's eligibility for Rehousing services and ongoing housing in a SIP Hotel.

1. **Refusal to complete the Coordinated Entry Assessment**
  - A combination of three explicit refusals or failed contact attempts may result in ineligibility
2. **Refusal to sign Rehousing policy**

- A combination of three explicit refusals or failed contact attempts may result in ineligibility
- 3. Refusal to engage with a housing provider**
- Guests have the ability to select from among three housing options
  - Often a single housing provider will offer all three options
  - Refusal to participate or engage with this provider will result in ineligibility
  - If a batch provider cannot meet reasonable accommodation needs, refusal will not be counted against eligibility
  - Refusal to engage with a batch provider without a documented reasonable accommodation will result in ineligibility, and the guest will not be reassigned to another batch. Guests who have a challenge with a specific housing provider should reach out to the housing support line.
- 4. A missed pre-scheduled meeting, agreed upon between both the navigator/case manager and the guest, to review housing offers (housing appointments) with a guest**
- 3 missed prescheduled meetings with the same provider to review housing offers may result in ineligibility
  - If there is an extenuating circumstance (such as if a guest is in the hospital, in a rehab program, or in jail), that circumstance must be documented by the navigator/case manager in ONE. If the circumstance is documented, the missed meeting will not count towards ineligibility
- 5. Refusing a housing option**
- Multiple housing offers (up to 3) can be presented in a single meeting
  - A guest may refuse up to 3 individual housing offers before they become ineligible
  - Units offered have to be appropriate for a guest's documented reasonable accommodation, and a rejection of a unit that does not meet reasonable accommodation will not count as a strike against eligibility
  - Guests will have up to three business days to decide whether or not to accept a housing offer.

If an individual becomes ineligible based on the criteria above, they will no longer be eligible for Rehousing services through their SIP Hotel. This includes the loss of their Pandemic Prioritization. Guests who are no longer eligible for Rehousing services will be offered exits out of the SIP Hotels which may include placement in congregate shelter, referral to Homeward Bound, or referral to problem solving services. Losing eligibility for Rehousing services will not impact an individual's housing referral status or eligibility for other services, such as Care-Not-Cash housing.

### [Policy Description: Further Details](#)

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#### ***Application of Pandemic Prioritization***

If a guest is not Housing Referral Status, the Pandemic Prioritization Policy will be applied. The Pandemic Prioritization Policy defines what type of housing assistance is available for each guest. The ONE System tracks this priority.

## **Housing Opportunities**

Rehousing-eligible households referred to a housing program shall proceed as follows.

### Housing Referral Status Adults (Category A)

- *Accepting a unit:* Staff shall offer up to three vacant units to each Adult Housing Referral Status head of household. Guests shall have up to three business days (9 AM – 5 PM) to accept a unit. If contact with the guest is challenging:
  - Staff shall contact each guest using one or more of the attempt methods described above. The same rules apply. Guests who are no longer eligible for Rehousing services will not lose their Housing Referral Status but will lose Rehousing services through their SIP Hotel.
  - Where a guest receives multiple unit referrals in one day, the guest shall have up to three business days to decide whether to accept or decline each of the unique referrals made that day. The guest may change their mind during the three business day period, but the last choice(s) they make by the end of the period stands.
  - If a guest agrees to proceed with a specific unit, staff shall match the guest to that unit in the ONE System.
  - Staff shall track any refusals in the ONE System.
- *Before entering into a lease:* Once a guest agrees to a unit, the Housing Navigator and the housing provider shall have 30 calendar days to move the guest into that unit. During this period, guests may change their mind and refuse to continue with the housing application process for that referral before signing a lease. Failure to attend an appointment to sign a lease shall be logged as a “missed pre-scheduled appointment” in ONE per the refusal reasons above.

### Transition Age Youth and Families with Children

A Rapid Rehousing Provider will assist households ages 18-24 and households with minors with their housing search. Rapid Rehousing housing providers shall have **45 calendar days** from the program referral date to move heads of household ages 18-24 and households with minors to a specific unit. Within this 45-day period, the housing provider shall offer up to three units as follows:

- Staff shall contact each guest using one or more of the attempt methods described above. The same rules apply.
- Where a guest is offered multiple units in one day, the guest shall have up to three business days to decide whether to accept or decline each of the units offered that day. The guest may change their mind during the three-business-day period, but the last choice(s) they make by the end of the period stands.
- Where a guest-driven housing identification process leads to the identification of a unit, the housing provider shall ensure that the guest moves into their unit no more than 45-days from the program referral date.
- If a head of household accepts a housing opportunity, the Rapid Rehousing provider shall enroll that household into their program in the ONE System.

- Rapid Rehousing providers shall track any refusals in the ONE System.

#### Pandemic Prioritization Categories B, C, and D

Staff shall offer up to three specific housing opportunities to each Pandemic Prioritization Category B, C, or D head of household. Guests shall have up to three business days (9 AM – 5 PM) to accept a housing opportunity as follows:

- Staff shall contact each guest using one or more of the attempt methods described above. The same rules apply.
- Where a household receives multiple housing opportunities in one day, the head of household shall have up to three business days total to decide whether to accept or decline each unique housing opportunities presented that day. The guest may change their mind during the three business day period, but the last choice(s) they make by the end of the period stands.
- If a guest agrees to proceed with a specific housing opportunity, staff shall match the guest to that unit in the ONE System.
- Staff shall track any refusals in the ONE System.

#### CAAP Recipients (Care-Not-Cash eligible)

Guests in SIP Hotels may be eligible for housing tied to their County Adult Assistance Program (CAAP) benefit, called Care Not Cash (CNC) Housing. If CNC-eligible guests refuse to engage with the CNC Housing Access Team (HAT), they will no longer be eligible for Rehousing services. Losing eligibility for Rehousing services does not affect a guest's CAAP eligibility, or a guest's ability to receive CNC housing referrals in the future, but may result in the guest exiting the SIP Hotel to a congregate shelter program.

If a guest qualifies for both CNC housing and Pandemic Prioritization Category B housing resources because they are over age 60, the guest will first be referred to available Category B scattered-site Permanent Supportive Housing. If a CNC-eligible guest offered Category B housing loses eligibility for Rehousing services, as defined in Section VI, they retain CAAP eligibility, but would be required to exit to shelter to work on any future CNC housing referrals.

#### Non-Rehousing Cohort Guests

Guests who are not part of the Rehousing Cohort but residing in SIP may, at the discretion of HSH, be offered Rehousing services during their stay. The Rehousing Participation Policy in full will apply to these guests that are offered Rehousing services, and guests will be required to acknowledge acceptance of the policy by signing the Rehousing Participation Agreement.

#### ***Reasonable Accommodations***

Where a household rejects a vacant unit or housing opportunity because it does not meet their reasonable accommodation, that offer shall not be counted for the purposes of this Rehousing Participation Policy. Instead, the housing provider shall present a new, unique unit for the guest's consideration that meets the guest's disability access.

### ***People wishing to be housed together***

Two individuals wishing to live together may do so. Each will take a separate coordinated entry assessment and receive housing options based on that assessment. The roommates may choose which housing option they wish to pursue.

### ***Problem Solving and Homeward Bound***

Problem Solving and Homeward Bound services will be available to guests throughout the Rehousing process. Guests may partake in as many Problem Solving conversations as they choose.

### ***Support from Behavioral Health***

SFDPH Behavioral Health Services has arranged a multi-faceted model of care to address behavioral health concerns, including those that may manifest during the Rehousing process.

Staff with concerns about a guest may email [BHSconsultation@sfdph.org](mailto:BHSconsultation@sfdph.org) or call the consultation line at [\(415\) 379-0414](tel:4153790414). This line operates Monday through Friday, 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM. After hours and on weekends, staff may call the Mobile Crisis line at [\(415\) 970-4000](tel:4159704000).

### ***Grievances and Appeals***

The Rehousing process seeks to provide a fair and transparent process for connecting individuals to housing and services. If a guest is dissatisfied with the Rehousing process, they have the right to file a grievance as described in the HSH Rehousing Participant Grievance and Appeal Policy.

Guests wishing to file a grievance or appeal should contact the Rehousing Support Line at [HSHRehousing@sfgov.org](mailto:HSHRehousing@sfgov.org) or leave a voicemail at (415) 275- 2080. Please include your name, the site you are in or other details of how to contact you. Someone will return the call within 1 business day.

### ***Guest education***

The following items shall be posted at each SIP Hotel site at least seven calendar days prior to this Policy's effective date:

- An explanation of this Policy
- An explanation on how to file a Grievance concerning how this Policy was applied

All guest-facing materials shall be translated and explained as required by Section 91.54 of San Francisco's [Language Access Ordinance](#) and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) ([28 CFR §§ 35.101 - 35.108](#)).

Copies of these documents, in addition to the full Rehousing Plan, the Rehousing Participation Policy, and a guest's own Rehousing Participation Agreement are available through the Rehousing Support Line.

### ***Training and Support for Staff***

All staff who play a role in implementing this Rehousing Participation Policy shall receive ongoing training and support from the HSH Rehousing Team. Housing providers and the HSH Housing Team shall develop and distribute materials to support staff understanding of the housing programs, units, and services available to each Pandemic Prioritization group.

### **Applicability to The Community Queue**

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The Rehousing Participation Policy is consistent with Coordinated Entry policies related to the Community Queue. Clients engaged in housing referral via the Community Queue also receive three offers of housing, and lack of participation in the housing placement process leads to clients not being prioritized for housing services. Any guests who is Housing Referral Status and housed in a SIP Hotel, will be eligible for Rehousing services via the SIP Rehousing Process. If guests decline to participate in the SIP Rehousing Process and / or leave the SIP Hotel Program, they will retain their Housing Referral Status. However, they might not receive prioritized services via the Community Queue.

### **Rehousing Participation Agreement**

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Please see [SIP Rehousing – Participation Agreement](#). The Participation Agreement is also available as a separate document upon request.