

## Family Homeless Prevention and Assistance Program (FHPAP)

**Service Counties:** Renville, Meeker, McLeod, Kandiyohi, Jackson, Cottonwood, Redwood, Lincoln, and Lyon.

**Upon Intake:** Funds may be used for **Prevention** (arrearage or re-housing without a day of homelessness) or **Re-Housing Assistance** (homeless, including doubled up). Funds may be used for arrearage, security/utility deposit, rent assistance (including short-term gap payment), utility assistance, mortgage, and transportation (Bus coupons and gas cards as purchased by department when available). Some additional funds are available for undesignated temporary aid.

**Determine Eligibility:** No other resources are available

- Household must lack liquid resources to resolve situation on their own (cash, etc.)
- Must have a statement of eligibility status (denial or assistance) of Emergency Assistance from County Human Services Agency if Emergency Assistance funding is available.
- Diversion- Discuss with household if other options may resolve situation: (payment plan with landlord, borrowing money from a family member, etc.) and document/case note efforts about diversion and that no other resources are available.

**Determine Eligibility:** Homelessness Status

- Must be at risk of homelessness, literally homeless or doubled-up/couch hopping.
  - Must provide documentation of one of the following housing crisis:
    1. Eviction Notice
      - For eviction prevention, must state amount of arrearage payment needed to stabilize housing.
      - Eviction Notice must state date of housing loss.
    2. Mortgage Foreclosure prevention
      - Foreclosure will occur without assistance.
      - Must have written documentation
    3. Third party verification
    4. Signed and dated personal statement from participant

**Determine Eligibility:** Income

- Household income must be less than 200% of poverty guidelines
- If over income, again discuss alternate solutions like payment plans to landlord. If that is not appropriate, consider other programs they may potentially be eligible for such as Salvation Army.

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### Determine Eligibility: Targeting Tool

- Household must score a minimum of 25 points on the targeting tool
- Override is required if score is less than 25 points but special circumstances.

### Determine Eligibility: Amount of request meets program guidelines

- \$1,000 maximum assistance per household to resolve initial crisis

### Determine if FHPAP is the appropriate program for the household

- Will household's housing be stable after resolving the initial crisis?
- If not, is the household eligible for needs-based gap payment assistance? (See below)
- Does the household need intensive case management? If so, consider medium or long term assistance.

### Determine Eligibility (if needed) for needs-based gap payment assistance\*

\*The purpose of this part of the program is to bridge short, temporary affordability gaps that would otherwise hinder a household from obtaining/maintaining their housing. If the gap is too large, the plan for stabilization unrealistic, or the needs for intensive services too great, needs-based gap payment assistance would not be appropriate.

The following are the specialized criteria for this type of assistance:

- Household must be included in one of the targeted populations or must score a minimum of 35 on the targeting tool.
  - Families with children
  - People with disabilities
  - People fleeing domestic violence
  - Youth (under age 25)
- Household must have an affordability gap
  - 25% of the total gross household monthly income is less than the monthly rent payment.
  - Monthly gap must be less than \$300
    - If the gap is more than \$300, consider a program with a deeper subsidy, if available.
- Households must have a feasible housing stability plan so that the housing will be affordable after the assistance ends.
- Affordability gap must be recalculated each month for the following month.
- Gap payment assistance is available for a up to six months, but maximum total assistance of this type is \$900 (i.e. 3 months X \$300 or 6 months X \$150)

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- Households receiving gap payment assistance must participate in services in order to continue to receive this type of assistance.
- Gap payment assistance is paid directly to the landlord.

### **Other types of assistance:**

- Utility assistance: only used when no other program is available, primarily for utility deposits.
  - This assistance must be necessary to resolve a housing crisis.
- Transportation assistance: must be used for housing search or employment.
- Undesignated temporary aid: extremely flexible funding used when no other funding exists.
  - Aid must be used to resolve an issue as part of the FHPAP household's housing stability plan.
    - Examples include: required work boots for new employment, work uniforms, etc.
- All temporary aid expenses are approved on a case by case basis by a supervisor.

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### ▪ Paperwork Required:

Ensure all appropriate forms are completed

- At Application:
  - Universal housing File Cover Sheet
  - UCAP Intake form
  - Emergency Housing Application
  - Releases of Information
  - Tennessean Warning
  - HMIS Consent
  - UCAP Needs Assessment / Checklist
  - Documentation of housing crisis (homeless or past due/ eviction notice)
  - Documentation of CAUSE of crisis (repair bill, medical need, loss of wages)
  - Income Documentation/Certification of Zero Income
    - Letter of hire, pay stubs, tax return for self-employed persons, verification of benefits from Social Security, DHS, etc.
  - Verification of County Assistance (EA) application status
  - Targeting Points worksheet
- At Enrollment:
  - Budget
  - Income worksheet and under 200% of FPL
  - Lead Based Paint Signature Page
  - Basic Rent Agreement
  - Copy of Lease or (utility bill if FHP prevention)
  - W-9 (if not currently a vendor)
  - Case Notes
  - Copies of Payment Vouchers
  - Financial assistance agreement
  - Landlord Information for Rental Assistance Programs
  - Gap payment calculation (if applicable)
- Plan for housing stability based on strengths and barriers

### **Communication is very important when determining households entered:**

All FHPAP households must be promptly entered into client spreadsheet to ensure no overspending of allotted direct assistance households using YTD budget. (Cannot spend money we have not yet received)

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### **Documentation/Reporting**

Ensure all required information is entered into HMIS.

Ensure case notes in file properly document the household's situation and steps to work toward housing stability. "Tell the story." Ensure the reader understands the crisis.

Ensure that the resolution to the crisis is noted in the file. (How did FHPAP resolve the crisis?)

Ensure documentation of direct assistance payments made is included in the file.

UCAP makes payments directly to the landlord, mortgage or utility vendor. In cases where a needs based gap assistance payment is made, the client will pay their rent contribution directly to the landlord and UCAP will pay gap payment directly to the landlord.

### **Follow-up**

Follow up with all households 6 months after exit to determine whether they are stably housed. Complete follow-up information on the Universal Housing file form. Data will also be collected in a data base.....more to follow. This allows us to identify possible changes needed in program design for optimum effectiveness.

