

Tenant Eligibility Certification

BHRS has developed a universal tenant referral and certification process that will be utilized by all developments receiving funds from the MHSA Housing program. The process described below refers to the designated MHSA units in a project.

A. Application Process

For referrals to MHSA Housing Program developments, the San Mateo County Behavioral Health & Recovery Services Division will work with its network of Full Service Partnership, Intensive Case Management and Integrated FSP teams, all of which provide intensive services to persistently and seriously mentally ill adults, older adults, and TAY, as well as children with serious emotional disturbance in San Mateo County. These teams receive referrals from agencies throughout the system of care serving a broad cross-section of homeless mentally ill adults, older adults, transition-aged youth and children in San Mateo County, including shelters, county mental health teams, outreach and case management teams, transitional residential programs, acute psychiatric facilities, the criminal justice system and family and self-referrals.

Referrals will be made by designated FSP, ICM or Integrated FSP provider (the Referral Agencies) to BHRS, which will then certify MHSA Housing Program eligibility. BHRS will designate specific application periods during which tenant certification applications will be accepted. Each Referral Agency shall assist clients in completing tenant certification applications and gathering necessary documentation. In addition to establishing basic program eligibility, the form shall indicate which housing site(s) the client would like to apply for. Clients can designate that they would like to be considered for any sites for which they meet basic eligibility criteria. The Referral Agency shall also review the screening criteria with the client and assist the client to prepare for the screening process.

BHRS staff will review the application and determine if all required documentation is included. If information is missing, the reviewer will alert the Referral Agency and request that the missing information be provided. BHRS will only be establishing basic eligibility for MHSA housing. BHRS will complete the review within ten business days from the close of the application period. MHSA Certification does not take into consideration factors such as credit history, eviction history, or criminal history. This background check information may be collected by the housing provider after a certified applicant is referred for a particular unit.

Applicants deemed ineligible for MHSA Housing units will be given written notification within 10 business days of the close of the application period; this notification will clearly delineate the unmet eligibility criteria and the rationale for the rejection of the application. Applicants who are denied may file an appeal orally or in writing with the Office of Consumer and Family Affairs. Staff is available to assist consumers with appeals. Following an investigation, the Quality Insurance Manager will issue a determination within 10 days. Details of the appeal process will be provided in the ineligibility notification letter.

B. Certification Process

Certification will be based on satisfaction of the basic eligibility criteria. Eligibility will be established as follows:

- **San Mateo County residency**
- **Enrolled in or pending enrollment with San Mateo County Behavioral Health & Recovery Service Full Service Partnership (FSP), Intensive Case Management (ICM) or Integrated FSP services.**

Enrollment will be verified by the Referral Agency. At its discretion, BHRS may at some future date expand eligibility requirements to include clients who are not currently enrolled in FSP/ICM services but are MHSA eligible and satisfy all other eligibility requirements.

- **Person in household with SMI/SED:**

Households must meet at least one of the following criteria:

1. The household contains at least one adult (18-59 years old) or older adult who has been diagnosed with a serious mental illness as defined in Welfare and Institutions Code Section 5600.3 (b).

As this criterion is a precondition to enrollment in County FSP and ICM services, enrollment will serve as verification of SMI/SED.

- **“Homeless”**

Homeless, defined as living on the streets or lacking a fixed and regular night-time residence. This includes living in a shelter, motel or other temporary living situation in which the individual has no tenant rights.

Referral agencies will be required to verify homelessness using a form and documentation as specified by the County.

- Applicant has had difficulty obtaining/maintaining housing:

In addition to being homeless, the certification must demonstrate that the issues and/or conditions that establish the individual’s eligibility for the housing program are the same issues and/or conditions that significantly interfere with his/her ability to obtain and maintain housing; and without services linked to the MHSA Housing Program, the individual will not be able to obtain or maintain housing.

- Applicant must be willing to enroll and participate in Rep Payee or similar Third-Party Rent Payment services prior to lease signing. Applicants with a pre-existing payee may continue that payee relationship; those lacking a payee will be connected to an authorized service provider through BHRS.

