

SUPPLEMENTAL HOUSING FUNDS

PURPOSE

To provide a source of funds that will be available to eligible clients of the San Mateo County Mental Health System to help them obtain or maintain stable and appropriate housing. Clients requiring any level of housing support may be considered for funds.

These supplemental funds will be allocated based on guidelines and standards developed by the Mental Health Services Division, the San Mateo County Office of Housing, and representatives from the nonprofit mental health contract agencies that provide supportive services to individuals in housing.

PROCEDURE

To request funds, an application should be made by a contractor or mental health staff member on behalf of the client. The request must document:

- Financial need
- Specific reason for request
- Consumer involvement in the request
- Investigation of other potential sources of funds
- Plan for payback of funds, if any

No housing provider or case-manager should assume that funds are available to a client until written approval is obtained. Debts incurred on the assumption of fund approval have no guaranty of being repaid from Supplemental Housing Funds.

It is expected that adult supervisors will play a consistent role in oversight of payback plans agreed to by clients served by their staff. To facilitate this, the Adult Manager will distribute reports, prepared by the Mental Health Association (fiscal intermediary), every two weeks or as these are available.

Wraparound Plans and status must be made clear to the receiving team when a client transfers from one county regional clinic or contract agency to another. The receiving team will continue to monitor the client's clinical and financial situation and is responsible for making any necessary recommendations about the plan if changes (including greater or lesser ability to repay the loan) occur.

Decisions will be based on the client's financial need and payback plan, using the following standards and guidelines:

- Mental Health Division Contractors may request reimbursement for sponsor-based housing problems by submitting a request for supplemental housing funds. Agencies must be able to demonstrate that they have investigated all other potential sources of funding before making a request and requests must be submitted in a timely manner.
- For sponsor-based housing, payments for rent that exceeds maximum Shelter Plus Care certificate limits may be requested, not to exceed \$100 per month. Every effort must be made to move client if possible or convince landlord to accept a tenant-based voucher that does not have a maximum that client may pay.
- Funds may be used to pay for roommate absences because of a client's illness, hospitalization, disappearance (moved without notice), refusal to pay, or death at the following limits:
 - Hospitalization - payments will be made for up to 60 days of rental assistance plus an additional 30 days if a new roommate must be found.
 - Failed to give notice - payments will be made for up to 60 days of rental assistance, or until a new roommate is found, whichever is shorter.
 - Refusal to pay or leave an apartment - payments will be made for up to 60 days of rental assistance for an eviction process plus an additional 30 days to find a new roommate.
 - Death - 60 days of rental assistance will be paid to find a new roommate.
- Deposits/first and last months' rent

All sources including client's savings plans and other funding resources should be tried prior to the request for supplemental funds. Clients need to have a full payback plan included in their request and have a clear understanding that this is a loan.

- Damage to Room or Apartment

Damage to a room or apartment that is not the result of a client's behavior or misuse and cannot be negotiated with the housing authority or the owner may be covered by the supplement.

Damage to a room or apartment that is the client's responsibility can be covered by the supplement if the request includes a payback and/or clinical follow-up

plan, i.e. drug and alcohol treatment. Sponsor based apartment housing providers may also request funds if damage needs to be corrected prior to new tenant or to ensure good relationships with landlords.

- Maintenance

Maintenance necessary to having the apartment pass yearly inspections can be covered by the supplement. Refusal by landlord to do the maintenance should be documented. The client's payback should reflect the client's responsibility for the problem that created the required maintenance efforts to pass inspection, i.e. client saves things and a truck and dump fees need to be paid to get apartment ready for inspection. Client may have to repay funds for these expenses if clinical interventions to prevent the scope of the problem were tried and unsuccessful.

Maintenance necessary to change tenancy can be covered by supplement if landlord refuses to pay and a mental health agency retains use of the apartment for a different client.

- Rent Increase

If possible, try to move client to another apartment and/or apply to get client on a supplemented housing program. Supplement can be used to maintain housing while other alternatives are put in place. (Up to \$100/month for one year.)

- Apartment Holds

Housing supplement money can be used to hold apartments while awaiting a final approved inspection.

- Loss of Income

Housing supplement money can be used to temporarily to pay rent if a client loses income for reasons including, but not limited to:

- Inability to work because of illness or family problems.
- Disruption or delay in SSI/SSDI payments.

A client's failure to repay the housing fund may make the client ineligible for future additional funds.

- Special Needs

Housing supplement money may be requested for uninsured or indigent clients who require services in a residential treatment facility or specialized supported living program. There may or may not be a payback plan. These requests will be reviewed and approved by Adult Resource Management (ARM) after application

by the Case Manager using the standard flexible funds application. The ongoing management of the client's continuing need for services remains the responsibility of the Case Manager (i.e., not ARM).

Residential Treatment Facilities (Hawthorne, Eucalyptus, and Wally's Place) and specialized living situations (Cordilleras Suites) must notify the Adult Manager monthly, in writing, about clients who are unable to pay their full rent. This report must include sufficient financial and clinical information to allow appropriate timely decisions about whether these clients are candidates for Supplemental Housing Funds.