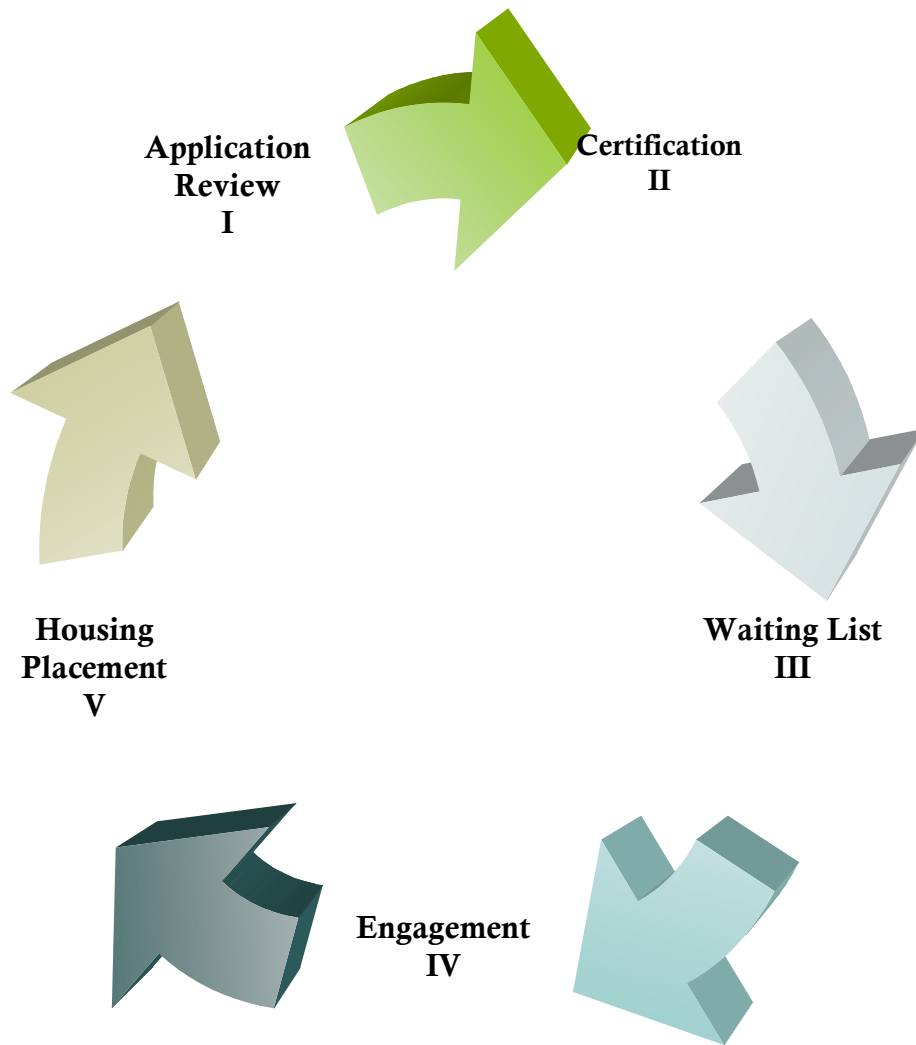


# SPC Application Process



# SHELTER PLUS CARE PROGRAM

## APPLICATION PROCESS

To ensure that candidates receive appropriate consideration for acceptance into Shelter Plus Care (S+C), the candidate's **Case Management Advocate (CMA), the staff person advocating/completing the application on behalf of the candidate** must submit a completed S+C application package to the Program staff located at The Community Partnership.

The following constitutes a completed S+C application package:

- Shelter Plus Care Permanent Housing Application
- Authorization for Disclosure
- Disability Verification (see below)
- Shelter Plus Care Supportive Services Agreement
- Shelter Plus Care Income Reporting Agreement
- Homeless Verification

If an application does not have each of these items submitted in accordance with the standards set forth in this manual, the application will be considered incomplete. The CMA submitting the application will be issued a documentation request in writing. The request will identify the missing information and give the CMA 30 days to submit the appropriate information. If an application is still incomplete for **30 days** after notice is given, the application will be made Inactive. If the CMA is not able to produce the required information within the designated time frame outlined in the documentation request, they may apply for an extension to submit the necessary documentation.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Extension requests will only be considered if they are received within the 30 day timeframe outlined in the documentation request.

Application packages must be accompanied by written disability verification.

**PLEASE NOTE: Disability verification for mental illness may not exceed a three-month period prior to date of application. Any documentation submitted for the purpose of verifying substance abuse history must cover the six-month period prior to the submission of the application to The Community Partnership.** Verification information that does not meet these standards will not receive placement consideration and will ultimately delay the housing process.

The following are examples of acceptable Shelter Plus Care verification documentation:

**Area of Verification**

**Homelessness**

**Mental Illness**

**Alcohol/substance Abuse**

**HIV/AIDS**

**Required Documentation**

Written documentation (on agency letterhead) from a homeless service provider verifying the candidate's homeless status one week prior to the submission of the Shelter Plus Care application package.

Psychiatric Assessment

Drug screen results, documentation on agency letterhead from referring agency/treatment program verifying candidate's alcohol/substance abuse history

Lab results, documentation from candidate's physician

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### *FAILURE TO SUBMIT REQUIRED VERIFICATION WILL DELAY PLACEMENT CONSIDERATION*

Application packages should be either faxed or mailed to:

**The Community Partnership  
Shelter Plus Care Program  
801 Pennsylvania Avenue SE, Suite 360  
Washington, DC 20003  
Fax# (202) 543-5361**

### **STEP I: Application Review**

Once the Case Management Advocate (CMA) has submitted a complete Shelter Plus Care (S+C) application package to TCP, the Program staff will place the date and time received on each package. If additional information is needed to support the candidate's placement consideration, the Program staff will forward a *Shelter Plus Care Documentation Request Notice* to the referring CMA requesting the information. Once the CMA has forwarded the requested documentation, the Program staff will once again review the application package for completion.

### **STEP II: Certification – Waiting List**

When a Shelter Plus Care application is complete, the certification process will begin. Application packages will be forwarded to the appropriate certifying agency(s) for disability certification. Disability certification is the program's mechanism for verifying and ensuring that the candidate has been diagnosed with one or more of the program's required disability(s). Applications are routed for certification in accordance with the disability information specified and supporting documentation provided in the candidate's application package.

The Community Partnership (TCP), the Department of Health/Addiction Prevention and Recovery Administration (DOH/APRA) and the Department of Mental Health (DMH) are the program's three designated certifying agencies. Each certifying agency has a designated certifying representative who is responsible for reviewing all disability documentation and authorizing certification. TCP is responsible for reviewing and certifying all HIV/AIDS applications; DOH/APRA alcohol/substance abuse; and the DMH, mental health and dual diagnosis of mental illness and alcohol/substance abuse. *SINCE ALCOHOL/SUBSTANCE ABUSE IS A DIAGNOSIS IDENTIFIED IN THE DIAGNOSTIC STATISTICAL MANUAL (DSM IV), THE DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH IS AUTHORIZED TO CERTIFY CANDIDATES WITH A DUAL DIAGNOSIS OF MENTAL ILLNESS AND ALCOHOL/SUBSTANCE ABUSE.*

Once the application package has been reviewed by the appropriate certifying agency(s), the application package, along with Shelter Plus Care Certification Authorization Form, will be returned to TCP by the designated agency listed above. The Certification Authorization Form serves as the certifying agency's official document for disability certification.

If the certifying agency representative requests additional information for certification, s/he will contact the S+C program staff at TCP to discuss the reason(s) for the request.

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TCP S+C staff will contact the candidate's Case Management Advocate (CMA) to request the additional information. Once the CMA submits the required documentation to TCP S+C staff, it will be immediately forwarded to the certifying agency for certification. Once certification is complete, TCP S+C staff will notify the candidate's CMA via an approval letter.

Once an application has been approved the client is placed on a Wait List. The Wait List is maintained by TCP S+C Staff. Approved clients are placed on the Wait List in chronological order based on the submission of their approved certification. TCP contracts with Sponsoring Agencies to serve the three disabled populations identified by the Shelter Plus Care program. When a vacancy occurs within one of these Sponsoring Agencies, the slot will be filled immediately by the next individual on the wait list that meets the eligibility criteria of the Sponsoring Agency with a vacancy. Because Shelter Plus Care is a permanent housing program and turn over is relatively slow, there is no way to determine where and when a slot will become available.

### **STEP III: Engagement**

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When a vacancy becomes available, the Community Partnership (TCP) initiates the sponsoring agency/candidate match. Once TCP has identified an agency/candidate match that best addresses the candidate's housing and supportive service needs and the Sponsoring Agency's vacancy, a copy of the Shelter Plus Care (S+C) application package will be forwarded to the identified sponsoring agency for review. The sponsoring agency then meets with the candidate referred by TCP. If the Sponsoring Agency does not accept the client referred, they are required to issue to TCP S+C staff and the CMA a reason for eligibility denial using the Notice of Eligibility Denial, in accordance with Section 19 of the Homeless Services Reform Act of 2005 (HSRA). In such cases the Sponsoring Agency must clearly state the reason for their denial and reference the reason for their actions. Section 8 of the Shelter Plus Care contains copies of notices required by HSRA.

Upon completion of the agency/candidate match, the designated Shelter Plus Care (S+C) sponsoring agency will begin to engage and prepare the candidate for housing placement. Sponsoring agencies accepting new candidates into their programs are expected to implement a team approach with member(s) from the referring agency to assist them in the engagement/transition process. It is important that the identified sponsoring agency and representatives from the referring agency work together to ensure that all information regarding the candidate is discussed and understood. The implementation of this approach allows individuals involved in the candidate's care to assist in the identification of all supportive service and housing needs.