

SHELTER PLUS CARE PROGRAM

HOUSING PROCESS

STEP I: Placement Request & Income Verification

Once an agency/candidate match has been identified and engagement has occurred, the Shelter Plus Care sponsoring agency must assist the client in submitting income information and identifying a unit. To begin this process, the sponsoring agency must forward current income documentation or a signed No Income Statement along with the Shelter Plus Care Sponsoring Agency Placement Request to the Shelter Plus Care Property Administrator.

The following is a list of acceptable S+C income verification:

<u>Income Source</u>	<u>Required Verification Documentation</u>
Employment	Pay Stubs (at least 2 current consecutive pay periods)
Unemployment	Award Letter from state of benefits
SSI	Award Letter from state of benefits
SSDI	Award Letter from state of benefits
TANF	Award Letter from state of benefits
Veteran's Benefits	Award Letter from Veterans Administration
Worker's Compensation	Award Letter from employer
Child Support	Award Letter from court system
Severance	Award Letter from employer
Other Sources	Award Letter from agency(s) providing benefits

If a candidate does not have an income at time of application submission, a Shelter Plus Care No Income Statement must be completed. The No Income Statement allows non-income individuals to participate in the program. Candidates who are unemployed and not receiving benefits or assistance from any federal or local government agency and/or outside organization at the time of application should only complete this document. If the candidate has applied for benefits (i.e., Unemployment, SSI, SSDI, etc.) and their application(s) is pending, this form must also be completed.

Upon acceptance into Shelter Plus Care (S+C) it is the responsibility of the designated sponsoring agency to assist participants with identifying an income. Although S+C will pay 100% of the participant's rental subsidy, it is the intent of S+C to assist participants identify income resources.

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Sponsoring agencies must assist clients in identifying housing options in accordance to the housing configurations identified in their Shelter Plus Care rental subsidy contracts. *CONFIGURATIONS ARE BASED ON THE AGENCY'S CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT WITH THE COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP AND THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT.*

Once a unit is identified by the client and the Sponsoring Agency, a Placement Request Voucher must be completed and sent to TCP's Property Administrator. The Placement Request Voucher authorizes the Property Administrator to proceed to the next phase of the placement process.

PLEASE NOTE: In cases of an address change (i.e., incorrect address, landlord identified another unit), the sponsoring agency must submit a revised Shelter Plus Care Placement Approval Request along with documentation substantiating the reason for the address change.

STEP II: Housing Inspection

Upon receipt of the Placement Approval Voucher, the Shelter Plus Care Property Administrator will contact the identified landlord to schedule an inspection date/time. Each unit will be inspected to ensure compliance with the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Housing Quality Standards (HQS), District of Columbia Housing Codes, and Free from Lead-Based and Lead-Based Paint Hazards. To confirm program compliance, the Property Administrator will complete an Inspection Checklist prior to occupancy. If the unit does not meet HQS, the Property Administrator will forward an Inspection Repair Notice to the landlord documenting all maintenance concerns.

Rent Reasonableness

Prior to forwarding a Shelter Plus Care Sponsoring Agency Placement Request, the sponsoring agency must inspect the proposed unit by using the inspection checklist to ensure that the unit is prepared for inspection. In addition, the sponsoring agency must attempt to the best of their ability to inspect the conditions of the proposed neighborhood to ensure that the identified unit is located in an environment that enhances the quality of life for the Shelter Plus Care participant. It is recommended that the sponsoring agency assess the neighborhood at various points (i.e., day, night) to ensure an appropriate living environment. The Property Administrator will test each unit for rent reasonableness per the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) regulations. The proposed rental price of the unit will be compared to comparable non-Shelter Plus Care (S+C) units within the area. Rent reasonableness will take into account location, size, type, quality, amenities, facilities, management and maintenance of each unit within the same building, complex and/or neighborhood. This mechanism has been implemented to ensure that rents are not excessive nor out of conformity with other rents currently being charged by the same owner for comparable non-S+C units.

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Occupancy standards for admissions and continued participation are identified in this section. These standards have been established to avoid overcrowding and wasted space. All units assisted under Shelter Plus Care shall adhere to the Department of Housing and Urban Development regulations and housing codes mandated by the District of Columbia.

Fair Market Rent

TCP can only pay rent up to the amount of the Fair Market Rent (FMR) for the city and unit configuration in which the client is residing. These standards are issued annually by the Department of Housing and Urban Development and are subject to fluctuation and variability of the city. All S+C participants must be informed of this limitation of the rental subsidy.

Bedroom Configuration

Participants shall be allowed to occupy units that provide safe and sanitary accommodations without overcrowding or wasting space. The following configurations shall apply at the time of admission and for continued participation:

<u>UNIT SIZE (BEDROOM)</u>	<u>MINIMUM # OF PERSONS PER UNIT</u>	<u>MAXIMUM # OF PERSONS PER UNIT</u>
0	1	1
1	1	2
2	2	4
3	3	6
4	4	8
5	6	10

The number of bedrooms shall not permit (2) persons other than husband and wife, significant others or children (same sex) under the age of (6) to occupy the same bedroom. Every member of the family, regardless of age, shall be included when applying occupancy standards for admissions and continued program participation.

All units assisted under S+C shall be the residence of the participant(s) identified on the lease. The participant(s) **shall not** sublease, assign, transfer or permit other individual(s) other than those identified on the lease/Shelter Plus Care Rental Assistance Contract to reside in the unit.

IF THE LEASE HOLDER DIES DURING PROGRAM PARTICIPATION, THE SURVIVING MEMBER (S) OF THE HOUSEHOLD IS AUTHORIZED TO RECEIVE CONTINUED RENTAL ASSISTANCE ON BEHALF OF THE DECEASED PARTICIPANT FOR A MAXIMUM OF (1) YEAR AFTER THE DEATH OF THE PRIMARY SHELTER PLUS CARE PARTICIPANT. ALL SURVIVING MEMBERS MUST BE IDENTIFIED AS SECONDARY OCCUPANTS ON THE LEASE AND THE COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP RENTAL ASSISTANCE CONTRACT AT THE TIME OF THE INITIAL LEASE SIGNING. EACH CASE WILL BE REVIEWED INDIVIDUALLY TO ENSURE A FAIR HOUSING PROCESS.

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STEP III: Lease Up

Once a unit has been inspected and approved, the Property Administrator will schedule a date and time for the signing of the lease and Shelter Plus Care Rental Assistance Contract. The Property Administrator will:

- assist the candidate(s), sponsoring agency as well as the candidate's CMA and/or guardian in reviewing the lease;
- inform the candidate that s/he is fully responsible for the unit and that s/he must agree to abide by all additional lease provisions identified by S+C and
- explain the responsibility of the identified sponsoring agency to review all policies and procedures specifically relating to their agency's program.

All Shelter Plus Care (S+C) participants are responsible to pay rent according to his/her income. Rent will be determined by the highest of either 30% of the family's monthly adjusted income (adjustment factors include the number of people in the family, age of family members, medical expenses and childcare expenses) or 10% of the family's monthly income. Shelter Plus Care (S+C) will be responsible for the remaining portion of the rent. If a participant is not receiving an income, S+C will pay 100% of the rent. All resources of regular earnings such as Employment, Unemployment Compensation, SSI, SSDI, TANF, Worker's Compensation, Child Support, Severance and Veteran's Benefits will be considered income and the subsidy will be calculated according to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) regulations.

PLEASE NOTE: with the submission of the Placement Request Voucher and prior to lease signing, it is mandatory that verification of income is submitted on behalf of the participant to the Property Administrator. Verification of income assures accurate subsidy calculations. **Housing placement will not be authorized without appropriate income verification.** Once The Community Partnership has received income verification, the Property Administrator will make the appropriate calculations and inform the participant of their financial obligation to S+C at the lease signing. The participant will also receive a copy of the rental assistance contract that defines the rental conditions of the program and financial obligations.

In the event that a participant or the sponsoring agency receives notification from the landlord regarding an increase in rent, a representative from the sponsoring agency must forward written documentation from the landlord to the Property Administrator. Sponsoring agencies must forward rent increase documentation to the Property Administrator within (2) business days of receipt from the landlord or program participant. Forwarding documentation to the Property Administrator within the required time period ensures timely increase adjustments and notification to the landlord, sponsoring agency and the participant. In cases where the participant receives notification regarding an increase in rent, the participant is required as defined in their signed Shelter Plus Care Rent Increase Notification Agreement to forward the received notification to their designated sponsoring agency within (5) business days of receipt from the landlord. Once the Property Administrator receives the required documentation, a review of the increase will be conducted. If the Property Administrator determines that the increase is appropriate, a Shelter Plus Care Rental Assistance Contract Addendum will be forwarded to the participant, the sponsoring agency, and the landlord confirming

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all subsidy adjustments. If determined that the increase is not in compliance with the conditions of the Shelter Plus Care (S+C) program or is above the Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) published Fair Market Rent (FMR) for the year, the Property Administrator will forward a written request to the sponsoring agency to identify other housing options for the participant. In these cases, the landlord will receive the appropriate (30) day notice to allow the participant to vacate the premises once another S+C unit has been identified. It is the responsibility of the sponsoring agency to ensure that each participant lives in an environment that is safe and affordable.

STEP IV: Housing & Income Changes

Each time a participant occupies a unit, the unit must be re-inspected by The Community Partnership's (TCP) Property Administrator. Units must be inspected regardless of inspection frequency (i.e., if a unit was inspected and the participant vacated the premises two months later, the unit must be inspected again before the next participant can occupy the unit). Unit inspections ensure that the unit is in compliance with Housing Quality Standards and the District of Columbia's Housing Codes. During this process, the Property Administrator will complete another Inspection Checklist, in addition to an Inspection Repair Notice documenting any maintenance concerns existing prior to occupancy.

All candidates must sign a Shelter Plus Care Income Reporting Agreement for acceptance into Shelter Plus Care (S+C) and for continued program participation. In the event that a participant's income changes during enrollment in S+C, the participant must honor the conditions of their Shelter Plus Care Income Change Agreement by reporting any change(s) to their designated S+C sponsoring agency within five business (5) days of notification.

Once the sponsoring agency receives written notification of the participant's income change, they must forward the documentation substantiating the participant's income change to the program's Property Administrator located at TCP within (2) business days of receipt from the participant. In addition, the sponsoring agency must document all changes on the participant's upcoming Home Visit Report. This process will ensure that the appropriate income adjustments are made and forwarded to the landlord, participant and sponsoring agency.

Once the information is received by the Property Administrator, the Property Administrator will forward a Shelter Plus Care Rental Assistance Contract Addendum to the participant and the sponsoring agency notifying them of the adjustments made to the participant's current rental subsidy. Failure to report income change(s) to the sponsoring agency and the program's Property Administrator may result in termination from S+C.

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