

Attachment A

PSHA Permanent Housing Standards

Revised January 2026

The Vermont Medicaid Permanent Supportive Housing Assistance (PSHA) Program aims to help Vermonters secure and maintain housing. The program supports participants into housing that is permanent, affordable, and safe. Adherence to the following standards is encouraged while respecting participant choice and supporting informed decisions, provided all potential positive and negative consequences are thoroughly considered.

Community Transition Assistance (CTA) funds can only be used when a housing unit meets the criteria of being permanent, affordable, and safe**.

PERMANENT

Permanent housing allows a person to remain in a unit as long as they wish, provided they comply with lease terms. While lifetime leases are not feasible, the PSHA program expects participants will enter into formal, written lease agreements, either standard or sponsored, for at least one-year, with the option to renew and default to a month-to-month agreement. These conditions can be reviewed on a case-by-case basis if they conflict with prevailing local practices or for other documented reasons.

AFFORDABLE

Housing units leased by Participants should be “affordable” to the greatest extent possible. Federal housing policies indicate that “affordability,” While 30% is ideal, Participants may pay up to 40 - 50% of their household’s gross income towards these costs. The provider agency is responsible for calculating this cost-to-income ratio and include it in CTA requests.

SAFE

Habitability standards (24 § CFR 5.703) apply any time PSHA Community Transition Assistance is used to help a program participant move into housing under PSHA.

Housing must be inspected and meet the required standards before any CTA funding requests are approved. Habitability can be demonstrated through the AHS Housing Quality Standards (HQS) when possible, or the providing agency can complete a checklist. Unlike HQS inspections, a certified inspector is not needed to conduct PSHA habitability inspections.

A PSHA Habitability Standards checklist can be found in the following Appendix. While using this form is not required, any assessment must verify that **units must meet the**

standards listed on the form. Each grantee should implement and consistently follow its own written procedure for evaluating and determining housing habitability standards have been met. Documentation must be kept in case files.

Using Different Housing Inspection Standards

A grantee may choose to rely on a different housing inspection standard, such as a city housing code. However, whichever inspection is used, it must determine whether all aspects of the PSHA minimum habitability standards have been met for the particular unit being assisted with PSHA CTA. Simply conducting a city housing code inspection, a sampling of units in a particular development, or another type of housing quality assessment is insufficient. Completed documentation should be placed in the participant's file.

SUPPORT SERVICES ONLY (WITHOUT CTA)

When a Provider Agency offers services-only assistance to help a participant maintain or move into new housing, a habitability inspection, 12-month lease, and affordability measures are not required. Nonetheless, it is strongly encouraged that all grantees work with clients to ensure they live in housing that is permanent, affordable, safe, and healthy.

****FOOTNOTE**

The potential acceptance of rental units outside the preferred housing standards can be considered in response to the severe housing shortage in the State and the understanding that the duration of homelessness may be significantly prolonged without such flexibility. CTA can be approved for moving into units outside the permanence and affordability standards, with explanation and a plan to continue to seek permanence. This policy may be amended as conditions change.

HOP - Minimum Habitability Standards for Permanent Housing (24 CFR part 576.403(c))	Meets Standard Yes/No
1. <i>Structure and materials</i> : The structures must be structurally sound to protect residents from the elements and not pose any threat to the health and safety of the residents. (this standard also applies to the building's exterior, common areas, and basement)	
2. <i>Space and security</i> : Each resident must be provided adequate space and security for themselves and their belongings. Each resident must be provided an acceptable place to sleep.	
3. <i>Interior air quality</i> : Each room or space must have a natural or mechanical means of ventilation. The interior air must be free of pollutants at a level that might threaten or harm the health of residents.	
4. <i>Water Supply</i> : The water supply must be free from contamination.	
5. <i>Sanitary Facilities</i> : Residents must have access to sufficient sanitary facilities that are in proper operating condition, are private, and are adequate for personal cleanliness and the disposal of human waste.	
6. <i>Thermal environment</i> : The housing must have any necessary heating/cooling facilities in proper operating condition.	
7. <i>Illumination and electricity</i> : The structure must have adequate natural or artificial illumination to permit normal indoor activities and support health and safety. There must be sufficient electrical sources to permit the safe use of electrical appliances in the structure.	
8. <i>Food preparation and refuse disposal</i> : All food preparation areas must contain suitable space and equipment to store, prepare, and serve food in a safe and sanitary manner.	
9. <i>Sanitary condition</i> : The housing must be maintained in a sanitary condition.	
10. <i>Fire safety</i> : All three conditions below must be met to meet this standard. (i) There must be a second means of exiting the building in the event of fire or other emergency. (ii) Each unit must include at least one battery-operated or hard-wired smoke detector, in proper working condition, on each occupied level of the unit. Smoke detectors must be located, to the extent practicable, in a hallway adjacent to a bedroom. If the unit is occupied by hearing impaired persons, smoke detectors must have an alarm system designed for hearing-impaired persons in each bedroom occupied by a hearing-impaired person. (iii) The public areas of all housing must be equipped with a sufficient number, but not less than one for each area, of battery-operated or hard-wired smoke detectors. Public areas include, but are not limited to, laundry rooms, community rooms, day care centers, hallways, stairwells, and other common areas.	

Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Emergency Solutions Grant Interim Regulations, 24 CFR § 576.403 Shelter and housing standards

MINIMUM HABITABILITY STANDARDS FOR PERMANENT HOUSING

Agency:

Building Address:

Inspection Date:

Performed By:

CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

I certify that I am NOT a HUD certified inspector and I have evaluated the property located at the address below to the best of my ability and find the following:

- ☐ Property meets all of the above standards.
- ☐ Property does not meet all of the above standards.

Final determination by program staff based on habitability evaluation:

- ☐ Property is approved.
- ☐ Property is not approved.

Signature: _____