

Procedure Section: P2360 Housing Case Management and Reach Up

Subsection: P2360A Reach Up and General Assistance Housing

Procedure:	P2360A	Effective Date:	4/1/26
Bulletin:	26-02	Supersedes:	New

Included Programs

Reach Up

For households with children staying in General Assistance Emergency Housing (also known as GA Housing or GA Hotel) it is an expectation that families engage in their own housing search and accept any available alternative housing placements, including shelter space or permanent housing options. If a household receives Reach Up and GA Housing, they will be expected to work with a Reach Up Case Manager in their efforts to locate housing other than GA.

Though less common, a VABIR Career Coach may take on this role, if the household is connected to other housing supports and the participant's primary goal is to increase their income through employment. Assigning a case manager and a career coach to work together with a family may be ideal in these situations. Refer to [Reach Up Services procedure 2378 Career Coach Services](#), as well as below.

Also less common is offering case management services to a household that receives Reach Up when the parent receives SSI or caretaker child only households. The preference would be for these families to work with other local housing partners, but RUCMs can provide housing case management at times.

Communicating expectations when participant receives Reach Up and GA housing

Reach out to the family using multiple methods of communication to establish a connection.

Methods of communication include:

- In person,
- Phone,
- Text,
- Postal mail (consider using an additional form of communication when possible),
- Email

Explain that it is the expectation that if a household is receiving Reach Up and is being housed by GA Housing that they will meet in person with their Reach Up Case Manager/Career Coach (RUCM/CC) on a weekly basis.

- The intention of this meeting frequency and format is to allow small goals to be established and followed through on, and so information can be shared between programs.
- Due to limited funding and hotel rooms available, efforts must be made to reduce the time households remain in a GA Hotel.
- It is also acknowledged that there is a shortage of affordable housing and so focus must be placed on goals that reduce obstacles and increase opportunities to locate alternate housing than GA Housing.
- This expectation is different than households that do not have a RUCM/CC assigned to work with them, simply because that service is not necessarily available to other households.

If a household is also working with another service provider on housing related tasks, this should be shared with the RUCM/CC, but does not necessarily take the place of their weekly meetings with their RUCM/CC. See section below “Local housing partner.”

The GA Housing Unit will also be informing families that if they are active with Reach Up, they must follow through with meeting with and establishing goals with their RUCM/CC.

Language to include on the participant’s Family Development Plan

As soon as possible add Housing Search as an FDP activity and include the following language:

I understand that to continue to receive Reach Up and General Assistance Housing I must meet with my Reach Up Case Manager/Career Coach in person on a weekly basis, at the hotel where I am being housed. We will schedule meetings several weeks in advance. If I am not able to attend a scheduled appointment, I will communicate this with my case manager/career coach prior to my meeting and reschedule to a time when I can meet.

I will come up with a primary plan and a backup plan to find housing other than GA Housing. These plans will include concrete steps that I will take to explore all housing options, reduce obstacles and increase opportunities to move into alternate housing. These plans will be documented in writing and adjusted as needed. If I am meeting with a housing partner on the alternate weeks and they are providing updates to my Reach Up Case Manager, my weekly meetings with my RUCM and Career Coach can move to a biweekly basis.

Use of Macro on FDP

A Macro has been created to use on an FDP created in ACCESS. Check out the [ESD Macro page](#) (ESD Internal link) on SharePoint to locate the FDP-GA Housing macro. Follow the instructions on [How to Use a Macro](#) (ESD Internal link).

Documentation of work with household in GA housing

RUCMs complete the [electronic RU-GA Meeting Data Jot Form](#) for each scheduled meeting with a household in GA housing. Make sure to capture any updates including moving out of GA housing, progress on plans, and lack of engagement. Submissions on the form will be sent via email to the RUCM and Reach Up Supervisor. Cut and paste a copy of the emailed submission in the case file.

Consider using the [GA In-Person Services Inventory](#) (internal ESD link) as a framework for working with participants.

Career Coaches should complete the Jot Form with an emphasis on the career-related work they are doing with the participant. If the CC has any trouble accessing the Jot Form, inform Reach Up Central Office. In the meantime, share the relevant information with the local Reach Up Supervisor who can enter it into the Jot Form.

Weekly in person meetings

Weekly in-person meetings will be held with the family at the hotel to ensure convenience for participants and allow RUCM/CC to observe the overall environment. This allows RUCM/CC to offer additional support, resources, and referrals to help the participant achieve their goals.

- Meetings will occur on site at the hotel in an available meeting space such as a conference room or a private section of the lobby.
 - If the participant and RUCM/CC both prefer to meet in the participant's hotel room they can, though a RUCM/CC should never enter a room without permission or if they feel unsafe.

- If the hotel does not offer a meeting space email RU Central Office, RU Central Office will work with the GA housing unit and ESD leadership to see if a space can be found at the hotel.
 - If a space cannot be found at the hotel, and there is a nearby public space where the meeting can be held, this is an acceptable alternative.
- Report concerns about the hotel to the [GA Housing Unit Management Team](#) and [GA Aops](#). Example of a concern may be basic needs not functioning properly such as heat not working or electrical issue.
 - GA Housing may be able to offer a quick solution to move the participant to another room or hotel; with a longer term solution setting up a health inspection completed or addressing the concerns with management of the hotel.
- Meetings between a RUCM/CC and a participant may include another RUCM/CC or a Reach Up Supervisor. RUCM/CC can coordinate participant meetings at the hotel simultaneously, allowing multiple RUCM/CC to be present at the same location.
- If the household requests to meet in a public place other than the hotel, accommodate the participants request and review the reason with the Reach Up Supervisor. Continue to offer the hotel as an option.
 - It may be appropriate to meet other than the hotel if participant has a meeting with another state entity and would be already at the state building, need to complete eligibility paperwork, or safety is a concern.
- If the RUCM/CC has reason to believe that a meeting at the hotel may be unsafe for any reason, they should not go. Concerns should be discussed with the Reach Up Supervisor and District Director to determine if a plan can be put in place to address the concern and make a meeting at the hotel possible.
 - If it is determined due to safety meeting with a participant will not happen at the hotel the CM/CC should document this in case notes
 - If the RUS/DD determine a specific hotel is unsafe for CM/CC to meet with participants they should email RUCM, RUCM will communicate this with the ESD leadership.

Working with a VABIR Career Coach

If a participant in GA housing is assigned to work with a VABIR Career Coach (CC), the CC will also meet in person weekly with the focus being on increasing the household's income.

Similar to the household's primary and backup plan for housing, the work with the CC should outline a primary and backup plan for increasing income.

- Primary plans should include the quickest way to increase income to be able to afford to self-pay at the hotel or afford other housing opportunities.
- Backup plans can include more long-term planning for education, training and employment goals.

The Career Coach should collaborate with the family's identified housing support (either RUCM or outside local housing partner) and share information that impacts the household's ability to move forward with their housing and income goals.

Local housing partners

If a local housing partner is supporting the household on housing related goals it is best practice to coordinate services around the family and communicate at least once per month to get an update on how they are supporting the family, so duplicate efforts are not made.

Reach Up cannot require local housing partners meet with households on a weekly basis or provide monthly updates to RUCM/CC. District office staff will foster positive relationships and collaboration with local housing partners. If a partner does not have the capacity to provide regular updates, the RUCM/CC will rely on the family to provide updates on the work they are doing with the local housing partner to avoid duplicated efforts.

- If the household and the housing partner meet once per month or as needed (no regular meetings scheduled), the RUCM/CC and participant are required to meet in person weekly.
- If the household and the housing partner have regular scheduled meetings at least every other week and the partner can provide at least biweekly updates to the RUCM/CC, the RUCM/CC and the participant can meet in-person at the hotel biweekly at a minimum.
- Meeting weekly can be required if that is determined to best support the participant.

Details about meetings

- When possible schedule a month of meetings at a time with households in GA housing. Meetings may not be able to be scheduled for the same day and time due to scheduling conflict—try as best as possible to at least schedule two weeks ahead.
- Plan for the following month mid-way through the current month.
- Schedule a full 45–60-minute meeting for each meeting.
- Use goal sheets at each meeting to help the household set meaningful goals.
 - Develop actionable steps that the household can take before the next meeting.

- If the goal is achieved move on to the next step.
- If the household needs more time to achieve their goal use the review/revise process to develop additional steps.
- Households should take the lead in setting their own goals; however, focus should remain on the end goal of reducing obstacles and increasing opportunities to locate alternate housing than GA Housing.
- If households include two parents/adults that work with a RUCM/CC(s), weekly meetings can occur with either or both parents/adults, as long as each parent/adult meets with their individual RUCM/CC at least one time each month.

Rescheduling weekly in person meetings

If an in-person meeting needs to be rescheduled due to the household or the RUCM/CC, try to set up a quick check in virtually or over the phone using Amazon Connect within the same week. If a quick check-in cannot occur, the following week's meeting should already be scheduled. If it is not already scheduled, try to schedule several weeks of meetings in a row to prevent missing multiple weeks of contact.

If meetings need to be rescheduled for three weeks in a row, and are not able to be completed in person, remind the household of the requirement to meet weekly in person and follow through with the conciliation process to get back on track.

If the household continues to not engage during the conciliation process, refer to the section below "Household refuses to meet in person or weekly."

Household refuses to meet in person

If a household refuses to meet in person, explain this is a requirement of receiving both GA housing and Reach Up, and that refusing to meet this requirement could result in conciliation, sanction or closure, as well as denial of future housing authorizations.

- If participant refuses after explaining this is a requirement, follow the conciliation process.
- If good cause to not meet in person is provided, review with the Reach Up Supervisor
 - Weekly meetings would still be needed but could occur using Amazon Connect or virtually.
 - Good cause for refusing to meet in person could include illness or safety concerns.

Make sure to clearly document discussions and reasoning in case notes.

Enter a CATN to inform the GA housing unit. For more information see the section

below on “Entering a monthly CATN about engagement.”

Determining if weekly in person meetings can be reduced

If it is felt that weekly meetings are no longer necessary, first review the case to determine if goals have been set and all actionable steps to overcome all obstacles and explore all available opportunities have been taken.

After reviewing, if still believed to be unnecessary, consult with the Reach Up Supervisor during weekly supervision. Refer to the GA In-Person Services Inventory if utilized. If the GA In-Person Services Inventory was not used, make sure all sections of it have been addressed. If the RUCM/CC and Reach Up Supervisor decide additional approaches or steps should be tried, weekly meetings will continue.

If additional approaches or steps cannot be identified, send identifying information and a summary of the situation (including the GA In-Person Services Inventory if used) to be reviewed by Reach Up Central Office (RUCO). RUCO will provide feedback outlining the next steps to take, including whether meetings can be held less frequently.

Establishing Primary and Back Up housing plans

Establish a primary plan and a backup plan with the household to locate housing other than GA.

- Primary plans should include the quickest alternative to GA housing.
 - Plans should be realistic, if the CM/CC does not think the participant’s plan is realistic they should coach the participant to develop a more realistic plan.
 - Examples of an unrealistic plan might be the plan is to get an apartment, but they have no plan to increase their income or voucher available to them.
- Backup plans can include more long-term planning for sustainable housing alternatives (including wait lists for vouchers).
- Include the primary and backup plans on the participant’s goal sheets and in case notes.
 - Primary and backup plans should be thorough and consider obstacles that could get in the way and opportunities that can increase the likelihood of reaching the identified plans.
 - Increasing income can help increase housing options. If no housing specific plans are identified, focus plans on increasing income.

Example: If a household is applying for subsidized housing, consider if any members of the household have criminal records that could prevent them from being approved for a voucher.

Consider if there are steps that can be taken to gather supporting documentation of references to include with an application or appeal a denial based on criminal history and include those steps in the plan.

Non-housing-related goals

Support goals identified by the participant that are not directly housing-related, such as attending an educational program, but maintain focus on goals that will allow the family to most quickly locate housing other than GA.

Communicating with GA housing unit

RUCM/CCs should share information through their local Reach Up Supervisor with the GA Housing Unit related to the participants engagement in housing related work and other information that might impact the household's eligibility for GA Housing. Information related to engagement should be entered in CATN, while other information can be emailed directly to the GA Housing Unit Management Team and GA Aops.

Entering a monthly CATN about engagement

Enter a CATN at least once per month indicating household is engaged in housing related work. Identify role as RUCM/CC and include brief description of their plan(s) for housing that are being worked on. This allows the GA housing unit to discuss/remind households of their tasks/goals when they call for reauthorizations.

Example of CATN indicating household is engaged: RUCM confirms that PARTICIPANT NAME is working this month on housing goals. Last meetings held were 12/3 and 12/11 and 12/17. Primary plan includes completing application to local housing authority Project Based Voucher program that has current openings.

Example of CATN indicating household is not engaged: RUCM confirms that PARTICIPANT NAME is not engaged in housing goals. Participant is scheduled to be sanctioned starting January 1, 2026 for missed meetings and not responding to texts, emails, phone calls and written correspondence.

Other reasons to communicate with the GA housing unit

Email the GA Housing Unit Management Team and GA Aops to inform them about changes including if a household:

- Leaves a hotel for any reason,
- No longer has their child(ren) staying with them,

- Indicates there is a safety or health concern at the hotel.

In addition to sending an email, enter a CATN to record the information in ACCESS.

Determining engagement with housing related work

Engagement in housing-related work means the household:

- Is responsive to attempts at contact (picks up phone, responds to text messages, stops by office).
- Is available to meet on a weekly basis in person.
- Has identified primary and backup plans related to housing.
- Follows through on agreed steps to complete plan and move towards housing related goals.
- Shares obstacles with RUCM/CC that get in the way of completing plan and comes up with alternative approaches.

Review each household's engagement in housing related work during weekly supervision with the Reach Up Supervisor.

If a household is being sanctioned or closed for not following through with housing related work, indicate in the CATN.

Coordinated Entry

The goal is that households with children staying in GA housing are referred to the local Coordinated Entry (CE) assessment partner and have a complete CE Assessment. RUCMCC will verify a Coordinated Entry referral has occurred. If the Coordinated Entry (CE) assessment partner has a waitlist, the RUCM/CC will make sure they are on the waitlist and following through with CE partner to complete the assessment.

- The GA Housing unit receives a list each month from the local Coordinated Entry Lead Agency that indicates if households in GA Housing have been referred and assessed by CE.
 - Confirm the status of the CE referral and assessment with the GA Housing Unit Management team.
 - If it is known that a referral was not made, email the GA Housing Unit Management Team and GA Aops and ask that a referral be made.

Referrals to Shelters

Households that are in GA housing should have been referred to available shelters at the time of their original GA housing authorization. If shelter space was not available at the time, but becomes available, RUCM/CC's may be asked to help facilitate a referral.

Households may be informed that their period of authorization for GA housing could be ended early and that they have to move to an available shelter space. This process can vary depending on the shelter requirements. Some shelters require an intake process and background check.

Household refuses alternate housing

It is a requirement of GA housing that households accept alternate housing if available. This includes:

- Shelter space
- Transitional apartment
- Other housing opportunities

A household that refuses alternate housing opportunities could receive a period of ineligibility (POI) for up to 30 days.

If a household refuses an alternate housing opportunity, review with a Reach Up Supervisor to determine if there is a good cause reason for not accepting the housing. If it is believed there is a good cause reason, send a description of the household's situation, including the alternate housing opportunity and the reason for not accepting to Reach Up Central Office (RUCO). RUCO will consult with ESD Leadership to determine if a management exception can be made.

Transferring case management to a different district

If a family is housed in a GA Hotel that is located more than 45 minutes outside the local District Office, consult with RUCO to help determine if the case management should be transferred to a closer district to best support the family. Refer to Reach Up Services procedure [2302D Transferring Participants Between Districts](#).

Understanding basic GA housing eligibility

Confirm night count and eligibility requirements with GA housing unit by checking CATN for the latest information. GA related CATNS should have "****" in the front and back of the note.

- If information is not available in CATN, email the GA Housing Unit Management Team and GA Aops before meeting with the family to ensure correct information is shared.

Share concrete information with households about the limitations around GA housing (night counts, room limits).

Revision History for P2360A

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Brand new section