

Transitional Housing Partner Q and A

Payments/Security Deposit

Q: For the “Hard to House” payment, is there a timeframe before the hotel can exit the household?

A: There is not a specific timeframe tied to households receiving the payment. There are timeframes that hotels must follow when exiting households in the Occupancy Agreement.

Q: If someone has to establish another occupancy agreement, would their security deposit go with them?

A: Households are eligible for one security deposit per hotel.

Q: Will payments be only made via invoice similarly to emergency housing, or will ESD be able to use credit card payments, as well?

A: Prospective payments will be made to hotels via the invoice process, ESD cannot pay via credit card.

Q: Would the client get the security deposit if they moved out prior to the 4 months, to move into an apartment?

A: No, though they would be eligible for a security deposit through VERAP or RUERA.

Q: If client moves to another hotel when asked to leave original hotel, how does payment transfer to the new hotel?

A: This depends on when the household leaves the hotel. If they are asked to leave immediately and are able to enter into an Occupancy Agreement immediately, ESD would pay the new hotel. ESD is able to pay both the new and old hotel if necessary.

Q: Will clients be required to pay a portion of their income for housing?

A: No, households will not have to pay for a portion of the hotel stay.

Participant Information

Program Entry/Who Can Participate

Q: Is this program for families with children?

A: Families with children will potentially be eligible for Transitional Housing, although ESD plans to transition them to the program last to preserve their ERAP eligibility.

Q: If someone is already in a hotel are they automatically enrolled in this program?

A: No, households must apply and provide a valid Occupancy Agreement.

Q: Will clients in GA under AWC qualify for this program?

A: Yes. The eligibility criteria are 80% AMI, homeless as defined by HUD category 1 or 2, and a Vermont resident.

Q: Are youth that are currently housed under the AWC policy be able to access this program?

A: To be eligible for the Transitional Housing program, applicants must be at least 18 years of age or be emancipated.

Q: Do participants in this program meet the HUD definition of literal homelessness?

A: Applicant households must meet HUD Category 1 or 2 to be eligible for the program. Everyone in the Transitional Housing program will meet the definition of literal homelessness.

Q: If someone causes their own eviction would they be able to use this program?

A: Yes. The reason a client is homeless does not factor into the eligibility requirements.

Q: Families currently in Family Shelters (not hotels) would be considered for transition on July 1st?

A: Yes, they could apply prior to 7/1, although they will not be eligible for provisional housing. Households staying in shelter are preserving ERAP months that could be applied to permanent housing in the future.

Q: For clients who have become literally homeless at this time and would usually go to ESD or call ESD to get a hotel room, would they simply fill out this form instead and upload it/hand it in to ESD?

A: After July 1st, households eligible for Emergency Housing will be granted Emergency Housing while they work to establish an Occupancy Agreement. Households ineligible for Emergency Housing would make use of Provisional Housing. An interview is required when clients enter the program, so they should contact ESD, not just upload the application.

Q: If a client is from out of state and has not acquired a VT state ID but has been housed in the hotels, will they still be eligible for this program?

A: Households must intend to remain in Vermont to eligible for the program.

Q: Will newly homeless persons during this 18 month automatically apply for transitional program?

A: This depends on the household's eligibility for the various programs.

Length of stay

Q: If someone utilized VERAP before becoming homeless, would that impact the amount of time they are eligible for this program?

A: Yes. Individuals are eligible for up to 18 months of ERAP assistance lifetime.

Q: 18-month limit, is this for the life of the ERAP funding window, or the life of the individual client?

A: This is a limit on individuals, ERAP funding runs through September 30th, 2025.

Q: If a client has reached the end of their 18 months of utilizing this, will it revert back to how we've been doing it this far? Especially because we have already had clients in hotels for over a year.

A: Once clients exhaust their 18 months of ERAP, they could apply for GA emergency housing. However, GA rules will revert back to pre-COVID rules on 7/1/22, which has a much narrower scope of eligibility.

Vulnerable/Uncooperative Participants

Q: What should we do about people with significantly mentally illness who are not navigating the process well, have been in the motels and are highly vulnerable? I am currently doing all paperwork for such people--they so far have allowed me to sign docs as indicated in their file.

A: ESD has tried to wrap services around this population to the extent possible.

Q: If Transitional Housing Program clients are not engaging with Housing Navigation Services or Housing Case Managers, what happens? How is that reported, etc.

A: ESD is working on a Coordinated Entry referral process, which will include follow up to ensure that applicants are following through. ESD and OEO will host another training to share these details in the near future.

Program Exiting

Q: Can you talk about any issues with leaving before the 3 months is over? We don't want to disincentivize moving out.

A: Households may leave an Occupancy Agreement prior to its termination to move to permanent housing. Households may exit at any point.

Q: If the household is currently working towards housing will there be any penalty for finding housing and leaving the hotel? Can you touch on what that may look like?

A: Households may leave an Occupancy Agreement prior to its termination to move to permanent housing.

Q: What will it look like if a hotel has been paid for the month, but then wants the tenant to leave secondary to breaking rules?

A: The Occupancy Agreement spells out how much notice a hotel must give a client before exiting them. There are some provisions for immediate exit due to safety concerns.

Hotel/Capacity Information

Q: How many hotel rooms are available for this program and where are they?

A: Most hotels housing Emergency Housing guests have expressed an interest in participating in the Transitional Housing program.

Q: Housing Case Managers in Chittenden County are at capacity. What shall we do to ensure that all motel guests on THP (transitional housing program) are served by Housing Case Managers?

A: The Office of Economic Opportunity has funding opportunities available at [Funding Opportunities For Partners | Department for Children and Families \(vermont.gov\)](#). There are many organizations and staff who are not specifically funded to provide "housing case management", but do support people with housing search and placement activities "housing navigation services". The Vermont Coalition to End Homelessness has online training available to support people with providing housing navigation services:
<https://helpingtohousevt.org/vceh-online-training-modules/>

Q: One of the questions we had from a motel manager was a concern for needing to increase insurance as this becomes more of a long term rental and not a motel?

A: ESD held office hours with motel managers and worked to address their concerns.

Q: Are there kitchenettes in the hotels? Making their own food helps keep food costs down.

A: Some hotels have kitchenettes, not all locations do.

Q: Will ESD be sharing the details about who the motels have agreed to continue to house with housing navigation on record?

A: Yes, ESD will make referrals to coordinated entry and share information as appropriate.

Q: Does every hotel have applications on site?

A: No, we cannot launch the program until 4/1. ESD will visit hotels the week of 4/4.

Q: Have hotels that have agreed to be in this program consented to act as "landlord references" for clients who are chronic?

A: We have not discussed hotels acting as references. That could be a conversation the household's housing navigator could have with the hotel.

Q: Can you create a way to be able to directly communicate with the new centrally organized program other than via the 1800 line. A huge amount of time is wasted being on hold currently for providers whose clients need assist.

A: ESD will create an email inbox. We expect to be calling these households ourselves, however if they do need to reach ESD they will need to contact us via the 1-800-479-6151 number.

Q: Just to confirm, we will be able to use this funding for current staff, if it increases our capacity to support housing stability services?

A: Details about funding opportunities including ERAP Housing Stability Services are available here [Funding Opportunities For Partners | Department for Children and Families \(vermont.gov\)](#).

Q: What if someone becomes homeless and no hotel rooms are available to house them?

A: ESD plans to work with hotels to get as many people hotels as possible. There are aspects of the Transitional Housing program, such as prospective payments, that make the program more attractive to hotels.

Q: Who should the hotel management contact if they'd like to participate in this program.

A: Nicole Tousignant nicole.tousignant@vermont.gov or Mark Eley mark.eley@vermont.gov.

Q: Are hotels going to mandated state IDs for entry into this program? That's another issue we've run into for under 21-year-old clients.

A: Hotels are private businesses and ESD cannot control whether or not they have an ID requirement.

Q: Have we offered things like Trauma-Informed Care and Cultural Sensitivity trainings to hotels?

A: ESD has not offered these trainings for hotels.

Q: Question is around the conversations and the type of Language we use when telling folks there is no current housing/hotel room?

A: Generally, although ESD has some significant challenges in some areas of the state, rooms have been available in other parts of the state and ESD has been able to offer transportation. Not all households are able to move.

Q: How many clients do we anticipate will not be able to access this program? Hotel has to agree on an individual basis? If hotel says no to an individual...?

A: ESD will work to make this as seamless as possible, including going to hotels to help facilitate household enrollment.

Administrative

Q: Will the push for clients to be entered onto the Coordinated Entry list be handled by the staff that is on site, or is that a detail still being worked out

A: ESD is working on a Coordinated Entry referral process and an additional training will be scheduled

Q: Who will be working on obtaining the occupancy agreement for each household?

A: ESD will assist households in obtaining Occupancy Agreements. Households may independently negotiate Occupancy Agreements if they choose to.

Q: Who is responsible for turning in the application to ESD? Do we, or is the applicant turn this document into ESD?

A: Applicants may apply in person at ESD district office, upload their application via the ESD uploader, or fax the application.

Q: Does this program replace the Emergency Housing program?

A: No. The Emergency Housing program will be in place according to pre-COVID rules on 7/1.

Q: Interpreter services will be available?

A: ESD offers interpreter services now and will continue to offer them.