



**FY2019 Continuum of Care  
Supplemental Questionnaire  
New Projects, Renewals, DV Bonus and Permanent Housing Bonus**

Agencies that apply for funds through the CoC Funding Process must complete an application for each program in E-snap. In addition, agencies must complete this Supplemental Questionnaire for each program.

This form is due on 8/25/2019 by e-mail to [hsc@cityofmadison.com](mailto:hsc@cityofmadison.com). If you have questions, please contact Torrie Kopp Mueller, [tkoppmueller@cityofmadison.com](mailto:tkoppmueller@cityofmadison.com) or call 608-266-6254.

- **Agencies with more than one CoC project must submit a separate form for EACH project.**

Name of Agency: Dane County Human Services/Housing Initiatives, Inc.

Name of Project: Permanent Housing for the Chronically Homeless (PHCH)

Proposed Amount: \$91,000

**Please answer the following questions:**

*Project applications will be reviewed based upon adherence to the HUD CoC Program Interim Rule, FY19 CoC NOFA, and FY19 CoC NOFA Policy Priorities, as well as results of the Performance Measure Ranking Criteria.*

1. Describe experience of each grantee (and sub-grantee) for administering this type of HUD-funded program. Please describe experience for all staff involved with this program.

***Housing Initiatives, Inc. (HII) has a 25-year history of solely providing permanent supportive housing for persons who are homeless and have severe and persistent mental illnesses. With the 10-year Plan to End Homelessness, the Permanent Housing for the Chronically Homeless (PHCH) program fits completely with the new goals. HII achieves this primarily through the 151 units in 33 properties that the agency owns and operates within the City of Madison, scattered throughout the city. Clients are integrated into established neighborhoods at a more personal, non-institutional level. Clients have multiple opportunities to reach and interact with agency staff, who recognize when clients may be experiencing a mental health crisis. This facilitates quick intervention from experienced case worker staff from HII or other partner agencies that provide mental health services.***

***Clients are also allowed to secure housing from private landlords within Dane County and, at the time of this application, HII has clients residing in the cities of Madison, Monona, Fitchburg, Sun Prairie and Middleton, the village of DeForest and the towns of Madison and Burke. Over the past 10 years, Housing Initiatives has partnered with 50 private landlords using a team approach between Housing Initiatives, landlords and case workers to monitor and intervene with clients as needs arise.***

***The cornerstone of HII's success is the staff and its experience administering the program and working with the clients they serve:***

***Bradley Hinkfuss: Mr. Hinkfuss is new to the role Executive Director for HII but comes with a long history of working with many dimensions of affordable housing and the homeless community. He managed many projects in his 16 years at Porchlight, and another 2 years at Domestic Abuse Intervention Services before coming to HII.***

***Christine Verdico: Ms. Verdico serves as the Business and Grant Operations Manager. She has been with HII for 11 years and has extensive knowledge in the administration and reporting of the Rent Assistance Program.***

***Loreen Gage (MS Human Services): Ms. Gage joined HII in early 2019 and has extensive experience in the mental health and public education sectors. She leads and works alongside a team of 3 case workers who work directly with any HII client to provide and connect them with broader community services. She is also the supervisor for supportive services staff at our Calypso Rd. Housing First project.***

***Lola Ferguson: Ms. Ferguson is new property manager at HII. Although she is new to the agency, she comes with over 13 years property management experience and has experience with Section 42 compliance. Combined with her impressive educational credentials (Accredited Residential Manager, MS, DR in Education), she promises a new level of leadership in the property management area.***

***Additionally, Housing Initiatives has three supportive services staff for the Calypso Rd. Housing First project, which houses people almost exclusively through the Rental Assistance program:***

***Krishna Reatigui-DeWitt (BS, MS – Social Work): Ms. Reatigui brings a master's degree in social work, along with significant work with the Veteran's Administration Homeless Program. Additionally, she has worked in the psychiatric unit of local hospitals.***

***Kevin Scott (BS-Psychology): Mr. Scott comes to HII with several years' experience working in different capacities with Tellurian's Adult Residential Program which focuses on serving clients with co-occurring conditions of mental health and substance abuse.***

***Kevin McGettigan: Mr. McGettigan recently joined the HII team but has very extensive experience in working in the local mental health recovery system with the Dane County Care Center and Tellurian. As a Certified Peer Specialist and Recovery Coach he brings a valuable new dimension to the HII services team.***

***The PHCH program is a relative newcomer as a program, having started less than three years ago. However, it fits and operates well under the larger umbrella of Housing Initiatives' programming, particularly the Rental Assistance program and the community-wide Coordinated Entry system. The original application included both acquisition funds for a building, and case management funds for 2 positions. It was instrumental in establishing a new campus of 2 buildings (15 units) with a dedicated case management office on-site. This renewal application is requesting only case management funds.***

***The program is currently in its second operating year of the original three-year grant. It has proved a very effective model in providing stable housing to formerly homeless people coming directly off the Dane County Continuum of Care Coordinated Entry list. In the most recent reporting year, 95% (20/21) of participants remained or exited to permanent housing destinations. All the clients served at the PHCH project receive a rent subsidy through the Dane County Rental Assistance program.***

2. Out of total program budget, including leveraged funds, what percentage are HUD funds? Please provide a breakdown of funding sources and amounts for this program. (Not scored, for information only)

***The total program budget for 2019 will be \$127,419, with \$84,630 (66%) coming from HUD CoC funds and \$42,789 (34%) coming from other Dane County sources.***

***For leveraging, we will include direct support from Dane County for the Supportive Services Lead position, which represents \$25,819 as part of our larger-picture supportive services program.***

3. Please describe how your project takes proactive steps to minimize or overcome barriers to housing retention. For Coordinated Entry, please describe how your project takes proactive steps to minimize barriers to access of the Coordinated Entry System.

***HII has a Director of Client Services (Loreen Gage) and three FTE case workers on staff to assist clients with finding solutions to issues that may adversely affect their ability to maintain independent living. Case workers engage with all new clients at the time of entry and reach out to clients continually to assist and connect them with services as needed. Identifying potential issues at the time of move-in helps case workers devise service plans tailored to the unique needs of each individual. Case workers make one-to-one meetings with clients a priority to address client needs.***

***Additionally, HII staff will receive training to achieve accreditation to work with clients to register for services through Dane County Comprehensive Community Services. This will open another avenue for service provision by HII staff and many other agencies and service workers utilizing the CCS system.***

***In 2019, HII increased service worker staffing to four FTE positions for the first time. This staffing increase will dramatically improve supportive service provision at the Calypso Road in addition to scattered site housing. All Calypso clients will also be clients of the Rental Assistance program. Case workers employ a harm reduction model in providing client services. In doing so, they offer multiple options to help clients retain housing and improve their situation. Examples include flexible repayment plans, payee arrangements, personal service plans, and application to other community resources. The staff also engages in ongoing professional training, and actively collaborate with the broader Dane County and Madison homeless services network.***

***Housing Initiatives is executing Memorandum of Understanding agreements with nine agencies that go through March 31, 2021 – as we have in the past. These agencies agree to provide supportive services for clients on an as-needed basis. The supportive services include, but are not limited to, mental health case management and other mental health care, lifeskills training, AODA treatment, job training skills and education, and access to food and other resources to maintain a home.***

***There are no barriers to access of the Coordinated Entry System. HII takes 100% of new client referrals from the Coordinated Entry waiting list, and HII staff are in regular contact with the Institute for Community Alliances staff that monitor and maintain the waiting list. This regular communication and coordination between HII, the ICA administrators and other participating agencies eliminates barriers and keeps system access working very well.***

4. In your last operating year: (N/A for New Projects)

How many households exited the program?

Why did the households exit? (i.e. one was terminated from the program & one moved into subsidized housing & one was evicted):

If the participant(s) was evicted, please list the reason?

Did the program attempt an agency transfer for any of the leavers? If so, what was the outcome?

How many new households entered the program?

How many transfers were accepted into the program?

***In the last program year, 2 people left the program.***

***Of the people who left, 1 left for permanent subsidized housing and 1 left for jail.***

***Neither of the households were evicted.***

***One of the leavers was transferred successfully to another permanent subsidized unit owned by HII.***

***There were 16 new households that entered during this program year.***

***There were 3 transfers accepted to the program.***

5. If a participant exits to a non-permanent destination does your agency have the capacity to provide ongoing support services? If so, for how long? Please describe the scope of services provided (Not scored, for information only)

***If a participant exits to a non-permanent destination HII has very limited ability to provide ongoing support services. If participants reach out to HII staff, the staff will continue to provide referrals, assist with housing searches, and connections to other community support services for up to one month.***

6. What is the status of the program's written standards checklist submission? Check one box below.

- The program has submitted the applicable written standards checklists to CoC Coordinator. All sections were answered with yes or N/A.
- The program has submitted the applicable written standards checklists to CoC Coordinator. One or more questions were answered with no. Specify the section: PSH Checklist #6 - Need written policy on safety for extreme weather; General Checklist, Termination and Grievance Procedures #4 – public website posting of proceures.
- The program receives EHH or CoC funds but has not submitted the checklists to CoC Coordinator. They are submitted with this application.
- The program is currently operating but not receiving EHH or CoC funds. Applicable checklists are submitted with this application.
- The proposed program is new and currently not operating. Applicable checklists were filled out based on the agency's plan for compliance and are submitted with this application.

7. **New Projects and those operating less than one fiscal year only.** Please provide a data narrative on what your project has accomplished thus far or what you hope the project will accomplish once in operation. Data points to include are those found on the performance spreadsheet and include: expenditure of funds, data quality, cost per exit, utilization rate, increase in participant income, successful exits, and returns to homelessness. ([https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1uYsK2uru\\_gqf085cifmuK\\_6RTipc5xOOU5xDv3I9tZc/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1uYsK2uru_gqf085cifmuK_6RTipc5xOOU5xDv3I9tZc/edit?usp=sharing))

8. Is your agency actively participating in the Homeless Services Consortium (HSC)? List names of staff who participates in HSC Committees or Work Groups below.

Committee Name	Staff Name
Community Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness Oversight Committee	
CORE Committee	Christine Verdico, Loreen Gage
Education and Advocacy Committee	
Point-In-Time Committee	Brad Hinkfuss
Nominating & Governance Committee	
Committee to End Youth Homelessness	
Shelter Providers Committee	
HSC General Membership Meetings	Loreen Gage
HSC Board of Directors	
Built for Zero	
Outreach Providers Group	
Family Placement Group	
Housing and Health (H2)	

**Alignment with Housing First Principles (N/A for Coordinated Entry)**

- 1) Please attach your agency and/or project written policies or procedures that clearly demonstrate participants are **NOT SCREENED OUT** based on the following criteria, and indicate the document and page number where the panel can find each provision.

**Please Note:** if a policy or procedure applies to all CoC-funded projects or agency-wide, you may submit one copy per agency. If you have different policies or procedures for different projects or project types, submit one copy of each relevant policy and specify to which project or projects each one applies.

	<b>Name of Document/File</b>	<b>Page Number</b>	<b>Name of Project(s) (or “All Projects”)</b>
Having too little or no income	Housing Initiatives Handbook for Tenants and Clients (revised 2019)	13	Rental Assistance
Active, or history of, substance use or a substance use disorder	Housing Initiatives Handbook for Tenants and Clients (revised 2019)	13	Rental Assistance
Having a criminal record *	Housing Initiatives Handbook for Tenants and Clients (revised 2019)	13	Rental Assistance
History of domestic violence (e.g., lack of a protective order, period of separation from abuser, or law enforcement involvement)	Housing Initiatives Handbook for Tenants and Clients (revised 2019)	13	Rental Assistance

\*1A) Please note if there are specific criminal records the program denies for, what they are and the reason for denial.

- 2) Please attach your agency and/or project written policies or procedures that clearly demonstrate participants are **NOT TERMINATED from the program for the following reasons**, and indicate the document and page number where the panel can find each provision.

**Please Note:** if a policy or procedure applies to all CoC-funded projects or agency-wide, you may submit one copy per agency. If you have different policies or procedures for different projects or project types, submit one copy of each relevant policy and specify which project or projects each one applies to.

	Name of Document/File	Page Number	Name of Project(s) (or "All Projects")
Failure to participate in supportive services	Housing Initiatives Handbook for Tenants and Clients (revised 2019)	14	Rental Assistance
Failure to make progress on a service plan	Housing Initiatives Handbook for Tenants and Clients (revised 2019)	14	Rental Assistance
Loss of income or failure to improve income	Housing Initiatives Handbook for Tenants and Clients (revised 2019)	14	Rental Assistance
Being a victim of domestic violence	Housing Initiatives Handbook for Tenants and Clients (revised 2019)	14	Rental Assistance

### Policy for Funding Consideration

To be eligible for funding consideration, Project Applicants must meet the following criteria:

#### All Project Sponsors

- Must meet all HUD eligibility criteria
- Must meet all pre-application deadlines set by the CoC.
- Must have met all program requirements for most recent program year to be eligible for application.
- Must be a 501(c)3, 501 (c)4, PHA or local government
- Must possess legal authority to apply for and receive funds and carry out activities authorized by the CoC Program.
- Must provide supplementary match funds required by HUD.
- Must participate fully in the Dane County CoC process to coordinate and integrate with other mainstream programs for which homeless populations may be eligible.
- Must assume responsibility for preparing an accurate and complete application for submission to HUD that meets all federal rules and regulations.
- Must be in compliance with all local, state, and federal civil rights laws and Executive Orders as well as all standards outlined in the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development CoC NOFA.
- All project applicants must meet any HUD certification requirements as outlined in the 2019 CoC NOFA.
- Project applicants for new projects will be required to enter data into the HMSI system, with the exception of Domestic Violence programs that are exempted by the Violence Against Women Act.

Signature:  Date: August 23, 2019

Contact Person: Bradley Hinkfuss E-Mail Address: bhinkfuss@housinginitiatives.org

Phone Number: 608.620.1751





**Housing Initiatives, Inc.**

**Handbook for Tenants and Clients**

**June 2019**

**Housing Initiatives, Inc. 1110 Ruskin St., Madison, WI 53704**

**Phone: 608-277-8330, Fax: 608-277-1726**

**[www.housinginitiatives.org](http://www.housinginitiatives.org)**



## **MISSION STATEMENT**

*Housing Initiatives, Inc. exists to provide permanent housing for persons in Dane County who have a severe and persistent mental illness and are experiencing homelessness because of the illness.*

Housing Initiatives (HII) provides two services:

1. HII owns and operates rental housing units for qualifying tenants; and
2. HII administrates the Rental Assistance for clients on behalf of Dane County Human Services.

This handbook and the policies detailed within constitute a nonstandard lease addendum for both tenants and clients living in an HII unit.

This handbook is intended to clarify Housing Initiatives' policies, as well as the duties and responsibilities of both Housing Initiatives staff and you. We hope you find this helpful.

This handbook is divided into two separate parts:

**Part One** is for tenants who are living in HII's housing units, who may or may not also be a client in the Rental Assistance Program.

**Part Two** is for clients who are in the Rental Assistance Program and living either in one of HII's units or in another landlord's unit.

**NOTE: This is an update to an earlier version of the handbook. This current version contains the policies to be followed.**

**Part One -  
for tenants living in HII's housing units**

(Please refer to Part Two of this handbook if you are in the Rental Assistance Program, as that also applies to you.)

**Expectations for living in HII housing:**

HII has two expectations of you so that we can continue to provide you with housing and so that you can continue to qualify for rental assistance.

- 1. You must pay the rent that is calculated and owed on time and in full.**
- 2. You must maintain a healthy and peaceful living environment.**

Each of these expectations is explained further in the following pages.

Violation of these expectations may result in termination of your lease and/or termination from participating in the rental assistance program. Termination and appeals are explained later on in this handbook.

**1 - You must pay the rent that is calculated and owed on time and in full.**

**Rent for Section 8 tenants:** If you are a tenant in the Section 8 Program, you are living in an HII unit with assistance from the Madison Community Development Authority (CDA). CDA has a set of requirements to assist you with the amount of rent you are expected to pay. Using these, CDA will determine your portion of the rent. You need to pay that amount by the 5<sup>th</sup> of every month. You should mail your portion of the rent to:

Housing Initiatives, Inc.  
1110 Ruskin St.  
Madison, WI 53704

Should you get behind in your rental payments, HII will attempt to work with you and your designated case manager/support person to resolve the problem and/or to institute a rental repayment plan to be paid within 12 months. Should you get behind during the course of the repayment plan, you may be asked to obtain a financial payee to prevent any future non-payment of rent. If you refuse to accept a payee or do not pay rent in full, HII will proceed with lease termination.

**Rent for Rental Assistance clients:** Please refer to Part Two of this handbook.

## **2 - You must maintain a healthy and peaceful living environment.**

All tenants in HII properties are eligible for supportive service programs. As such, we understand that all of our tenants have unique challenges to living independently. Our policies are designed to help you maintain independent living and coexist with neighbors who are also clients in supportive service programs.

**Leasing and Inspections:** HII's housing leases are the basis of the legal relationship between you and HII. All units must be occupied pursuant to a dwelling lease agreement that complies with HUD's regulations. HUD rules also require HII to inspect each dwelling unit prior to move-in, annually during occupancy and at move-out. HII may require additional inspections.

**Lease Orientation:** After unit acceptance, but prior to occupancy, an HII representative will provide you with a lease orientation. The head of household or spouse is required to attend, as well as all family household members age 18 or older.

**Move-In Inspections:** The lease requires HII and you to inspect the dwelling unit prior to occupancy in order to document the condition of the unit and equipment in the unit. A copy of the initial inspection, signed by you and HII staff, will be provided to you and HII will keep a copy in your tenant file.

**Move-Out Inspections:** HII will inspect your unit at the time you vacate the unit. You may participate in the inspection if you wish, unless you vacate without notice to HII. The difference between the condition of the unit at move-in and move-out establishes the basis for any charges against the security deposit so long as the work needed exceeds that of normal wear and tear. HII will provide you a statement of any charges to be made for

maintenance and damage beyond normal wear and tear within 21 days of tenant move-out.

**Maintenance and Damage Charges:** If HII charges you for maintenance and repair beyond normal wear and tear, HII will specify the reason and cost for the charges. Schedules of special charges for services and repairs are required to be incorporated in the lease and will be explained to you as well. HII will arrange a payment plan for any such charges with you. When applicable, work will be charged based on HII's actual costs of parts and labor.

**Annual Inspections:** HII is required to inspect all occupied units annually using HUD's Housing Quality Standards form 9602.

**Scheduling of Inspections:** Inspections will be conducted during normal business hours. You do not have to be home for HII to conduct its annual inspection. HII will notify you of the inspection with at least 24 hours prior to the inspection. If you need to reschedule, due to a medical situation, you must notify HII at least 24 hours prior to the scheduled inspection or as soon as possible. If the delay was requested because of a medical reason, HII will reschedule, but you must produce verifiable medical documentation. HII will reschedule the inspection only once. HII staff will be present for all inspections.

**Emergency Entries:** HII may enter the dwelling unit at any time without advance notice when there is reasonable cause to believe that an emergency exists. If no adult household member is present at the time of an emergency entry, we will leave a written statement showing the date, time and purpose of the entry prior to leaving the dwelling unit.

**Housekeeping:** HII considers proper housekeeping and cleanliness important factors in being able to maintain independent living. HII will post a list of expected housekeeping duties on your refrigerator. You are expected to complete these duties, keeping your unit safe and sanitary.

If HII finds that your housekeeping habits pose a health or safety risk, encourage insect or rodent infestation, or cause damage to the unit, this will be considered a lease violation and you will be served with a 5 day notice-to-cure.

A re-inspection will be conducted at the end of the notice-to-cure to confirm that you have complied with correcting the problem. Failure to abate the problem or allow for a re-inspection is considered a violation of the lease and may result in termination of your lease.

Continued violations of keeping your unit safe and sanitary, will result in non-renewal or termination of your lease.

**Reporting Maintenance Issues: It is very important that you inform HII should any maintenance issues arise with your home as soon as possible.** In the event something in your home requires attention (e.g., light switch not working), call maintenance at 608-277-8330. In the event of a maintenance emergency after hours 5 PM or on weekends (e.g., burst pipe with running water, a fire, etc.), contact the emergency number at 608-334-7886.

Maintenance issues are logged at the office and will be addressed as soon as possible with emergency issues receiving top priority.

**Guests:** A guest is defined as a person temporarily staying in the unit with your consent, or the consent of another member of your household, who has express or implied authority to consent on your behalf. You, and the members of your household, have the right to exclusive use and occupancy of your leased unit, in accordance with the lease, including reasonable accommodation of your guests. You are responsible for the conduct of visitors and guests, inside the unit as well as anywhere on or near the premises.

**Guest Policies:**

- Dwelling units are specifically for you and the individuals specifically listed on the lease.
- Your housing arrangement and structure of the family household composition is established by the lease. Therefore, you cannot take in boarders, roommates or permit visitors/guests to reside in your unit in a “doubling-up” type of situation.
- You must notify HII when you have overnight guests who will be staying in your unit for more than 2 days. A guest can remain up to 7 consecutive days or a total of 14 cumulative calendar days during any 12-month period.
- You may request an exception to this Guest policy for valid reasons (e.g., care of a relative recovering from a medical procedure expected to last 20 consecutive days). An exception will not be made unless you can provide verifiable documentation in writing for the need and provide verifiable documentation that the guest has a home to which the guest can return.
- Children who are subject to a joint custody arrangement or for whom a family has visitation privileges, that are not included as a family member because they live outside of the



housing unit more than 50 percent of the time, are not subject to the time limitations of guests as described above.

HII may prohibit any guest from visiting, temporarily staying, or living in your unit, or on HII property, for a stated period of time if the guest:

- has engaged in negative behavior or criminal activity; or
- has engaged in or threatened violent or abusive behavior toward HII staff, contractors, or other tenants.

HII will notify guests that they are prohibited from HII property by issuing a no trespassing notice with you and the guest, if possible.

- Former tenants, who have been terminated, are not permitted on Housing Initiatives, Inc property.
- Guests who represent the unit address as their residence address for receipt of benefits or other purposes will be considered unauthorized occupants. Guests may not receive mail. Guests who remain in the unit beyond the allowable time limit will be considered unauthorized occupants. The presence of unauthorized occupants constitutes a violation of the lease.

**Drug Crime On or Off the Premises:** Drug-related criminal activity is defined by HUD as the illegal manufacture, sale, distribution, or use of a drug, or the possession of a drug with intent to manufacture, sell, distribute or use the drug. Drug means a controlled substance as defined in section 102 of the Controlled Substances Act.

Drug related criminal activity engaged in, on or off the premises by you, a member of your household, a guest, or any other person under your control is grounds for termination. You will not be given a second chance and HII will terminate your lease.

HII may also terminate your lease for drug related civil activity engaged in, on or off the premises by you, a member of your household, a guest, or any other person under your control.

**Alcohol or Drug Abuse:** If you, a member of your household, a guest, or any other person under your control engages in abuse or pattern of abuse of alcohol or drugs that threatens the health, safety, or the right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by others, HII may terminate your lease.

In making the decision to terminate the lease or not to terminate it, HII will consult with your support services and clinical staff. HII will consider all credible evidence, including but not limited to, treatment plans, record of conviction(s), arrest(s), police contact(s), civil ordinance violation(s) and other pertinent factors. **Upon consideration of such alternatives and factors, HII may, on a case-by-case basis, choose not to terminate the lease.**

**Assistance Animals:** Assistance animals are animals that assist, support, or provide service to a person with a disability, or that provide emotional support that alleviates one or more identified symptoms or effects of a person's disability. Assistance animals that are needed as a reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities are not considered pets, and thus, are not subject to HII's pet policies.

For an animal to be excluded from the pet policy and be considered an assistance animal, there must be someone with a disability in the household. You must request a reasonable accommodation for the assistance animal. HII will review and approve in accordance with HII policies. You must supply documentation from a clinical service provider stating that ownership and maintenance of the animal will positively aid you with your mental health needs prior to bringing the animal home.

HUD regulations do not affect any authority HII may have to regulate assistance animals under federal, state, and local law. You must care for assistance animals in a manner that complies with state and local laws, including anti-cruelty laws. You must follow all City Ordinances about the care and handling of the assistance animal and immediate disposal of all animal waste.

You must ensure that assistance animals do not pose a direct threat to the health or safety of others, or cause substantial physical damage to the development, dwelling unit, or property of other tenants. When your care or handling of an assistance animal violates these policies, HII will consider whether the violation can be reduced or eliminated by a reasonable accommodation. If HII determines that no such accommodation can be made, HII may withdraw the approval of the particular assistance animal.

**Grievances:** If you have a complaint with another tenant or a tenant's guest, you should try to resolve it with that person. If you cannot, notify the Property Manager. The Property Manager may meet with everyone involved or come up with an alternative plan. Complaints that are unable to be resolved by the Property Manager may be appealed to the Executive Director.

If you have a complaint about any HII staff, or its contractors, contact the Executive Director at 608-277-8330.

**Appeals:** Any appeals of notice-to-cure, lease non-renewal or lease termination need to be made in writing to HII's Executive Director within 10 days of receipt of any notice. A meeting will be held and the Executive Director will make a final decision on any notice.

## Part Two -

For clients who are in the Rental Assistance Program and living either in one of HII's units or in another landlord's unit.

Please read Part One of this handbook if you are living in a property owned and managed by HII, as that also applies to you.

**The Rental Assistance Program:** The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development enacted the Rental Assistance program in 1992. The program is designed to provide permanent rental assistance for homeless persons with severe mental illnesses. HII has administered the program since 1995 and currently administers the program on behalf of Dane County's Department of Human Services.

### **Housing First Principles:**

The Rental Assistance Program follows the principles of Housing First, as directed to our local Continuum of Care by HUD and outlined in the Madison/Dane County Written Standards. Per these standards, potential clients may not be denied admittance into the program for the following reasons:

1. Having too little or no income;
2. Active, or history of, substance use or a substance use disorder;
3. Having a criminal record; or
4. History of domestic violence (e.g., lack of a protective order, period of separation from abuser, or law enforcement involvement)

Additionally, clients in the Rental Assistance Program may not be terminated from the program for the following reasons:

1. Failure to participate in supportive services;
2. Failure to make progress on a service plan;
3. Loss of income or failure to improve income; and
4. Being a victim of domestic violence.

**Expectations for Rental Assistance clients:** HII has two expectations of you so that we can continue to provide you with rental assistance.

- 1. You must pay the rent that is calculated and owed on time and in full**
- 2. You must maintain a healthy and peaceful living environment.**

These expectations are explained further in the following pages.

Violation of these expectations may result in termination of your lease and/or termination from participating in the rental assistance program. Termination and appeals are explained in the following pages.

**1 - You must pay the rent that is calculated and owed on time and in full.**

**Income:** Income is not a requirement for participating in the Rental Assistance Program. Income that you receive needs to be reported to Housing Initiatives as part of the application and re-certification processes.

**Rent for Rental Assistance Clients:** You are in this program with assistance from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. They have a set of requirements for us to provide you with a rent subsidy. The rent amount that you are required to pay primarily depends upon your income and medical expenses.

Some of your medical expenses will be eligible to be used for a rent deduction.

When you enter the program, and once a year thereafter, HII will meet with you, if you need and request it, and complete necessary paperwork for you to continue to qualify for the Rental Assistance Program. At this time, you must provide us with written documentation of income and medical expenses for yourself and any others in your household and identified within your lease. HII will calculate your rent amount based on HUD's established criteria. A copy of the form that we use for rent calculation is included at the end of this handbook.

You should mail your portion of the rent by the 5<sup>th</sup> or the month to:

Housing Initiatives, Inc.  
1110 Ruskin St.  
Madison, WI 53704

If you have a change in income, you need to inform HII within 10 days so that we may recalculate your rent. Withholding changes in income can result in program termination.

Should you get behind in your rental payments, HII will attempt to work with you and your designated case manager/support person to resolve the problem and/or to institute a rental repayment plan to be paid within 12 months. Should you get behind during the course of the repayment plan, you may be asked to obtain a financial payee to prevent any future non-payment of rent. If you refuse to accept a payee or do not pay rent in full, HII will proceed with lease termination.



**Medical Expenses for Rent Calculation Credit:** Out-of-pocket medical expenses may qualify for credit for your rent calculation. HII uses the Department of the Treasury Internal Revenue Service, Publication 502, Medical and Dental Expenses to determine which medical expenses are eligible for a rent deduction. Receipts for medical expenses from the previous year will be used to calculate your rent amount each year.

In order for HII to consider your medical expenses, you need to provide HII's Program Director with receipts that you paid from the previous year's expenses. HII will determine whether or not these expenses qualify. Expenses have to exclusively be used for your health benefit in order to be deemed eligible for deduction. Prescription documentation from your medical provider may be required. All of your medical expenses will be reviewed for eligibility. You will be provided with a written explanation as to why something did or did not qualify for an eligible medical deduction towards your rent calculation. If you dispute the Program Director's denial of medical expenses, you may appeal the decision to HII's Executive Director. A September, 2017 memo detailing the policy is attached on Page 19 of this handbook.

## **2 - You must maintain a healthy and peaceful living environment.**

We understand that you are working with specific clinical issue that may result in specific challenges to your living environment. Our policies are designed to help you maintain your independent living.

**Leasing and Inspections:** You are required to have a signed lease for your dwelling unit. However, HII must approve all leases, even those with private landlords, prior to your signing it and

moving in. HII will discuss conditions and expectations of the lease with you.

A copy of your signed current lease will be in your file at HII. It is your responsibility to provide HII with any addendums signed with the lease and all lease renewals.

HUD rules require HII to inspect your dwelling unit annually during occupancy.

**Maintenance and Damage Charges:** All maintenance and damage charges you accrue, and charged by Housing Initiatives, Inc or a private landlord, are your responsibility. All disputes with private landlords regarding these charges are between you and the landlord. HII urges you to seek assistance from support staff to help mitigate these issues.

In the event that you have maintenance issues with your apartment unit, should you not be renting from HII, you should contact your landlord to have them repaired. Please also contact HII to report maintenance issues so that we may be able to follow up to verify your issues are addressed.

**Housekeeping:** HII considers proper housekeeping and cleanliness important factors in being able to maintain independent living.

In the event that a landlord informs HII that your housekeeping habits pose a health or safety risk, encourage insect or rodent infestation, or cause damage to the unit, HII will contact your support staff to work with you to mitigate any of these conditions.

If your housekeeping habits are not mitigated, it may result in lease violations that may put your housing in jeopardy.

**Violations of Leases:** Housing Initiatives urges you to carefully read over leases before you sign them as you are expected to follow any and all clauses in them.

If you violate a lease clause, you may be subject to notice-to-cure actions by the landlord. Repeated violations may result in non-renewal of leases or evictions from housing. **Evictions from housing are subject to termination from the Rental Assistance program.**

**Grievances with landlords:** HII urges you to be proactive about resolving disputes with your landlord. In the event a dispute cannot be mutually resolved, HII recommends you contact the Tenant Resource Center for assistance with your legal rights as a tenant. The Tenant Resource Center may be reached at 608-257-0006 or [ww.tenantresourcecenter.org](http://ww.tenantresourcecenter.org).

**Grievances with Housing Initiatives:** If you have a complaint about the HII Staff or its contractors, please contact the Executive Director at (608)277-8330.

Any complaints you may have with the Executive Director or HII Staff in the application of the Rental Assistance Program, may be directed to the Dane County Department of Human Services. The Adult Community Services Manager can be reached at (608)242-6484.

**Appeals:** Any appeals of notices to cure, lease non-renewal or lease termination need to be made in writing to HII's Executive Director within 10 days of receipt of any notice. A meeting will be held and the Executive Director will make a final decision on any notice.



## **Housing Initiatives' Rental Assistance Calculations Policy – September 2017 Purpose:**

Specific actions, timeframes and responsibility need to be established regarding out-of-pocket medical expenses and which are eligible to be considered in order to accurately calculate the amount of a client's rental assistance. Per the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), clients will pay no more than 30% of income for rent, after the standard deduction of \$400 annually is subtracted. Additionally, clients may be eligible for utilities and childcare deductions, as well.

### **Procedure:**

#### **Eligible Deductions:**

- Upon admission into the Rental Assistance Program, and at least annually thereafter, Housing Initiatives (HI) will work with clients to determine their income and the amount of rental assistance for which they are eligible. Clients will be notified sixty (60) days in advance when the annual recertification is due. The goal is to complete the recertification by year's end for the upcoming year. However, as some receipts may not have been received by the client yet, receipts will only be accepted until January 31<sup>st</sup> for the new year's rent calculation.
- HI will calculate rent based on HUD's established criteria, taking into consideration all possible deductions, such as medical, utility and childcare expenses.
- HI will need to have proof for all expenses, such as receipts for every purchase that specifically state what was purchased and the cost for each item. This is the responsibility of the client to collect and submit to HI. Ideally, receipts will be submitted along with the annual Social Security notice of income.
- Any amount of out-of-pocket medical expenses can be submitted; however, HI will only allow expenses that are solely listed in the most recent version of the Department of the Treasury Internal Revenue Service, Publication 502. If something is listed in this Publication 502, HI will deduct that cost from the rent calculation. If an expense is not listed, it will not be deducted from the rent calculation. The Publication 502 can be found at <https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p502.pdf>.
- Proof for all medical expenses will be accepted throughout the year, however, they will only be considered at the annual recertification for the upcoming year.
- Rent calculations are determined based on medical expenses from the previous year. For example, expenses incurred in 2016 will be considered to establish the rent amount for 2017.

#### **Rent Calculation:**

- Rent calculation is conducted once a year unless the client has a change in income of at least \$100/month. If a client has such a change, the client must notify HI so that a new rent calculation can be completed. If a client incurs a one-time eligible medical expense during the year, the client may choose to discuss this with HI to determine if a rent calculation is necessary. Otherwise, all other eligible medical expenses will be used to determine the next year's rent calculation.
- HI will inform the client, in writing, what the rent calculation is for the upcoming year.

#### **Appeals:**

- If a client wishes to appeal the rent calculation, the client needs to provide HI a written appeal within fourteen (14) days of the date of the rent notice from HI. If the appeal is not written or submitted within the specified time frame, it will not be considered. A specific Appeal Form accompanies this policy.
- The client must submit whatever documentation is being appealed at the same time that the appeal is submitted to HI.
- Once an appeal has been submitted as specified, HI will investigate and render a written decision within fourteen (14) days and specifically state the result of the appeal. Once this has been completed, the appeal is considered closed.

**IMPORTANT NUMBERS:**

**Emergency (Fire/Medical): 911**

**Housing Initiatives Office: 608-277-8330**

**Housing Initiatives Fax: 608-277-1726**

**Housing Initiatives After-Hours Maintenance  
Emergency: 608-334-7886**

**By signing this form, you are acknowledging that you understand the rules set forth in the Housing Initiatives, Inc Handbook and that you agree to follow the rules as stated.**

**Signed:**

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**Applicant**

**Date**

**Witnessed by:**

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**Housing Initiatives Staff**

**Date**