

# County of San Diego, Health and Human Services Agency (HSA) CalWORKs Program Guide

## Family Stabilization - Homelessness Prevention Services

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### **Background:**

As part of the Family Stabilization (FS) program implemented by Assembly Bill (AB) 74, San Diego County offers Homelessness Prevention Services (HPS) to:

- Help families to obtain and maintain stable housing
- Create family stability to ensure participation in WTW activities and self-sufficiency
- Supplement CalWORKs (CW) programs ([CPG 44-200.C](#), [S.N. 15-04](#)) addressing housing emergencies due to eviction and/or shut-off notices
- Make follow-up contacts with the family within pre-established timeframes ([CPG 10-007.D](#)) as part of ongoing case management

### **Policy:**

Participants who are experiencing a qualifying instance of homelessness have the option to request Family Stabilization/HPS ([CPG 10-007.A](#)), or CW/Homeless Assistance ([44-200.C](#)), or CW/Housing Support Program ([S.N. 15-04](#)).

### **HPS Eligibility Criteria:**

- HPS [criteria for homelessness](#), and [acceptable housing providers](#) are aligned to CW Homeless Assistance (HA) ([44-200.C](#))
- Eligible individuals ([CPG 10-007.A](#)), who already received CW Permanent or Temporary Homeless Assistance (HA), or CW Housing Support Program (HSP), or other housing assistance, may qualify for HPS if additional help is needed, or different circumstances are causing a new instance of homelessness
- To qualify for HPS, participants must be meeting FS eligibility criteria ([CPG 10-007.A](#)), be in compliance with WTW participation requirements, or curing WTW non-compliance or sanction
- Individuals who are exempt ([CPG 10-020.A](#)), or excused ([CPG 10-020.B](#), [CPG 11-001.G](#)) from WTW participation may be eligible to HPS if:
  - [Exemption is expected to end within 60 days](#) from the date of FS application
  - Services are needed to ensure future WTW participation ([ACIN I-64-15 Q #1](#))
  - All other HPS eligibility requirements are met
  - There is history of voluntary participation in the previous three months
- Participants are required to show that they will be able to maintain stable housing without additional assistance
- To ensure housing affordability, housing costs may **not** exceed the 80% of the family's Total Monthly Household Income ([44-200.C TMHI](#), [44-200.C Countable THMI](#))

See [CPG 10-007.A](#) for additional eligibility criteria.

### **Available Services:**

Within the program limit ([10-007.A](#), [CPG 10-007.B](#)), HPS may cover:

- Temporary shelter expenses while seeking permanent housing
- Overdue rent amount to prevent eviction
- Rent and/or deposit to secure permanent housing
- Overdue utility bill(s) to:
  - Prevent shut-off; or

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- Establish new utility services when participant had to move out from previous residence due to domestic violence or reasons beyond the family's control (in this case, HPS payment may cover also utility deposit).
- Credit check fees
- Extended Housing Assistance (see section below)

### Extended Housing Assistance (EHA):

Participant experiencing a qualifying housing emergency may be eligible to receive EHA to ensure stable living arrangements for additional time while participating in assigned FS/WTW activities.

EHA payments must be approved by Eligibility Operations/CalWorks (EO/CW).

EHA priority guidelines include, but are not limited to:

- a) Participating in Mental Health/Domestic Violence/Substance Abuse and Learning Disability services while maintaining satisfactory progress as determined by the provider
- a) Caring for disabled second parent and/or disabled child in the home with special needs
- b) Being homeless, pregnant or disabled and being referred by a local homeless shelter/transitional housing center, housing assistance program
- c) Being in need of additional housing stability as determined by Child Welfare Services (CWS), Behavioral Health Services (BHS) or other county agency/organization working with the family
- d) Have a verifiable financial hardship resulting from circumstances beyond the family's control that caused the non-payment of rent and/or utilities (e.g. being laid-off from work, employed parent in a two-parent family no longer in the home, or becoming severely disabled, death in the family, disability requiring additional out-of-pocket medical expenses)
- e) Being evicted for other reason than late or non-payment of rent (e.g. inhabitable home, property sale or foreclosure)
- f) Forced relocation due to domestic violence or a court decision

EO/CW will evaluate if, at the time of approval, the participant is:

- Eligible to CW
- Required to participate in WTW, or meeting HPS eligibility criteria for exempt or excused individuals
- Meeting all FS eligibility criteria ([CPG 10-007.A](#))
- In compliance with WTW requirements
- Successfully participating in assigned WTW/FS activities
- Seeking or retaining employment
- Being referred to, or participating in EWE/ESE activities

**Note:** CW discontinuance/closing action must be resolved (if applicable) prior to EHA approval

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### Required Verifications:

Depending on the type of emergency, acceptable HPS verifications include, but are not limited to:

- A "Late Rent" notice
- A "Landlord's "30/60 Days" notice to end a periodic tenancy
- A "3 Days to Pay Rent or Quit" notice, otherwise known as "Eviction Notice"
- Other written notice of termination/eviction allowed by California State laws
- A shut-off notice from the local utility company
- A 'Late payment' notice from the local utility company
- A written statement from shelter/housing provider indicating that the family can no longer share living quarters, reason for eviction, expected moving date, date and signature of shelter/housing provider
- Verification of financial hardship resulting from circumstances beyond the family's control that caused the eviction, family forced relocation, tenancy termination and /or utility shut-off
- Verification of housing /utility expenses, credit check fees, subsidized housing assistance
- A written statement signed by family/individual sharing housing/utility expenses, indicating household composition and amount or percentage contributed by each party
- Supporting documentation/verification necessary to evaluate EHA eligibility each month
- Other pertinent documentation

### HPS Payment Limits:

| HPS Payment Types            |                                                                                              | HPS 12-month limit                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                      |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Permanent Housing            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deposit</li> <li>• Rent*</li> </ul>                 | AU 1-4                                                                                                                                                                           | Up to <b>\$2,500</b>                                                 |
|                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overdue rent</li> </ul>                             | AU 5-8+                                                                                                                                                                          | Up to <b>\$3,500</b>                                                 |
|                              | Credit check fees                                                                            | All AUs                                                                                                                                                                          | Up to <b>\$150</b>                                                   |
| Temporary Housing            | Daily rate                                                                                   | Up to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>\$85 plus taxes</b> (Mon-Fri)</li> <li>• <b>\$150 plus taxes</b> (Sat/Sun/Holiday)</li> <li>• <b>Up to 16 days</b></li> </ul> |                                                                      |
| Extended Housing Assistance* | Deposit                                                                                      | Up to <b>2 months of rent</b><br>(deposit + last month of rent)                                                                                                                  |                                                                      |
|                              | Rent*                                                                                        | AU 1-4                                                                                                                                                                           | Up to <b>4 months</b> of rent<br>(same as Permanent Housing amounts) |
|                              |                                                                                              | AU 5-8+                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                      |
| Utility Assistance           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deposit; and/or</li> <li>• Overdue bills</li> </ul> | AU 1-4                                                                                                                                                                           | Up to <b>\$500</b>                                                   |
|                              |                                                                                              | AU 5-8+                                                                                                                                                                          | Up to <b>\$1,000</b>                                                 |

\* Rent amount must be within 80% of AU's THMI

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### HPS Payments:

- Payments may not exceed the established HPS 12-month family limits, unless otherwise authorized by EO/CW
- HPS payments will be issued only to housing/utility service provider(s)
- HPS **cannot** be used to pay any legal fees related to disputes with property owner or other shelter/utility service providers
- If other individuals are living in the home and contributing to housing/utility expenses (e.g. roommates, family member(s) receiving Social Security Income (SSI/SSP), HPS payments will cover only the participant's contribution
- If participant is receiving other housing assistance (e.g. Section 8), HPS payment will cover only the verified portion of rent/deposit/utilities which is the participant's responsibility
- HPS payments will be denied if:
  - Required verification is not provided **before** the HPS payment's due date established by the service provider, and "Good Cause" does not exist
  - Verification is incomplete, and/or its validity is questionable
  - Participant has been approved for other type of homeless assistance for the same instance of homelessness
  - Rent application is denied for any reason by the property owner
  - Other parties sharing housing/utility expenses are not able to cover their own portion
- Participant is responsible for all payments not previously authorized by the County
- After EO/CW initial approval, EHA payments must be authorized on a month-by-month basis and only after verifying participant's CW and HPS eligibility, living situation, WTW participation and compliance
- Payments and/or services will not be authorized if, at the time of HPS evaluation:
  - CW case is in "discontinued" or "closed" status, and discontinuance or closing action cannot be resolved prior to HPS approval
  - Individual is ineligible to cash aid ([CPG 41.500](#)) and will no longer be required to participate in WTW effective the following month (e.g. CW timed-out, WTW sanctioned)
  - Individual is no longer meeting FS/HPS eligibility criteria
  - Exempt status is extended for any reason ([CPG 10-020.A](#)) and mandatory participation is no longer expected to begin within 60 days from the date HPS request was submitted. See [CPG 10-007.C](#) for TEA exceptions.

### HPS Timeframes:

- Evaluation process must be initiated on the **same day** the FS referral or, if not possible, no later than the first working day after the request/referral is received
- Participant is responsible for meeting **all** requirements and conditions imposed by the HPS service providers
- HPS payments/services must be authorized, or denied, on the **same day** the verification/documentation is received by the County or, if not possible, no later than the first working day after the verification/documentation is provided by the participant or FS service provider
- Approval, denial, or discontinuance notices must be issued at the time HPS services are approved, denied, or discontinued. See [ACIN I-02-14](#) for adequate notice requirements.

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See [CPG 10-007.A](#) for FS eligibility determination and case management

### **Compliance and WTW 24-Month Time Clock:**

- Due to the impact of homelessness on the family's emotional/physical safety, the WTW 24-Month Time Clock will un-tick month(s) during which the participant received HPS for temporary or permanent housing assistance ([CPG 10-003.B](#))
- HPS/utility services do not affect the participant's WTW 24-Month Time Clock, unless otherwise determined by the FS Specialist (FSS). Good Cause [CPG 10-020.B](#) may be granted if the utility emergency is impacting WTW participation.

### **Procedure:**

[HPS Processing Guide 10-007.2](#)

### **Impact(s):**

None to other programs

### **Program Affected:**

CalWORKs/ Welfare-To-Work

### **References:**

- [Senate Bill \(SB\) 855](#)
- [Assembly Bill \(AB\) 74](#)
- [Welfare & Institutions Code \(WIC\) section 11325.24](#)
- [Welfare & Institutions Code 15204.2](#)
- [All County Letter \(ACL\) 14-61](#) and [ACL 14-12](#)
- [All County Information Notice \(ACIN\) I-64-15](#)
- [CalWORKs Program Guide 10-007.A Family Stabilization Overview](#)

### **Approval for Release:**

October 14, 2015

### **Sunset Date:**

This policy will be reviewed for continuance by October 31, 2018