

Eligibility and Basic Requirements**Q: Can you discuss the food requirements?**

A: Housing Support providers are required to ensure the provision of three nutritious meals per day. This looks different depending on the type of setting, but typically, people living in supportive housing settings receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits to prepare their meals. If a person does not have SNAP or experiences a disruption in benefits, the provider must ensure the person receives food to satisfy the requirement of three nutritious meals.

Q: From whom do we get the Housing Support approval letter?

A: When a person is approved for Housing Support, the county processing the Combined Application Form will make an eligibility determination. That determination is printed on a notice and will be sent to the person and the person's authorized representative, if they identified one.

Q: Can we use the assistance calculator on HB101 to get the estimated client obligation for the property management side of things?

A: Refer to calculators on DB101:

https://mn.db101.org/mn/programs/income_support/housing/program2e.htm

The calculator can be used by providers as a planning tool to inform conversations with clients about Housing Support and what might be possible – not to make tenancy decisions. Clients receive an official approval notice from the county or tribe when their case is processed (after they move into housing). The approval notice includes the client obligation amount.

Note that county or tribal financial workers may see earned income in their database system that providers would not know about when using the calculator. Providers can request a “prediction of eligibility” letter from the county or tribal financial worker for a more accurate estimate.

Q: Why are we required to utilize a Presumptive Eligibility Letter when a County Benefit Letter shows income and Housing Support funding a client is receiving?

A: An applicant is not approved for Housing Support until they move into housing. Providers can request a “prediction of eligibility” letter from a county or tribal financial worker. They are not required to obtain or use a “prediction of eligibility” letter, but these can be very helpful in making tenancy decisions prior to a person's case being formally approved. When a case is formally approved, the client receives an approval notice. Housing providers need this documentation to complete the rent and income calculation worksheet.

Room and Board Rate: Use of Funds for Housing Related Expenses

Q: Can you discuss what providers are able to use pooled funds for? Is use of those funds at the provider's discretion?

A: If available, providers use pooled funds for any allowable expenses for the benefit of anyone in the supportive housing program. Generally speaking, expenses are allowable in supportive housing if they are:

- Related to maintaining housing stability, and
- Not for clothing or medical expenses

Q: Can the base rate administrator utilize leftover pooled funds to ensure a participant who just moved in has all their basic needs met (furniture, household, and personal items)?

A: Yes. A bed and clothing storage are required as the minimum standards that providers must ensure a person has. Other furniture and necessary household items are allowable.

Allowable expenses for Housing Support Room and Board Rate:

<https://edocs.dhs.state.mn.us/lfserver/Public/DHS-7127-ENG>

Q: Is there an option for Housing Support participants to have renter's insurance paid for from the Housing Support funds?

A: Yes, renter's insurance is an allowable expense as long as basic needs are taken care of first (rent, food, bed, etc.)

Occupancy and Rent

Q: Can you discuss any site licensing/regulatory approval requirements, if any, for operating Housing Support at a site (aside from the client qualifications and county contract)?

A: There is no longer the registration requirement. The habitability inspection is the only requirement to ensure the property meets health and safety requirements.

Q: Can a Housing Support participant move into a non-Housing Support unit and still get the Housing Support funds (non-Housing Support property)?

A: A participant can live in any housing unit in a property and receive Housing Support as long as the unit meets the habitability inspection. There are generally not specifically designated units for Housing Support. For Minnesota Housing funded properties with high priority homeless (HPH) or people with disabilities (PWD) units using Housing Support, the units can generally float to any unit in the building as long as property management allows it and there are no other restrictions on the unit that would prohibit it.

Q: If a person gets off Housing Support but stays in the unit, are we obligated to have another unit for Housing Support?

A: For Minnesota Housing funded units, no.

Q: Can the rent for the unit be over \$954/month?

A: Housing Support is a cash supplement and does not (technically) affect rent amount. Property owners set their rent, but if it is over the Housing Support amount, the unit is unlikely to be affordable.

Many providers of Housing Support funds actually set a "rent limit" within their organizations to ensure that enough money remains for the other items they need to cover. A unit with rent set over the Housing Support maximum would be unlikely utilized for a Housing Support participant.

Minnesota Housing underwriting standards for Housing Support recommend that rents be set at \$200 below the Housing Support Room and Board Rate. Rates need to be negotiated between the Housing Support provider and the property owner. Refer to [Chapter 2 in Minnesota Housing's Multifamily Underwriting Standards](#) for additional considerations.

Q: How is it determined if the participant pays their rent portion to the landlord or to the Housing Support agency?

A: The Housing Support provider determines who the participant pays their portion of the rent to; it can be paid either to the Housing Support provider or the property manager/owner. Best practice appears to be shifting toward the participant paying the property manager/owner.

Q: Can we require participants to make online payments?

A: Participants cannot be required to make an online payment, but they certainly can choose that option. They could also choose to set up payments through a representative payee. Payment methods for the provider's portion of the rent should be negotiated directly with the provider.

Q: If a tenant/participant who was on the Housing Support at move in and moved into a specific unit designated for Housing Support and they stop receiving Housing Support, can they remain in that unit?

A: Yes, the tenant can remain in the unit as long as they continue paying the rent. The Housing Support provider needs to notify the property manager. The rent amount may need to be adjusted so that it does not exceed the applicable rent limit for the unit.

Q: If a person went off Housing Support, can we charge an amount over the Housing Support rent?

A: Unless the resident receives at least \$1 of rental assistance from another government rental assistance program, the rent cannot exceed the applicable rent limit.

Q: How do you handle the issue of tenants who go off of Housing Support one month (do not do their paperwork) and then go back on the next month? Do you provide the Housing Support Worksheet for every situation?

A: Yes, the Housing Support Rental Assistance Calculation Worksheet should be completed each time there is an increase in the client obligation or a decrease in the Housing Support Room and Board Rate or the rent amount. It is important to run the worksheet calculations in conjunction with these changes to determine if Housing Support can continue to be treated as rental assistance or if the rent will need to be adjusted to comply with the applicable rent limit. For units that are not required to recertify income annually, the income portion of the form will only need to be completed at initial occupancy.

Q: Tenants should receive a Certificate of Rent Paid (CRP), correct?

A: Yes

Services

Q: Can you talk about if a participant is not following program guidelines or not showing up for meetings. How is that handled and what if you have to discharge a participant from programming for noncompliance?

A: There is no service participation requirement to stay enrolled in Housing Support.

Q: Can Housing Support and Housing Stabilization Services be used at the same time?

A: Yes, but if a Housing Support participant is receiving Housing Support supplemental services and Housing Stabilization Services at the same time, the Housing Support service payment is reduced by 50%.