



## **Housing Stability and Eviction Prevention Guidance for Supportive Housing Providers**

The New York City Health Department and New York City Department of Social Services are issuing this guidance to support tenant stability and prevent housing loss within supportive housing. This document clarifies and strengthens expectations for contracted supportive housing providers, with the goal of helping tenants successfully maintain their housing. Providers are expected to work proactively and in close collaboration with property managers to identify and address concerns early, assist tenants in meeting lease obligations, and pursue all reasonable alternatives to avoid housing court whenever possible, ultimately preventing eviction. This guidance reaffirms both agencies shared commitment to promoting long-term housing stability for supportive housing tenants.

### **Tenancy Obligations, Counseling, & Engagement**

Supportive housing providers must counsel supportive housing tenants on their tenancy obligations at lease signing, quarterly for their first year of tenancy and at lease renewal thereafter. Additional support and counseling must be provided if the tenant demonstrates persistent late payments and or behaviors that are impacting their lease obligations. Instances where tenants are not well engaged in services must be discussed with program leadership to review the efforts made thus far and determine any additional supports and strategies needed to re-engage the tenant.

### **Coordination with Landlords/Property Managers**

All supportive housing programs must have procedures in place to coordinate with landlords in working with tenants.

- a. *Congregate site* programs must ensure routine communication with landlords/property managers, at least monthly, that allows for both parties to share concerns about tenants, actions being taken to assist tenants, and clear information about the notification of arrears to supportive housing tenants. This communication must be done in a manner that upholds tenant confidentiality. Likewise, congregate sites must attain written rent collection policies from property management companies. These policies are to be disseminated to tenants upon move-in and tenants are to be informed of any changes made to these policies.
- b. *Scatter site* programs must have clear policies regarding rent collection that are easy to understand, with notification to tenants of any changes made. These policies are to be disseminated to tenants upon move-in.

### **Monthly Housing Court Case Reporting**

All programs are required to submit, through the monthly report to the funding agency, data on all tenants who are in rent arrears or have received a Demand Notice and/or have an open housing court case. Please refer to the Monthly Report Guidance issued by the contracting agency for detailed instructions. This requirement will be incorporated into existing reporting practices and expands on current contract requirements.

### **Interventions to Support Tenants**

The interventions listed below are not an exhaustive list, but are the minimum requirement to be offered to all tenants experiencing rental arrears or difficulties adhering to their lease obligations:

## **I. Communication and Engagement**

- Case conference: as needed, providers must coordinate and conduct meetings with the tenant and their treatment team, service providers, or natural supports (with consent) who support their stability and may assist with helping tenants understand options available to them (e.g., Adult Protective Services, family member, partner, friend, treatment services provider).
- Providing written notices (as well as ensuring tenants understand them and have the support to take action to address).
- Consistently reaching out to tenants using various strategies if tenant is not engaged in services (e.g., sending a notarized letter, offering a breakfast or lunch meeting, texting or delivering letter under the door).
- Providing escorts to services and assisting with technology to access entitlements or other services as needed.
- Offering language assistance and reasonable accommodations for disabilities, whenever necessary.
- Behavioral health interventions should be prioritized when they are a primary barrier to compliance with the lease agreement and placing a tenant at risk of eviction. Program staff must escalate challenges to support prioritization and collaboration with property managers and treatment providers.

## **II. Budgeting and Financial Literacy**

- Arranging payment plans (e.g., SSI, landlord, bank, agency support).
- Ensuring tenants understand the logistics of rent payments, including deadlines, amounts due, and acceptable payment methods.
- Ensuring tenants understand any other charges they will be required to pay in addition to rent, as applicable.
- Assisting tenants in developing and regularly reviewing household budgets to ensure timely rent payments.
- Ensuring that budgets account for all sources of household income, including contributions from all leaseholders.
- Providing ongoing financial literacy education, which includes:
  - Setting goals and managing budgets – using paper or online budgeting worksheets and financial planning tools when helpful.
    - Helping tenants identify resources in the community that can help offset budgetary constraint issues; food insecurity/foodbanks, utility programs, and discount transportation programs.
- Assisting tenants in opening bank accounts.
- Making tenants aware of the option to enroll in automatic payments if they are comfortable with this option (and familiarizing tenants with how to access and navigate this tool).

## **III. Navigating Entitlements, Benefits and Financial Assistance**

- Assisting tenants with applying for and renewing entitlements and benefits.



- Supporting alternative payment arrangements (e.g., representative payees).
- Advocating for payment plans with landlords, when needed.
- Ensuring tenants are provided rent statements or receipts for payments made to the landlord.
- Informing tenants of how to reach out to the billing/finance departments of property managers where possible.
- Assisting tenants in applying for financial assistance programs, such as one-shot deals, rental subsidies, and recertifications.
  - This includes helping the tenant compile all necessary documentation, follow up, and communicate with HRA directly as needed.
- Ensuring tenants have access to free legal counsel to help prevent eviction.

**Resources**

Purpose	Service/Website
Empowering tenants through financial literacy training/resources	<a href="#">NYC Financial Empowerment Centers</a>
	<a href="#">National Disability Institute Financial Empowerment</a>
Centralized referral center for mobile mental health treatment and support services (accessible to social service providers only)	<a href="#">NYC Health Single Point of Access (SPOA)</a>
Best practices for rent collection in supportive housing	<a href="#">The Network's Best Practices for Rent Collection</a>
Guidance for OMH Programs Regarding the Disclosure of Protected Health Information for Treatment Collaboration, Hospital Discharge Planning, or Care Coordination <i>(applicable to DOHMH programs within Local Services Plan)</i>	<a href="#">OMH Guidance</a>
Programs and benefits resources for tenants	<a href="#">ACCESS NYC</a>
Mental health crisis response	<a href="#">NYC 988</a>
	<a href="#">Mobile Crisis Teams</a>
Peer-led mental health advocacy	<a href="#">Baltic Street</a>
Legal services for tenants	<a href="#">Legal Services for Tenants - HRA</a>
	<a href="#">Mobilization for Justice</a>
	<a href="#">The Legal Aid Society</a>
Emergency cash assistance for tenants	<a href="#">One Shot Deal - Access NYC</a>
Support for adults at risk of harm or eviction	<a href="#">Adult Protective Services (APS)</a>
NYC Housing Court navigation services	<a href="#">Court Navigator Program</a>
	<a href="#">Walk in Services - Help Center</a>
	<a href="#">Housing Court Answers</a>