

Family Homeless Prevention and Assistance Program (FHPAP) Updates

As you continue receiving guidance and staying informed about COVID-19, here are the latest FHPAP program updates including program requirement changes and helpful resources.

Release of Information, Tennesen Warning and Other Enrollment Documents

Please follow your internal guidance about working with participants and social distancing. We encourage you to use alternative modes of connection such as phone calls, emails, Skype, and video calling to engage with households who may be at higher risk of exposure or have increased needs during this time. We want to expedite enrollment into FHPAP whenever possible, so we are temporarily waiving the need for a Release of Information, Tennesen Warning and other enrollment documents such as applications to be signed by the adults in the household. Verbal consent for these requirements from each adult in the household will be allowed and should be documented appropriately in the client file.

Income Verification

Formal documentation and third party verification continue to be the best methods for verifying household income; however during this crisis, Minnesota Housing is allowing households to self-report income when necessary. Self-reporting of income should only be used in extreme situations when other more appropriate methods are unavailable. When self-reporting is used, staff should inquire about a wide variety of potential income sources and document the household's response in the client file. Staff must still calculate annual income and make sure that households meet the income requirements for FHPAP.

Reducing Barriers to Enrollment

In order to be eligible for FHPAP, households need to have incomes at or below 200% federal poverty guidelines, be a Minnesota resident and be in a housing crisis. We know that some communities have added additional requirements. Grantees and their subgrantees should review all self-imposed requirements and eliminate any unnecessary requirements when possible to make sure that households can access FHPAP as quickly as possible. We also encourage communities to eliminate the need for an emergency assistance denial before allowing access to needed financial assistance.

Budget Adjustments

As in the past, minor adjustments within line items and service type are allowed. Changes must be approved by your advisory committee and Minnesota Housing. If you would like to explore additional budget changes, contact Minnesota Housing staff to discuss your request (see below for contact information).

Payments to Grantees

Although Minnesota Housing staff are working remotely, payments to grantees will continue as scheduled. We encourage grantees to expedite payments to their subgrantees.

Reporting Deadlines

If you have upcoming reporting deadlines with Minnesota Housing, separate communication will be sent to you with revised deadlines.

Dramatic Changes in Service Delivery

As you and your subgrantees work to comply with recommendations from the Minnesota Department of Health, we understand that service delivery may be modified. We also realize that some entities may not be able to maintain services due to staff illness, loss of staff or other issues. If there is going to be a dramatic change in service availability or access, please let Minnesota Housing staff know immediately.

Executive Order 20-14 Suspending Evictions and Writs of Recovery

On March 23, 2020, Governor Walz announced [Executive Order 20-14](#) Suspending Evictions and Writs of Recovery During the COVID-19 Peacetime Emergency. Grantees have often obtained a copy of an eviction notice as documentation of a household's housing crisis for FHPAP eligibility. During this Executive Order, we are directing grantees to first try to secure a late rent notice if it can be obtained quickly; however if this isn't possible and will delay the crisis resolution, grantees may secure verbal verification of late rent from the landlord. Securing verbal verification should be a last resort, and the landlord name and contact information should be noted in the file.

COVID-19 and Minnesota Housing

Minnesota Housing has added a [COVID-19 landing webpage](#) to its website that includes previous eNews publications sent to our partners as well as other useful information.

If you have more questions as you navigate interactions with participants and assess FHPAP requirements, please reach out to [Diane Elias](#) or [Nancy Urbanski](#).

Prioritizing the health and safety of staff and participants and maintaining housing stability are very important to Minnesota Housing. Thank you for all you are doing to provide continued services and assistance to households during this challenging time.



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