

D.5/F.5

Adherence to Housing First Principles in Admitting and Terminating Participants

I. Admissions to Housing

In screening individuals and families for admission to housing projects, both the Homeless Navigation Hotline (the Hotline) and CoC- and ESG-funded housing projects will adhere to Housing First principles. Among other things, these principles prohibit screening out prospective participants based on any of the following:

- A. Having no income or too little income;
- B. Having a poor credit or financial history;
- C. Having a history of evictions from housing;
- D. Exhibiting behaviors that indicate a lack of “housing readiness”;
- E. Having an active substance use disorder or a history of such disorders;
- F. Having a criminal record, unless that record includes one or more convictions for crimes which result in state- or federally-mandated restrictions on housing;
- G. Refusing, in the case of permanent supportive housing, to accept or participate in treatment or supportive services; or
- H. Being a domestic violence victim, whether or not:
 - 1. The domestic violence has resulted in the involvement of law enforcement;
 - 2. The prospective participant has a protective order; or
 - 3. The prospective participant is currently separated from the abuser.

II. Terminations from Housing

- A. Grounds for Termination. ESG- and CoC-funded projects providing permanent housing, including either permanent supportive housing or rapid re-housing projects, may not base decisions to terminate a participant from their projects on any of the following:
 - 1. The participant’s use of alcohol or drugs, in and of itself (without other lease violations);
 - 2. The participant’s engagement in services, although rapid re-housing projects may require clients to accept case management as a condition to receiving rental assistance;

3. The participant's failure to make progress on a service plan;
 4. The participant's loss of income or failure to increase income; or
 5. The participant's engagement in any activities that are not commonly prohibited in other lease agreements found elsewhere in Stark County.
- B. Steps to be Taken Before Terminating a Participant. Before terminating a participant, providers of CoC- or ESG- funded housing must do the following:
1. Give the participant reasonable flexibility in paying their share of rent (after subsidy) and offer them special payment arrangements (*e.g.*, a payment plan) for rent arrears and/or assistance with financial management (including representative payee arrangements).
 2. Exercise judgment and examine all extenuating circumstances to ensure that the participant is terminated only in the most severe cases; and
 3. Follow formal policies and procedures for terminating assistance, which provide due process to the client as required by 24 CFR section 578.91.

III. Filing Complaints for Violations of These Rules

Any person or any authorized agent of a person who believes that the person has been denied admission to or been terminated from permanent housing in violation of these rules, may file a complaint with the Collaborative Applicant by following the appeal procedures outlined in Section VII of the HCCSC's *Coordinated Entry Guide*.