

MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities Administration

HOUSING PRACTICE GUIDELINE

NOTE: Replicated from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) Housing Guideline as included in the Public Mental Health Code Manual, Volume III, Section 1708, Subject GL-05, Chapter 07-C, Dated 2/14/95.

I. SUMMARY

This guideline establishes policy and procedure for ensuring that the provision of mental health services and supports are not affected by where individuals choose to live: their own home, the home of another, or in a licensed setting. In those instances when public money helps subsidize an individual's living arrangement, the housing unit selected by the individual shall comply with applicable occupancy standards.

II. APPLICATION

- a. Psychiatric hospitals operated by the MDHHS.
- b. Special facilities operated by the MDHHS.
- c. Prepaid Inpatient Health Plans (PIHPs) and Community Mental Health Services Programs (CMHSPs) as specified in their contracts with the MDHHS.

III. POLICY

The MDHHS recognizes housing to be a basic need and affirms the right of all individuals of public mental health services to pursue housing options of their choice. Just as individuals living in licensed dependent settings may require many different types of services and supports, individuals living in their own homes or sharing their household with another individual may have similar service needs. RHMA's shall foster the provision of services and supports independent of where the individual resides.

When requested, RHMA's shall educate individuals about the housing options and supports available, and assist individuals in locating habitable, safe, and affordable housing. The process of locating suitable housing shall be directed by the individual's interests, involvement, and informed choice. Independent housing arrangements in which the cost of housing is subsidized by the PIHP and CMHSP are to be secured with a lease or deed in the individual's name.

This guideline is not intended to subvert or prohibit occupancy in or participation with community-based treatment settings, such as an adult foster care home, when needed by an individual recipient.

IV. DEFINITIONS

Affordable: is a condition that exists when an individual's means or the combined household income of several individuals is sufficient to pay for food, basic clothing, healthcare, and personal needs and still have enough left to cover all housing related costs including rent/mortgage, utilities, maintenance, repairs, insurance, and property taxes. In situations where there are insufficient resources to cover both housing costs and basic living costs, individual housing subsidies may be used to bridge the gap when they are available.

Habitable and safe: means those housing standards established in each community that define and require basic conditions for tenant/resident health, security, and safety.

Housing: refers to dwellings that are typical of those sought out and occupied by members of a community. The choices an individual of mental health services makes in meeting his/her housing needs are not to be linked in any way to any specific program or support service needs he/she may have.

Responsible Mental Health Agency (RMHA): means the MDHHS hospital, center, PIHP, or CMHSP responsible for providing and contracting for mental health services and/or arranging and coordinating the provision of other services to meet the individual's needs.

V. STANDARDS

RMHAs shall develop policies and create mechanisms that predominantly consider an individual's choice in selecting where and with whom they live. These policies and mechanisms shall also:

- A. Ensure that RMHA-supported housing blends into the community. Supported housing units are to be scattered throughout a building, complex, or the community to achieve community integration when possible. Use of self-contained campuses or otherwise segregated buildings as service sites is not the preferred mode.
- B. Promote and support home ownership, individual choice, and autonomy. The number of individuals who live together in RMHA-supported housing shall not exceed the community's norms for comparable living settings.
- C. Assure that any housing arranged or subsidized by the RMHA is accessible to the individual and in compliance with applicable state and local standards for occupancy, health, and safety.
- D. Be sensitive to the individual's cultural and ethnic preferences and give consideration to them.
- E. Encourage and support the individual's self-sufficiency.
- F. Provide for ongoing assessment of the individual's housing needs.

- G. Assist individuals in coordinating available resources to meet their basic housing needs. RMHAs may consider the use of housing subsidies when individuals have a need for housing that cannot be met by the other resources which are available to them.

VI. REFERENCES AND LEGAL AUTHORITY

MCL 330.1116(j)

VII. EXHIBITS

Federal Housing Subsidy Quality Standards based on 24 CFR § 882.10