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New York City Supportive Housing: Client Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

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NEW YORK CITY SUPPORTIVE HOUSING: CLIENT FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

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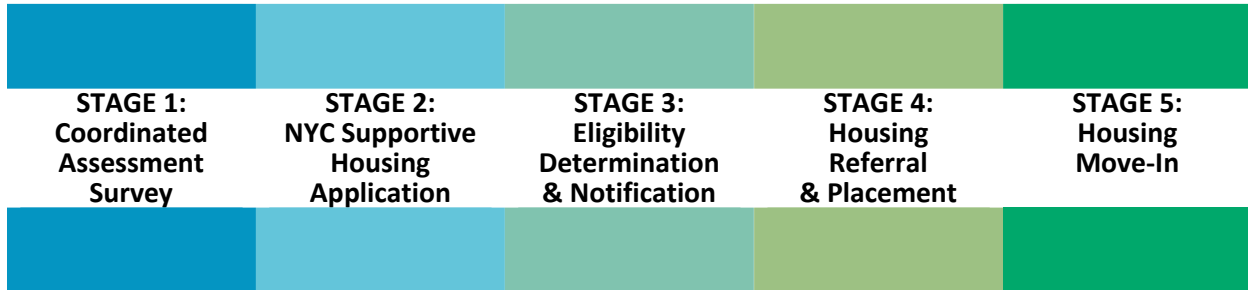
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SUPPORTIVE HOUSING PROCESS



General Questions

Q: What is supportive housing?

A: Supportive housing is safe, affordable, permanent housing with professional social services teams for individuals and families who have experienced homelessness. Supportive housing can be individual or shared apartments throughout the community and includes ongoing rental assistance and housing-related supports and services to help people maintain stable housing and overall wellbeing. Whether in an individual or shared unit, tenants receive a lease and keys. Supportive housing providers offer different services for health, employment, and other needs either directly or through service partnerships. Single adults, adult families, families with children, and young adults may be eligible for supportive housing.

Q: What is CAPS?

A: CAPS stands for Coordinated Assessment and Placement System. Through CAPS, individuals and families who are homeless (or at-risk of being homeless) are assessed, prioritized, and referred for supportive housing based on their needs. The goal is to create an efficient, equitable, and transparent process for accessing supportive housing to quickly support people to stable housing. CAPS includes the following:

1. The Coordinated Assessment Survey – completed by a provider, like a street outreach or shelter provider, on behalf of a client, to determine potential eligibility for supportive housing and rental assistance.
2. The NYC Supportive Housing Application – completed by a provider, like a street outreach or shelter provider, on behalf of a client, to assess eligibility for supportive housing. Includes opportunity for a client to provide information on housing choices.
3. Connecting People and Housing – this system helps city agencies connect eligible clients to refer to supportive housing based on availability and location of apartments, program eligibility, and client housing preferences.

Q: How long will it take before I am able to live in Supportive Housing?

A: It may take time to obtain a supportive housing unit. Opportunities for units depends on current supportive housing tenants moving out or new housing providers contracting with the city or state to build new buildings. Other factors that impact your placement include the type of supportive housing you are eligible for, your household size, service and support needs, mobility and physical accommodation needs, preferred borough/location, etc. The timing of your placement will also depend on your continued effort to keep your income and identification documents up to date with your current case worker/housing team.

Stage 1: Coordinated Assessment Survey

Q. Who can I work with to submit a Coordinated Assessment Survey?

A: Staff in the following settings have access to complete the Coordinated Assessment Survey: Nonprofit shelter and outreach providers, hospitals, jails/prisons, supportive housing providers, community-based organizations, etc.

Q. What happens after I complete a Coordinated Assessment Survey?

A: After completing the Coordinated Assessment Survey, CAPS will provide results to your case worker or the staff person assisting you. These results show the potential housing options you may qualify for, based on the information you provided during the survey. One of these options may be supportive housing.

The survey also returns any client documents that are on file with HRA, including copies of identification documents, social security card, proof of income, and more. These documents are required to apply for all types of housing, including supportive housing.

Stage 2: NYC Supportive Housing Application

Q: How do I apply for supportive housing?

A: If your CAPS assessment shows you are potentially eligible for supportive housing and you want to apply, you must work with a pre-approved social service or health provider (can be the same person who submitted the survey) to complete a NYC Supportive Housing Application.

The NYC Supportive Housing Application is completed electronically and determines your eligibility for the many supportive housing programs offered by the City and State.

Q: What documentation is required to apply for supportive housing?

A: The NYC Supportive Housing Application requires a psychosocial assessment. Mental health supportive housing also requires a psychiatric evaluation, which can be completed by an approved doctor, licensed psychiatrist, psychologist, or social worker. Other documentation, such as a valid photo identification or birth certificate may be needed. Ask your case worker to help you figure out what specific documents are needed, where to get them, and what help is available to have all documents in hand as soon as possible.

Q: How do I know if I am eligible for Supportive Housing?

A: Once a NYC Supportive Housing Application is submitted, a clinical team from NYC’s Human Resources Administration (HRA) reviews the application and makes an eligibility determination based on requirements for the different housing options. Documentation of this determination

is returned to the provider who originally submitted the application for you. You can ask your case worker or the staff person who assisted you for an update throughout the process.

Q: How long does it usually take to complete the application process and when can I expect to hear whether I’m eligible?

A: Once submitted, applications are usually reviewed within 1-3 business days. In some cases, additional documentation is required. This information will help the HRA clinical team be able to determine your eligibility. Without the information, they cannot determine your eligibility.

Stage 3: Eligibility Determination & Notification

Q: What’s the difference between being eligible/approved for Supportive Housing and being placed in Supportive Housing?

A: Once you are determined to be eligible and approved for supportive housing, you are included in the pool of people from which referrals to available units are made.

City agencies consider two main factors in making referrals to housing providers: 1. the requirements of the housing provider and 2. the preferences and needs noted in your supportive housing application. The Standardized Vulnerability Assessment category that is noted on your Supportive Housing Application Determination Letter also helps the referring agency make appropriate referrals to housing providers. Remember, it is the combination of your needs and preferences, the availability of units in categories you are eligible for, AND the services available by each housing provider that are considered when making referrals.

Q: What if I am not eligible for supportive housing?

A: If you are determined not eligible for supportive housing, discuss other options with your case worker, including other supports to locate an acceptable rental unit and financial assistance that may be available to help with move-in costs and rent.

Q: How can I make sure my service needs will be addressed in supportive housing?

A: The services and support you may need in supportive housing are determined based on the information you provide in the **NYC Supportive Housing Application**. Make sure to communicate with your case worker or other staff assisting so they have a clear idea of the support you will need to maintain housing and address other critical needs.

Q: Once I am approved for supportive housing, what happens next?

A: Based on the type of supportive housing you are eligible for and the supportive housing units that are currently available, your application packet will be submitted to housing providers by a designated city agency or other partner. Contact information for the designated city agency or other partner (called a “placement entity”) is listed in the **NYC Supportive Housing Application Determination Letter** that is provided to your case worker once a complete **NYC Supportive Housing Application** is approved.

Q: When will I know if I have a supportive housing apartment?

A: Your case worker or other staff assisting you are your point of contact throughout this process. They will let you know when there is a supportive housing apartment that you are eligible for and will help coordinate a time for you to participate in an apartment or unit viewing with the supportive housing provider.

Q: How long is my supportive housing approval good for?

A: Supportive housing eligibility determinations are good for twelve (12) months.

Q: My supportive housing approval has expired, what should I do next?

A: An updated application will need to be submitted by your case worker or health provider. It will need to include any changes in health, mental health, substance use, or homeless history.

Stage 4: Housing Referral & Placement:

Q: What should I consider when viewing a supportive housing unit (apartment)?

A: CUCS has a guide called [Tips for Applicants Preparing for Housing Interview](#) that may be useful as you consider what you need to successfully move-in to supportive housing. Below are some questions you may want to ask the provider. Ask your case worker for help as needed so you have a good understanding of any supportive housing option offered to you. Many meetings are on Zoom or Teams; practice with your case worker if you are unfamiliar with the platform.

- What are the rules and policies where I am applying? (e.g., visitors, curfew, etc.)
- What type of neighbors will I have here?
- What are my rights and responsibilities as a tenant?
- When will program staff be available to help me?
- What services are available onsite and in the community?
- How close is the supportive housing unit to my doctors or other community supports I visit? Is it easy to access transportation?
- What furniture will I need when I move-in?

Q: Can I live anywhere in NYC with Supportive Housing?

A: Supportive Housing is available in each city borough. However, housing choices depend upon providers having vacancies.

Q: How do I share my housing preferences for supportive housing? (E.g., borough, specific features, etc.)?

A: This is done when you complete the **NYC Supportive Housing Application**. Please make sure to share this information with your case worker during that step of the process and to be clear about your needs when viewing a potential supportive housing unit.

Q: What if I don't like the options presented to me for housing?

A: You have the right to refuse an apartment. Share with your case worker what you didn't like about the apartment so it can be documented. It is important to know that supportive housing is limited, and an apartment may not have all of your desired features, so please think about what apartment features, services, location, etc., are essential for you to live in your own housing versus features that would be "nice to have".

Q: How will I know I've been approved and when can I move in?

A: Your case worker will share any updates with you, including when you have been approved for a unit. You may be asked to provide additional information to the supportive housing provider, such as, your government issued identification, verification of income and assets,

proof of a social security number, and proof of your date of birth and citizenship (which may include a birth certificate). This information helps the housing provider confirm you meet the requirements they have to their funders and is also used to help submit the rental subsidy application that will help your rent be affordable. Stay in close contact with you case worker during this period.

After the housing provider has completed all of the steps they are responsible for, they will confirm your move-in date. You will need to sign a lease prior to moving into your new home.

Stage 5: Housing Move-In

Q: What are my rights in supportive housing?

A: Your rights are important! In New York City, supportive housing providers must tell you what your rights are and help protect your rights. For more information about supportive housing tenant’s rights, refer to the [Supportive Housing Tenant’s Notice of Rights Template](#).

Q: Can I view the unit before I move in?

A: Yes! As this will be your home, you can view the unit (when it is vacant) and the building. Virtual viewings are often an option as well. Keep in mind that some viewings take place while the building is still in development. In these cases, you may be able to see the location, or view a similar type of unit. Please ask the housing provider for up-to-date information.

Q: What supports might be needed to live as independently as possible in supportive housing? Where should I look for resources?

A: Please see the [Directory of NYC Resources](#) for more information.

Q: What happens once I move into supportive housing? Can I move between units or move to other housing?

A: The lease is signed between the supportive housing provider (landlord) and you, both of which are required to honor the terms of the lease. In order to keep your housing affordable, you also sign an agreement with the funder of your rent subsidy (such as HPD or NYCHA).

If you are interested in exploring other housing options, please speak with your case worker or other supportive housing provider before deciding to leave a supportive housing unit. If you leave your unit without coordinating with your case worker, you may lose your eligibility for continued housing assistance and supportive services.

Q: Who do I contact when I have questions about my unit?

A: Prior to move-in, any question about your housing unit should be shared with your case worker or other staff assisting you who can help you find an answer. Once you move-in, you would contact your supportive housing provider and/or their maintenance team.

Q: What services are available to me once I have housing?

A: Services available to supportive housing residents will vary based on need, but usually include case management support and other social and community services. Services will vary depending on whether you lease a unit in a building with onsite services or a scattered site

supportive housing unit where the team is not on site. Supportive housing residents may also access services that are available to any New York City resident.