

Portland's Housing Bond

Appendix J PSH Definitions

Homeless Adult:

Defined as an adult(s) without minor children (under the age of 18) in their care, who may: (a) live on the streets, stay in a shelter(s), abandoned building or vehicle; or live in any other place not meant for human habitation.

Adult Homeless Households:

Generally homeless adult households without minor children (under the age of 18) in their care and may include arrangements not based in biological or intimate partner relationships, including but not limited to households that are multi-generational, same gender partners, unaccompanied adults, parents with adult children, or married couples.

Assertive Engagement:

Assertive Engagement (AE) is a synthesis of evidence-based practices adopted by Multnomah County that includes elements from Motivational Interviewing, Strengths-Based Practice, and Assertive Community Treatment. It is a person-centered and strengths-based social service approach to working with people that honors the individual as experts in their own lives. AE principles will guide service design as well as how Adult Homeless Services are delivered by Suppliers.

Chronically Homelessness Household (local definition): a household living with a disabling condition and experience of long or repeated episodes of homelessness.

Coordinated Access Systems:

(CAA) coordinate efforts across providers to ensure that households have access to housing and services across systems, and includes street, site-based, and telephonic outreach and engagement, coordinated access assessment, resource navigation and referral, documentation collection, barrier mitigation, coordinated access waitlist management, and flexible client assistance to support the rapid transition of people prioritized through coordinated access to available housing resources. CAA for adult households is currently focused on HUD-funded housing resources but will soon incorporate housing resources funded through other resources such as this Bond Solicitation. The Joint Office of Homeless Services is also working to integrate the coordinated access systems in place for families with children, youth, veterans and survivors of domestic violence.

Culturally Responsive and Culturally Specific Services:

All Suppliers of supportive housing services will be expected to deliver those services in a Culturally Responsive and/or Culturally Specific manner, as those terms have been defined through a collaborative County-wide work group, led by the Multnomah County Chief Operating Officer and the Director of the Office of Diversity and Equity. These definitions realize the County's stated belief that **culturally responsive and culturally specific services eliminate structural barriers and provide a sense of safety and belonging which will lead to better outcomes**. For more detailed information on cultural specificity and responsiveness, please see Multnomah County's guidance on [Culturally Specific Services](#).

Housing First and Low Barrier:

Supportive housing services should be designed to support the community's commitment to Housing First. Housing First is an approach to quickly and successfully connect households experiencing homelessness to permanent housing without preconditions and barriers to entry. Housing First recognizes that with the right supports, everyone is "ready" to return to permanent housing as soon as a suitable unit becomes available. Therefore, absent very specific programmatic justifications (for example, Recovery Housing models), services should be designed to expedite and not delay a participant's return to permanent housing. Following this approach, the utilization of services are participant-led and modified to meet the unique needs of each participant.

Imminent Risk of Homelessness:

Term that refers to individuals who are at imminent risk of losing their permanent housing and lack the immediate resources necessary to prevent them from becoming homeless.

Permanent Supportive Housing:

(PSH) is deeply affordable permanent housing with supportive services to assist persons experiencing homelessness who have a significant disabling condition(s) to live independently. Supportive services are designed to meet the needs of participants and must be offered for the entire duration of program participation. PSH may be single site, scattered site, or clustered, and can be integrated with market-rate units and affordable units, including those funded by Portland's Housing Bond and other housing development resources. Housing assistance can be project-based or tenant-based. Our community currently has PSH funded by a variety of sources including [HUD Continuum of Care \(CoC\)](#), local public funds, and other resources.

Racial and Social Justice:

In order to end homelessness, we must acknowledge and address through our work the continuing role that structural and institutional racism play in causing significantly disproportionate rates of homelessness among Communities of Color.

We are often described as a progressive community. But we are, in fact, a community built on a long history of legalized and institutionalized racist and oppressive practices that have deprived generations of People of Color access to economic and social opportunity. Until 1926, Oregon's Constitution barred African Americans from moving to or residing in Oregon. As recently as 1948, Oregon realtors affirmed their commitment to a "Code" that, "a realtor shall never introduce into a neighborhood members of any race or nationality whose presence will be detrimental to property values." These examples of racial exclusionary laws and practices in Oregon are two of many contributors to the infrastructure of institutional racism that continues to this day.

Data shows that the inequities created by these historical practices continue to be reproduced and reinforced through institutionalized racism and prejudice in our current housing, education, criminal justice, and employment and human services systems.

As a result, African Americans, Native Americans, Latinx communities, immigrants and refugees and other Communities of Color do far worse on all social indicators of well-being than whites. And their rates of homelessness are much higher than rates of homelessness among whites.

Eliminating these disparities requires an understanding among all suppliers of supportive housing services of how historical and current structural, institutional, and personal racism shape the experiences and opportunities of People of Color in our community. It requires that suppliers understand and carry out their obligations under federal, state, and local civil rights statutes designed to protect people against unlawful discrimination. It requires that resources be targeted and services be delivered in a manner that addresses these disparities (see below for discussion of culturally responsive and specific services). And it requires that individual Suppliers and the homeless services system as a whole be accountable for equitable access to and benefit from services provided.