

# Guidelines to the State Housing Related Assistance Program for Adults with Serious Mental Illness

From July 1, 2007 to June 30, 2008

For Questions About the Guidelines Contact:

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## **GUIDELINES TO THE NEBRASKA HOUSING RELATED ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

### **A. AUTHORIZATION**

These guidelines are issued to implement the Housing Related Assistance as authorized under **Neb. Rev. Stat. 71-812(3)**. These guidelines will be used for the twelve month period of **July 1, 2007 to June 30, 2008** (Fiscal Year 2008). The Division reserves the right to change these guidelines as necessary to successfully implement the Program. In FY2006, the program was referred to as "*State Rental Assistance Transition Voucher Program*". In FY2007, the program name was changed to "*State Housing Related Assistance Program*" consistent with the authorizing state statute. Neb. Rev. Stat. 71-812 (3)(a) instructs the division to manage and distribute the Housing Related Assistance funds based upon a formula established by the division, in consultation with regional behavioral health authorities. A meeting was held to receive consultation with the Regions on March 13, 2007. Comments received at that meeting were used to prepare these FY2008 guidelines.

1. The Region Housing Related Assistance Program shall comply with the requirements set forth in these Guidelines.
2. FY2008 Guidelines are issued by Division of Behavioral Health via e-mail by April 2, 2007.
3. The Region's Housing Related Assistance Budget Plan shall be submitted to the Division of Behavioral Health no later than Friday, May 4, 2007. The Region Budget Plan is used to develop the annual Housing Related Assistance contract for the budget period of July 1, 2007 to June 30, 2008.
4. The Region needs to submit Report of Actuals by September 1, 2007 for FY2007 (contract period July 1, 2006 to June 30, 2007) and by September 1, 2008 for FY2008 (contract period July 1, 2007 to June 30, 2008).

### **B. REGIONAL ADMINISTRATION OF PROGRAM**

1. Neb. Rev. Stat. § 71-812.(3)(a) says the Division of Behavioral Health Services shall contract with each regional behavioral health authority for the provision of housing-related assistance. Each regional behavioral health authority may contract with qualifying public, private, or nonprofit entity for the provision of such assistance.
2. In order to be a qualified public, private, or nonprofit entity for the provision of Housing Related Assistance, the organization needs to meet the following requirements:
  - a. The designated entity shall be an organization with experience in managing affordable housing for adults who are very low income with a serious mental illness.
  - b. Providers of Behavioral Health services are excluded from filling the Regional Housing Coordination function. A principle of "Supported Housing" is service provision and housing management is functionally separated.
3. The Regional Administration involves housing coordination for the State Housing Related Assistance program: (a) approve applications from eligible consumers for Housing-Related Assistance, (b) authorize Housing Quality Standards (HQS) inspections be completed for approved consumers, (c) make payments to the landlord, (d) provide support and technical assistance to behavioral health providers and consumers in planning and locating rental housing, (e) provide regional system leadership in housing, and (f) provide other related behavioral health housing administrative functions. Tasks and activities included in the Regional Housing Coordinator's role do NOT include supervision or delivery of direct services to a consumer.
4. The person designated to complete the Regional Housing Coordination duties shall be responsible for the following functions:
  - a. Develop and maintain the Regional Program Plan for State Housing Related Assistance Program.

- b. Submit the annual Region Budget Plan, annual Report of Actuals, and the Supported Housing Data Base Monthly Reports as specified by the Division.
  - c. Develop and implement strategies to ensure the program is culturally competent, and represents the ethnic and gender needs of the community.
  - d. Provide approval of eligible consumers for Housing-Related Assistance,
  - e. Authorize Housing Quality Standards (HQS) inspections by qualified personnel to be completed on the housing unit where eligible consumers live, or may live. The housing paid by this program shall meet HQS.
  - f. Assure authorized payments to the landlords and utility companies for Housing-Related Assistance are made.
  - g. Provide expertise in housing, system leadership, program support, and technical assistance in behavioral health housing areas including serving as part of the administrative team of the region as well as support to behavioral health providers, and eligible consumers as requested.
  - h. Coordinate an assessment of housing needs for adults with serious mental illness.
  - i. Collect data and evaluation of housing program outcomes.
  - j. Facilitate communication among housing and behavioral health providers (in and out of network), regional systems, human service systems, and other system participants to build coalitions and ensure the region can provide access to appropriate rental assistance services and affordable housing for adults with serious mental illness.
  - k. Participate and attend meetings for the statewide Housing System Team led by Division staff.
  - l. Responsible for leadership and system problem solving for Housing Related Assistance under this contract specifically and housing issues for adults with serious mental illness in general.
  - m. Comply with data reporting and outcome performance measures as set by the Division.
  - n. Maintain all the documentation required by the State of Nebraska and Division of Behavioral Health under state law, regulations, the Housing Related Assistance annual contract and these guidelines.
5. The Region is responsible for managing the total funds allocated in the contract and the \$5,000 maximum per consumer annual (12 months) of Housing Related Assistance funds.
- a. Program policy places a cap of up to \$5,000 per consumer annually (12 months) of state funded Housing-Related Assistance.
  - b. Once a consumer is found eligible to receive Housing Related Assistance, the Region may bill the Division the \$5,000.
  - c. If additional funding is required annually for the eligible consumer, the Region is required to receive written approval from the Nebraska Division of Behavioral Health.
  - d. If the consumer needs less than the \$5,000, the Region may retain the balance of funds to serve other eligible consumers. The Region may carryover the unexpended balance of Housing Related Assistance funds into the following fiscal year. The carryover shall be reported to the Division via the Region Budget Plan and the Report of Actuals. The carryover shall only be used to pay housing related assistance for eligible consumers.
6. Region seeking written approval from the Division of Behavioral Health.
- a. The Region needs written approval from the Division of Behavioral Health under the following conditions:
    - 1) Additional funds over the \$5,000 annual cap are needed in order to serve the eligible consumers who, without the additional support, would be at risk of an inpatient mental health commitment, at least in part because of lack of affordable independent housing.

- 2) Other Housing Related Costs are needed but are not listed in these guidelines, and/or
  - 3) Payment of Housing Related Debt of over \$500 in order to move into Public Housing
- b. Procedure for written approval from the Division of Behavioral Health:
- 1) The Region prepares a written request to document the following items:
    - i) Housing Related Assistance Service Participant ID# \_\_\_\_\_.  
(Do Not Provide the person's name)
    - ii) Confirm the following information:
      - (1) The person is SMI according to program policy;
      - (2) The person is extremely low income according to program policy;
      - (3) The person is at risk of moving to a higher level of care if this additional support is not provided;
      - (4) The consumer has an Individual Service Plan with a goal of independent living; and
      - (5) The consumer has HHS authorized behavioral health services.
    - iii) Specify when this person started with the Housing Related Assistance Program (Month, Year)
    - iv) Report how much of the \$5,000 has been expended to date. Include in this report the actual monthly housing related expenses (rent payments, utilities, other) for this person.
    - v) Report how much is remaining of the \$5,000.
    - vi) Report the Fair Market Rent as defined and published by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) that applies to this consumer.
    - vii) Given this consumer's situation, how much additional Housing Related Expense funding is needed to complete a twelve month authorization time?
    - viii) What else is going on that makes the request this important?
  - 2) The Regional Administrator must approve the request before it is submitted to the Division. If the Regional Administrator does not agree with request, then the answer is no.
  - 3) If the Regional Administrator agrees to the request, the Region sends an e-mail to the Housing Manager at the Division of Behavioral Health. The e-mail should include the information requested above and report the Regional Administrator has approved the request. The documentation sent needs to make a convincing case in writing for the additional assistance.
  - 4) The Division of Behavioral Health decision (approved or disapproved) will be sent by e-mail back to the Region.
  - 5) The Region is responsible for maintaining all of the documentation including the Division of Behavioral Health's approval.

### **C. HOUSING RELATED ASSISTANCE PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS**

The Nebraska Housing Related Assistance Program will provide Supported Housing capacity in each of the six Regions by addressing the following program requirements:

1. The general principles of the evidence based practice of "Supported Housing" are followed, as defined by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in the Community Mental Health Services Block Grant. This includes permanence, functional separation of housing and services, integration, affordability, and flexibility.
2. **CONSUMER ELIGIBILITY** – Consumer eligibility criteria for the Housing Related Assistance program:

- a) An adult who (1) has a serious mental illness; (2) has an Individual Service Plan with a goal of independent living; (3) has Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) funded Behavioral Health Services (funded in whole or in part by the Division of Behavioral Health and/or the Division of Medicaid and Long-Term Care); and (4) is willing to participate in appropriate authorized behavioral health service(s).
- b) An adult who needs housing related assistance (1) as documented by efforts to fully exhaust local options available in seeking rental assistance administered by local housing authorities and/or other entities; and (2) clear demonstration by the consumer's willingness to honor the agreements involved in continuing to seek the other sources of rental assistance if initially turned down or placed on some form of a waiting list after starting the Housing Related Assistance.
- c) An adult who is
  - 1) **Priority One**:
    - (i) Extremely Low Income who is discharged from an inpatient mental health commitment, or
    - (ii) Extremely Low Income who is eligible to move from a residential level of care to independent living to make room for a person being discharged from an inpatient mental health commitment;
  - 2) **Priority Two**: consumers who are extremely low income at risk of an inpatient mental health commitment, at least in part because of lack of affordable independent housing.
  - 3) **Priority Three**: consumers who are eligible under Neb. Rev. Stat. § 71-812 (3) for housing-related assistance for very low-income adults with serious mental illness.

**For FY2008, only Priority One and Priority Two individuals can be served.**

- d) The Nebraska Housing Related Assistance program for Adults with Serious Mental Illness is funded by Nebraska state tax dollars. To be eligible for the Nebraska Housing Related Assistance program
  - 1) Funds may only be used for housing related assistance in Nebraska;
  - 2) The consumer must be:
    - i. Citizen of the United States of America or
    - ii. Documented as a Lawful Permanent Resident (LPR) of the United States of America. LPR status is demonstrated, at minimum, with a United States Permanent Resident Card, known popularly as a Green Card.
3. AT RISK under Priority Two means a qualified Behavioral Health worker has certified the person is "at risk". The documentation includes a signature from Behavioral Health worker on the application. The signature by the qualified Behavioral Health worker means the consumer meets adult with serious mental illness criteria, meets the extremely low income criteria and has one or more of the following situations:
  - a) a history of inpatient mental health board commitment within last five years;
  - b) was subject to an emergency protective custody (EPC) within the last five years;
  - c) the housing assistance will clearly prevent a psychiatric hospitalization;
  - d) the person is currently homeless;
  - e) the person has no income and appears eligible for SSI;
  - f) the consumer is living in independent housing that is not safe, decent, or affordable;
  - g) housing assistance prevents a consumer from moving into a higher level of care.

- h) outpatient mental health board commitment
- 4. Individual Service Plan - The consumer needs to have an Individual Service Plan with a goal of independent living. This means there is written documentation showing:
  - a) The consumer's goal of obtaining and maintaining independent housing;
  - b) A contact person who is:
    - 1) Properly trained in identifying and assisting the individual with obtaining and maintaining adequate housing in the community and
    - 2) Can be contacted by a landlord if there are any problems; and
  - c) The consumer must receive Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) funded Behavioral Health Services. These are services funded in whole or in part by the Division of Behavioral Health, and/or the Division of Medicaid and Long-Term Care.
  - d) For Zero Income Consumers, there is a plan of action to seek a stable income.
- 5. The Nebraska Housing Related Assistance Program is designed for people who are **NOT** capable of independent living without behavioral health services and supports in order to remain successfully in the community.
- 6. The funds for Housing Related Assistance are intended to serve as a "bridge" to other housing alternatives including self support or other affordable housing options such as the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Section 8. Therefore, the consumer must have fully exhausted attempts to receive local program rental assistance where the housing is located. If placed on a waiting list, the consumer needs to follow-up with the local housing authority until officially turned down or accepted.
- 7. Authorized Use of Funds - The funding may be used for housing-related assistance for extremely low-income adults with serious mental illness. The Housing-related assistance includes rental payments, utility payments, security and utility deposits, and other related costs. Utility deposits and payments are limited to tenant paid gas, electric, water, sewer, garbage. Other related costs and payments may also be covered. Specifically excluded are cable television and telephone.
- 8. "Other Related Costs"
  - a) The availability of "other related costs" is authorized under the state definition of "Housing-Related Assistance" [Neb. Rev. Stat. 71-812.(3)(b)(ii)].
  - b) Specifically excluded from other related costs are:
    - 1) Cable television and telephone.
    - 2) Food, cleaning products, or other related consumable products.
    - 3) Funds to cover for damages that the tenant made to the unit during tenancy.
    - 4) To cover debt from previous times except as noted below.
  - c) The consumer needs to clearly document that she/he has exhausted all other resources first. If it is clear that no other options are available, then the following "other related costs" may be approved:
    - 1) Authorizing an allowance for stove and refrigerator consistent with the local housing authority's standards.
    - 2) One-time costs may include security and utility deposits, reasonable moving expenses, needed furniture such as couch, bed, table, and chairs, as well as items needed to make the consumer's apartment suitable for living such as bedding, dishes, silverware, and pots & pans, and general kitchen supplies.
    - 3) Housing Related Debt may be paid such as pass due rent or utility payments which, if paid, allows the consumer to receive Section 8 and/or other local housing authority

services. As a result of this Housing Related Debt payment, the consumer will be discharged from the Housing Related Assistance program, except for consumers with zero income. The maximum authorized is \$500. If additional funding is required for the eligible consumer to pay the debt, the Region is required to receive written approval from the Nebraska Division of Behavioral Health. The funds expended are part of the \$5,000 cap.

- d) Use of "other related costs" counts as part of the \$5,000 annual cap for each consumer.
  - e) Housing Flex Funds are for an eligible consumer who does not need ongoing rental assistance.
    - 1) The consumer needs to clearly document that she/he has exhausted all other resources first.
    - 2) The Housing Flex funds may be used for one-time expenses to help an eligible consumer move into a housing unit that meets Housing Quality Standards (HQS) and Fair Market Rents (FMR). However, these funds are not to be used to pay for ongoing housing related expenses.
    - 3) These funds are intended to cover authorized one time costs (such as security and utility deposits), utility payments (such as tenant paid gas, electric, water, sewer, garbage), and/or "Other Related Costs" as needed to provide housing.
    - 4) Use of Housing Flex funds counts as part of the \$5,000 annual cap for the consumer.
  - f) "Other Related Costs" must be clearly documented by the Region.
  - g) Other Related Costs not listed in these guidelines are unauthorized without written approval from the Division of Behavioral Health Services Housing Manager. The Region needs to E-mail to the Division of Behavioral Health Services Housing Manager with the situation. The e-mail response from the Division of Behavioral Health is the documentation showing approval or disapproval.
9. Tenant-based Rental Assistance is the model used by the Nebraska Housing Related Assistance program. Tenant-based Rental Assistance means the funds are designed to help individual households afford housing costs. The individual consumer found eligible receives funds to provide Housing Related costs (such as rent, utility costs, security deposits, and/or utility deposits). The consumer chooses her/his own housing unit. The housing unit shall meet Housing Quality Standards (HQS). If a participant decides to move, he or she may take the Housing Related Assistance to the new housing unit. In other words, the funds follow the consumer.
10. Rent Limits - The Region sets local standards on what is reasonable rent.
- a) The leased rent (not including utilities) should be equal to or less than the Fair Market Rents (FMR) as calculated, defined and published by HUD as much as possible.
  - b) If it is documented that the eligible consumer can not obtain safe, decent, and affordable housing in the local area using the Fair Market Rent limit, the Region may approve a higher amount of rent.
11. The consumer is expected to contribute 30% of adjusted gross income for rent and utilities.
- a) This policy is based on the standard of Housing Cost Burden as defined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). HUD defines Housing Cost Burden as the ratio between payments for housing (including utilities) and reported household income. This calculation is based on gross income. It does not make the adjustments to income required by housing assistance programs before percentage-of-income rents are determined.

- 1) Moderate Cost Burden (Cost Burden > 30%) = Housing costs (including utilities) are between 31 and 50 percent of reported income.
  - 2) Severe Cost Burden (Cost Burden >50%) = Housing costs (including utilities) are exceeding 50 percent of reported income.  
Source: HUD; <http://www.huduser.org/publications/affhsg/worstcase/appendixb.html>  
Appendix B, Glossary, Housing Problems
- b) An eligible consumer on Supplemental Security Income (SSI) receives \$623 per month (effective January 2007). In this case, the tenant contribution would be \$186.90 for rent and utilities.

	2007
Individual / Monthly	\$623
Individual / Annual	\$7,476
Housing Cost = 30% Monthly Income	\$186.90

- c) **Zero Income Consumers** – reasonable accommodation needs to be made for consumers who are found eligible for the Nebraska Housing Related Assistance program with no income.
- 1) It is understood that various events may cause a consumer to have no income at the time of approval for Housing Related Assistance. The reasons may vary from loss of employment to awaiting a decision from the Social Security Administration on a pending appeal. Whatever the reason, the consumer has no income at the present time.
  - 2) Under these conditions, the Housing Related Assistance may be used to pay for a unit that meets Housing Quality Standards (HQS) and Fair Market Rents (FMR).
  - 3) Ongoing payments needed for a consumer with zero income to live in public housing is authorized if the Region clearly documents a cost savings to the Housing Related Assistance program.
  - 4) Under the Housing Related Assistance program, all consumers with zero income must be willing to participate in appropriate actions to seek a stable income. Seeking stable income involves either getting employment or clearly documenting medical disability. This includes a plan of action in the consumer’s Individualized Service Plan (ISP) to document the employment seeking efforts or medical disability.
    - (a) Employment – The ISP needs to specify how the consumer will obtain employment using options such as:
      - (i) searching for employment independently,
      - (ii) using the services of the NE Department of Labor,
      - (iii) seeking Supported Employment from the local behavioral health provider,
      - (iv) applying for Vocational Rehabilitation services, or
      - (v) related strategies.
    - (b) The ISP needs to contain the medical documentation of disability
      - (i) There is documentation from a physician or psychologist licensed in Nebraska showing the consumer’s serious mental illness is severe enough to prevent the individual from doing any Substantial Gainful Activity (See Attachment: DOCUMENTATION OF DISABILITY).
      - (ii) The consumer needs to apply for disability benefits from the Social Security Administration (SSA) under Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and/or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI).
  - 5) The Housing Related Assistance program needs to review the case:
    - (i) Monthly to determine if the consumer is working on establishing a stable income.

- (ii) If the consumer's application for disability benefits under SSA is in appeal, the case review may be quarterly.
  - 6) The consumer needs to clearly demonstrate the willingness to honor the agreements involved in continuing to seek the stable income (such as seeking employment or medical disability) in order to continue to receive Housing Related Assistance. Failure to honor these agreements may be grounds for Housing Related Assistance to be terminated.
12. Project-Based Rental Assistance is NOT an approved use of Nebraska Housing Related Assistance program funds. Project-Based Rental Assistance means the rental assistance funds are directed to a specific building. The building owner agrees to maintain the property to specified standards and to accept eligible participants for a period of time. The consumer must live in the unit within the particular property. If the consumer chooses to move to another housing unit, the rental assistance stays with the building. In other words, the funds do not follow the consumer.
13. Housing Related Assistance funds are NOT approved for Licensed Healthcare Facilities as specified under Title 175 Health Care Facilities and Services Licensure. This includes Chapter 4 - Assisted Living Facilities and Chapter 19 - Mental Health Centers. If the consumer is not able to live independently with behavioral health support services, the next higher level of care would be a licensed healthcare facility (Assisted Living or a Mental Health Center). If the consumer is on Supplemental Security Income (SSI), then he/she would be eligible for Aid to the Aged, Blind and Disabled (AABD) to pay for this living situation. AABD is a Medicaid program for those who meet the Social Security definition of permanent and total disability, are blind, or over age 65. The standard is used to supplement income for those on Medicaid who meet the monthly income standard.

#### **D. PROGRAM DEFINITIONS**

1. **Nebraska Behavioral Health System (NBHS)** is the publicly funded, regional, non-Medicaid mental health, substance abuse and addictions service system in Nebraska.
2. **Behavioral Health (BH)** includes both mental health and substance abuse (alcoholism, drug abuse, and addiction) services. Behavioral health disorder means mental illness or alcoholism, drug abuse, problem gambling, or other addictive disorder. [Neb. Rev. Stat. §71-804(2)]
3. **Network Management Team (NMT)** is the group of persons who work together to reach agreements for the operation of the NBHS through the Regional networks. Persons included on the NMT include the Regional Administrator who serves as the Network Manager in each Region and representatives from the Nebraska Division of Behavioral Health Services.
4. **Housing-Related Assistance** – includes rental payments, utility payments, security and utility deposits, and other related costs and payments. [Neb. Rev. Stat. 71-812.(3)(b)(ii)]. Utility deposits and payments are limited to tenant paid gas, electric, water, sewer, garbage. Specifically excluded are cable television and telephone. Other related costs and payments may also be covered.
5. **Housing Quality Standards (HQS)** are requirements for safe and decent housing. HQS are issued by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development under the Housing

Voucher Programs (commonly referred to as "Section 8"). According to HUD regulations, all rental units must meet HQS before assistance can be paid on behalf of the eligible consumer and at least annually throughout the term of the assisted tenancy. HQS defines "standard housing" and establishes the minimum criteria necessary for the health and safety of program participants.

6. **Very Low-Income** means a household income of fifty percent or less of the applicable median family income estimate as established by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development. [Neb. Rev. Stat. 71-812.(3)(b) (iii)]
7. **Extremely low income** - Households earn incomes between 0 and 30 percent of Median Family Income (MFI) as defined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).
8. **Median Family Income** (MFI) may also be referred to as Area Median Income (AMI). MFI represents the value at which one-half of all families have incomes above that value, and one-half have incomes below that value. MFI estimates are updated annually by HUD.
9. **Adult With Serious Mental Illness** means a person eighteen years of age or older who has, or at any time during the immediately preceding twelve months has had, a diagnosable mental, behavioral, or emotional disorder of sufficient duration to meet diagnostic criteria identified in the most recent edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders and which has resulted in functional impairment that substantially interferes with or limits one or more major life functions. Serious mental illness does not include DSM V codes, substance abuse disorders, or developmental disabilities unless such conditions exist concurrently with a diagnosable serious mental illness; [Neb. Rev. Stat. 71-812.(3)(b) (i)]
10. **Supported Housing** – Services that assist individuals in finding and maintaining appropriate housing arrangements. This activity is premised upon the idea that certain clients are able to live independently in the community only if they have staff support for monitoring and/or assisting in residential responsibilities. The staff assists clients to select, obtain, and maintain safe, decent, affordable housing and maintain a link to other essential services provided within the community. The objective of supported housing is to help obtain and maintain an independent living situation.

Supported Housing is a specific program model in which a consumer lives in a house, apartment or similar setting, alone or with others, and has considerable responsibility for residential maintenance but receives periodic visits from mental health staff or family for the purpose of monitoring and/or assisting with residential responsibilities, criteria identified for supported housing programs include: housing choice, functional separation of housing from service provision, affordability, integration (with persons who do not have mental illness), right to tenure, service choice, service individualization and service availability. [Source: Community Mental Health Services Block Grant Application Guidance / Instructions FY 2005 - 2007, page 91.]

## **E. REGION BUDGET PLAN / REPORT OF ACTUALS**

The Region is expected to prepare a Budget Plan and a Report of Actuals for the Housing Related Assistance Program consistent with the business practices of the Nebraska Division of Behavioral Health.

1. The Region Budget Plan is an itemized annual operating budget for the program. It is used to prepare the annual contract between the Division of Behavioral Health and the Regional Behavioral Health Authority. It consists of the Region Budget Plan forms (see Attachment: FY08 Budget Plan forms Housing Related Assistance Guidelines final april 2 2007.xls) and the Budget Justification Narrative.
  - a) REGION BUDGET PLAN FORMS
    - 1) BH – 20a (HRA) REVENUE SUMMARY
    - 2) BH – 20b (HRA) EXPENSE SUMMARY
    - 3) BH - 20c (HRA) PERSONAL SERVICES SUMMARY
    - 4) BH - 20d (HRA) OPERATIONS SUMMARY
    - 5) BH - 20e (HRA) TRAVEL SUMMARY
    - 6) BH - 20f (HRA) CAPITAL OUTLAYS SUMMARY
    - 7) BH - 20g (HRA) HOUSING RELATED ASSISTANCE SUMMARY
    - 8) BH - 20h (HRA) OTHER EXPENSES SUMMARY
    - 9) BH - 20i (HRA) HOUSING RELATED ASSISTANCE RECONCILIATION SUMMARY
  - b) BUDGET JUSTIFICATION NARRATIVE - This narrative will explain and justify in detail all items included on the Region Budget Plan forms including why the costs listed are necessary and how those costs were calculated. The applicant should review Division policy for allowable and unallowable costs. Please address the following items separately in the narrative
    - 1) Identify amounts and sources of other revenues, if any, (such as local, state and/or federal funds) to be used by the Regional Housing Related Assistance program.
    - 2) PERSONAL SERVICES – this is the annual staffing needs by position, and their respective salary and fringe costs separately.
    - 3) OPERATIONS – this describes how the operational cost for facility requirements, computer system, phone, copies and related costs were determined.
    - 4) Describe how the costs were determined for Housing Quality Standards (HQS) inspections.
    - 5) TRAVEL & CAPITAL – this describe how travel, capital outlay, and other related costs were determined.
    - 6) A report on the Housing Related Assistance carryover funds from the previous fiscal year.
  
2. The Report of Actuals
  - a) The Region shall submit a Report of the Actual Housing Related Assistance Revenues and Expenditures on the SAME FORMS used for the FY08 Region Budget Plan, submitted electronically and on paper.
  - b) The Actuals are an unaudited report of the Region's end of the contract year summary of the expenses and revenues for Housing Related Assistance and are completed PRIOR TO the official financial audit.
  - c) Due Dates:
    - 1) September 1, 2007 for the contract period of July 1, 2006 to June 30, 2007
    - 2) September 1, 2008 for the contract period of July 1, 2007 to June 30, 2008

**F. PROGRAM PLAN:**

1. The Region is responsible for developing and maintaining the Housing Related Assistance Program Plan consistent with FY2008 guidelines.
2. The updated program plan does not have to be submitted to the Division of Behavioral Health. However, the Housing Related Assistance Program Plan does need to be made available by the Region to the Division of Behavioral Health upon request.

**G. AUTHORIZED USE OF HOUSING RELATED ASSISTANCE / PRIORITY ONE AND PRIORITY TWO**

1. 25% of the housing related assistance funds needs to be reserved for Priority One.
2. The standing policy is a person who is Extremely Low Income being discharged from an inpatient mental health commitment is always top priority for Housing Related Assistance.

**H. HOUSING RELATED ASSISTANCE FUNDING ALLOCATION PLAN FY2008**

Below is the State Housing Related Assistance Program funding allocation table to be used to prepare the Region Budget Plan FY2008.

Region	Total Funds Available	Rg % of Population	Region Total Housing Related Assistance funds	Region Housing Coordination	% FTE for Region Housing Administration
1	\$106,000	5.30%	\$81,000	\$25,000	.5 FTE
2	\$120,000	6.00%	\$95,000	\$25,000	.5 FTE
3	\$260,000	13.00%	\$205,000	\$55,000	1 FTE
4	\$252,000	12.60%	\$197,000	\$55,000	1 FTE
5	\$484,000	24.20%	\$416,000	\$68,000	1 FTE
6	\$778,000	38.90%	\$670,000	\$108,000	1 FTE
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$2,000,000</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>\$1,704,000</b>	<b>\$296,000</b>	<b>4 FTE</b>

1. **Region Total Housing Related Assistance funds** – these are the funds paid on behalf of consumers such as rental assistance, utility payments, deposits, and other related costs including “Housing Flex Funds”.
2. **Region Housing Coordination** – includes personnel costs, operating costs, travel costs, and payments for Housing Quality Standards (HQS) inspections. HQS may be conducted by outside parties under contract with the Region or may be completed by the Regional Housing Coordinator.

**I. PROGRAM EVALUATION**

A goal of the Division of Behavioral Health in FY2008 will be to develop a method to evaluate the Housing Related Assistance Program in consultation with the six regional behavioral health authorities.

**J. REPORTING**

1. Region Budget Plan is due by Friday, May 4, 2007. The information is used to prepare the annual contract. Print a paper copy, with a cover letter signed by the Regional Administrator, and send it to Division of Behavioral Health Housing Manager. Also, send

an electronic copy to the Division of Behavioral Health Housing Manager ([jim.harvey@hhss.ne.gov](mailto:jim.harvey@hhss.ne.gov)) and the field representative.

2. Monthly Financial Billing using Division of Behavioral Health Services approved forms.
3. The Report of Actuals is due September 1, 2007 for FY07 and September 1, 2008 for FY08. Print a paper copy, with a cover letter signed by the Regional Administrator, and send it to Division of Behavioral Health Housing Manager. Also, send an electronic copy to the Division of Behavioral Health Housing Manager ([jim.harvey@hhss.ne.gov](mailto:jim.harvey@hhss.ne.gov)) and the field representative.
4. The Supported Housing Data Base Monthly Report must be sent electronically via e-mail by the 15th of the month to the Nebraska Homeless Assistance Program in the Office of Economic and Family Support ([betty.medinger@hhss.ne.gov](mailto:betty.medinger@hhss.ne.gov)) with a copy to the Division ([jim.harvey@hhss.ne.gov](mailto:jim.harvey@hhss.ne.gov)).

**ATTACHMENT: DOCUMENTATION OF DISABILITY (page 1 of 2)**  
**Example of Documentation from a Physician or Psychologist Licensed in Nebraska**

**Use for Guidance Only**

Date

Address

Dr. \_\_\_\_\_:

(Consumer Name) is currently receiving rental assistance through Region \_\_\_ Housing Related Assistance Program. We are in need of information to determine this person's eligibility for benefits.

Please answer the following two questions **on the back**, sign and return to Region \_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_. In answering the two questions, please note that Housing Related Assistance is for adults who are age 18 or older, extremely low-income, with serious mental illness.

**Consent:** I allow Region \_\_\_\_\_ to request and obtain medical information from the source listed above for the purpose of verifying eligibility and the level of benefits under the Housing Related Assistance program.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Applicant signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

Enclosed is a self-addressed, stamped envelope for your convenience. Thank you for your immediate response.

Sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_  
Regional Housing Coordinator

**ATTACHMENT: DOCUMENTATION OF DISABILITY (page 2 of 2)**  
**Example of Documentation from a Physician or Psychologist Licensed in Nebraska**

**Use for Guidance Only**

**INFORMATION BEING REQUESTED**

Please circle either YES or NO next to the statements below regarding the individual listed on the front of this page.

**YES      NO      1) In your opinion, does this person have a disability as defined by the Social Security Act?**

42 U.S.C. Section 423 (d)(1) (A) defines disability as:  
Inability to engage in any substantial gainful activity by reason of any medically determinable physical or mental impairment which can be expected to result in death or which has lasted or can be expected to last for a continuous period of not less than 12 months.

**YES      NO      2) In your opinion, does this person have a serious mental illness as defined by the Nebraska Behavioral Health Services Act?**

**For the purposes of the Nebraska Housing Related Assistance program, Adult with serious mental illness means:**

A person eighteen years of age or older who has, or at any time during the immediately preceding twelve months has had, a diagnosable mental, behavioral, or emotional disorder of sufficient duration to meet diagnostic criteria identified in the most recent edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders and which has resulted in functional impairment that substantially interferes with or limits one or more major life functions. Serious mental illness does not include DSM V codes, substance abuse disorders, or developmental disabilities unless such conditions exist concurrently with a diagnosable serious mental illness [Neb. Rev. Stat. Section 71-812(3)(b)(i)].

**Name and title of the medical professional verifying the disability**

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Signature

Date

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Print or Type Name

License Number

ATTACHMENT:

**STATUTE AUTHORIZING THE HOUSING RELATED ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

Section 71-812 (3) (a) Money transferred to the fund under section 76-903 shall be used for **housing-related assistance** for very low-income adults with serious mental illness, except that if the division determines that all **housing-related assistance** obligations under this subsection have been fully satisfied, the division may distribute any excess, up to twenty percent of such money, to regional behavioral health authorities for acquisition or rehabilitation of housing to assist such persons. The division shall manage and distribute such funds based upon a formula established by the division, in consultation with regional behavioral health authorities and the Department of Health and Human Services Finance and Support, in a manner consistent with and reasonably calculated to promote the purposes of the public behavioral health system enumerated in section 71-803. The division shall contract with each regional behavioral health authority for the provision of such assistance. Each regional behavioral health authority may contract with qualifying public, private, or nonprofit entities for the provision of such assistance.

(b) For purposes of this subsection: (i) Adult with serious mental illness means a person eighteen years of age or older who has, or at any time during the immediately preceding twelve months has had, a diagnosable mental, behavioral, or emotional disorder of sufficient duration to meet diagnostic criteria identified in the most recent edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders and which has resulted in functional impairment that substantially interferes with or limits one or more major life functions. Serious mental illness does not include DSM V codes, substance abuse disorders, or developmental disabilities unless such conditions exist concurrently with a diagnosable serious mental illness; (ii) Housing-related assistance includes rental payments, utility payments, security and utility deposits, and other related costs and payments; and (iii) Very low-income means a household income of fifty percent or less of the applicable median family income estimate as established by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Source: Laws 2004, LB 1083, § 12; Laws 2005, LB 40, § 5

Section 71-803 The purposes of the public behavioral health system are to ensure:

(1) The public safety and the health and safety of persons with behavioral health disorders;

(2) Statewide access to behavioral health services, including, but not limited to, (a) adequate availability of behavioral health professionals, programs, and facilities, (b) an appropriate array of community-based services and continuum of care, and (c) integration and coordination of behavioral health services with primary health care services;

(3) High quality behavioral health services, including, but not limited to, (a) services that are research-based and consumer-focused, (b) services that emphasize beneficial treatment outcomes and recovery, with appropriate treatment planning, case management, community support, and consumer peer support, (c) appropriate regulation of behavioral health professionals, programs, and facilities, and (d) consumer involvement as a priority in all aspects of service planning and delivery; and

(4) Cost-effective behavioral health services, including, but not limited to, (a) services that are efficiently managed and supported with appropriate planning and information, (b) services that emphasize prevention, early detection, and early intervention, (c) services that are provided in the least restrictive environment consistent with the consumer's clinical diagnosis and plan of treatment, and (d) funding that is fully integrated and allocated to support the consumer and his or her plan of treatment.

Source: Laws 2004, LB 1083, § 3