

TRANSITIONAL HOUSING

CORE STANDARD

Transitional Housing provides temporary housing and support services through Victim Service Programs (VSP). These services are designed for victims who have fled a situation of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, human trafficking, and /or other victims of crime. They enable these victims to locate and secure permanent housing, and provide assistance in securing employment for eventual reintegration into the community.

Please see the following additional standards for more information on other options available for victims of crime if transitional housing options are not available or appropriate:

- Emergency Financial Assistance
- Emergency Shelter
- Emergency Housing (for older and/or disabled adults)
- In-Home Care for Adults and Children (emergency caretaker services)
- Relocation

Transitional Housing Models:

Transitional housing may be provided in scattered site, clustered site, or communal living locations.

Scattered Site -

- Survivor lives in an apartment in the community.
- Survivor holds lease in their own name.
- VSP is not the landlord (unless subleasing to survivor).

Clustered Site -

- VSP owns a building with units, or rents a group of apartments in a common location.
- VSP is landlord and service provider.
- Survivor lives in the program-owned building or one of the program's rented units for a specific period of time while they find more permanent housing.

Communal Living -

- Similar to design for emergency shelter services. May have separate/private bedrooms but share common space such as living room, dining room, kitchen, etc.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

For the VSP that provides transitional housing services, the following requirements apply:

1. Compliance - If housing is provided by VSP (cluster site or communal site), the physical space shall comply with all relevant federal, state, and local laws; health and safety codes; and inspection requirements.

2. Policies and Procedures - Written policies and procedures for the following items at a minimum must be in place:
 - a. A detailed description of whom is eligible for transitional housing services, including provisions for caretakers and/or dependents where appropriate.
 - b. Scope of services that includes relevant support services to assist with the transition (e.g., budgeting, counseling, facility rules and regulations, fee schedule, if applicable).
 - c. A detailed application, intake, and risk assessment process for new clients.
 - d. Communication procedures between the client, VSP, and landlord, including confidentiality considerations.
 - e. Transitional Housing Rent Structure and Agreement. These may include the following types:
 - i. **Subsidized**
Survivor enters into the lease. VSP provides a portion of rent, as rental assistance, paid directly to the landlord.
 - ii. **Rent and Sublet**
Lease is in VSP's name and the VSP is responsible for payment of the rent. VSP creates sub-lease or rental agreement for survivor, and survivor pays a portion of the total cost of rent to the VSP.
 - iii. **Own**
VSP-owned and operated. VSP creates a sub-lease or rental agreement for survivor, and survivor pays a portion of the total cost of rent to the program.
 - f. Security and liability considerations, which include a detailed Safety Plan, if necessary.
 - g. Resident rights and responsibilities;
 - h. Emergency protocols (e.g., fire, suicide or service recipient fatality, bomb threats, hostage situations, injury or health-related emergencies, etc.) and unforeseen disruptions of service (e.g., shelter infestations, environmental disasters, natural disasters and utility disruption, etc.), if applicable.
 - i. Duration of stay. The length of stay is anticipated to be between 6 months and 24 months, but should not exceed 30 months. Policy should be flexible and balances the specific needs and support services to the victim and their family.
 - j. Termination Procedures, including early termination by cause as well as steps for moving survivors from transitional housing status to independence in a permanent residence.

The VSP shall develop and document a transitional housing plan meeting the needs of the victim and their family. The VSP shall document, in writing, the victim's agreement with the plan and all related VSP policies and procedures.

3. Program Income - VOCA Recipients must be cognizant that they may be generating program income in the delivery of transitional housing services. Program income means gross income earned by the subgrantee that is directly generated by a supported activity or earned as a result of a PCCD grant award during the period of performance.

If you choose to accept the payment/program income you must contact the Fiscal Department at PCCD at RA-PCCDGrantsMgmt@pa.gov. Please refer to PCCD's Applicant's Manual for more details on program income and for current policies related to it.

4. Conflict of Interest – VOCA Transitional Housing funding may not be used in payment to any vendor of transitional housing goods or services if said vendor has a personal or professional affiliation with any member of the Board or staff of the VOCA subrecipient program.
 - a. Personal or professional affiliation includes:
 - i. A material economic relationship between the vendor and a Board member or staff member.
 - ii. A material economic relationship between the vendor and a Board/staff member's partner parent, sibling, child or member of the immediate household.
 - b. Members of the Board of Directors and staff have an affirmative duty to disclose all personal or professional affiliations with a proposed vendor of transitional housing services and the subrecipient must consider all material facts and avoid even the appearance of impropriety and avoid entering contractual relationships with said proposed vendor(s).

STRIVING FOR EXCELLENCE

- VSPs are encouraged to coordinate with other VSPs and other local area service providers to develop a comprehensive range of housing for victims of all crimes within the county. Ongoing communication with County housing providers regarding the manner in which the program's transitional housing services will be distinguished as a housing option within a service area is strongly recommended.
- Based on the emerging nature of Human Trafficking issues, VSPs should remain abreast of the latest research by seeking out and incorporating new policies and guidelines to improve service delivery to this victim population. Screening/assessment of all victims, should include a focus on human trafficking to identify or verify if the person has been trafficked in order to connect them to additional services;
- As a best practice, it is recommended that survivors are never required to pay more than 30% of their gross income in rent regardless of the rent structure selected.

REFERENCES & RESOURCES (applicable legal authority if available)

Some of the above information was borrowed from the following resources:

- National Network to End Domestic Violence (www.nnedv.org)
- OVW Fiscal Year 2016 Transitional Housing Assistance Grants for Victims of Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking

- [PCCD's Applicant's Manual – Financial and Administrative Guide for Grants](#)
- Related Victim Services Standards
 - a. Confidentiality
 - b. Emergency Shelter
 - c. Emergency Housing (for older and/or disabled adults)
 - d. Relocation
 - e. In-Home Care for Adults and Children
 - f. Emergency Financial Assistance
 - g. Transportation (under development)
- Section 8: Residential Shelter Services standard, PCADV
- PA Act 105, Pennsylvania's comprehensive human trafficking statute