Greater Richmond Continuum of Care

Standards for Joint Transitional Housing/ Rapid Re-Housing Programs 2026

Introduction

The Greater Richmond Community of Care (GRCoC) has developed the following standards for partner agencies providing Joint Transitional Housing Rapid Re-Housing (Joint TH/RRH) services. These standards were created in collaboration with individuals from Virginia Home for Boys and Girls (VHBG), HomeAgain, and Housing Families First. These standards were originally developed in June 2024. They were reviewed by the GRCoC System Policy and Process (SPP) Committee and approved by the GRCoC Board. SPP reviews Program Standards every two years to ensure they are current with community needs and priorities. These program standards were last updated in March 2026.

These Joint TH/RRH standards are designed to meet standards set by the Department of Housing and Urban Development. These standards will serve as the guiding principles for all Joint TH/RRH programs to ensure Joint TH/RRH programs are administered uniformly. Each Joint TH/RRH provider must maintain compliance with their funders' requirements.

Description

The Joint Transitional and Rapid Re-Housing project is designed to meet the unique developmental needs of transition-age young adults (aged 18-24) by helping them quickly move into permanent housing with available supportive services to help them maintain that housing.[1] Joint TH/RRH projects use a Housing First approach with client-driven service models and a focus on helping people move to permanent housing as quickly as possible. Participants cannot be required to participate in treatment or services to receive assistance. Joint TH/RRH projects provide a safe place for young people to stay – crisis housing – with financial assistance and wrap around supportive services determined by program participants to help them move to permanent housing as quickly as possible. Stays in the crisis housing portion of these projects should be brief and without preconditions, and participants should quickly move to permanent housing.

Eligibility Criteria

To obtain Joint TH/RRH assistance, all adult members of the household must be between the ages of 18-24 at the point of enrollment, although other members of

[1] SNAPS In Focus: The New Joint Transitional Housing and Rapid Re-Housing Component - HUD Exchange

the household outside of this age range may be added after the point of enrollment (ex: birth of a child). Households must also meet at least one definition of homelessness as prescribed by HUD (Housing and Urban Development) under 24 CFR 576.2:

Eligible households include any individual or family who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, meaning:

1. An individual or family with a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground;

2. An individual or family living in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangements (including congregate shelters, transitional housing, and hotels and motels paid for by charitable organizations or by federal, state, or local government programs for low-income individuals); or
    1. This includes Youth Homeless Demonstration Program defined kinship care.

3. An individual who is exiting an institution where he or she resided for 90 days or less and who resided in an emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation immediately before entering that institution;

Eligible households may also include an individual or family at imminent risk of homelessness with no safe alternative housing, resources, or support networks to maintain or obtain permanent housing, meaning:

1. In own housing, but being evicted within 3 days
2. A hotel or motel paid for by the youth, family, or friends where the youth cannot stay for more than 14 days (often due to lack of ability to continue paying)
3. With family or friends and being asked to leave within 3 days

Eligible households may also include any individual or family who meet the following criteria if they live in an emergency shelter or other place described above:

1. Is fleeing, or is attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or other dangerous or life-threatening conditions that relate to violence against the individual or a family member, including a child, that has either taken place within the individual's or family’s primary nighttime residence or has made the individual or family afraid to return to their primary nighttime residence;

2. Has no other residence; and

3. Lacks the resources or support networks, e.g., family, friends, faith-based or other social networks, to obtain other permanent housing. Households must be without other housing resources.

Determination of Eligibility and Prioritization

All households will be referred from the Coordinated Entry System of the GRCoC. For all assistance, an initial assessment to determine program eligibility of the household will be conducted by the GRCoC Coordinated Entry System (CES). It will establish the type of assistance needed and prioritize households for assistance. Providers also document eligibility for all households during intake. Households will be assessed using the tool(s) adopted by the GRCoC Board.

Coordination of services to survivors of sexual and domestic violence is done through the Regional EmpowerNet Hotline. Case conferencing may be utilized to support eligibility determination and service coordination, particularly for households experiencing domestic or sexual violence, to ensure appropriate and safe placement. All referrals and service connections follow established safety protocols, including confidentiality protections, survivor-centered practices, and coordination with appropriate partners to ensure client safety throughout the referral and housing process.

HUD provides additional guidance on determining the homeless status of young people.

Joint TH/RRH Services

Joint TH/RRH projects may use innovative project models to best meet the needs of youth experiencing homelessness, such as:

1. Shared Housing
2. Transitioning from TH to RRH (Rapid Re-Housing) components in the same unit
3. Scattered site, project-based, or master leased TH and RRH components

Transitional Housing

Transitional Housing (TH) provides temporary crisis housing with supportive services to youth experiencing homelessness with the goal of interim stability and support to successfully move to and maintain permanent housing. TH projects can cover housing costs and accompanying supportive services for program participants for up to 24 months.

Participants in a TH component must have a signed lease, sublease, or occupancy agreement with the following requirements:

1. An initial term of at least one month
2. Automatically renewable upon expiration, except by prior notice by either party
3. A maximum term of 24 months

While participants reside in the TH component of the joint project, case managers should emphasize supportive services that meet the needs of their participants and facilitate the movement of program participants into permanent housing, and support connections to the Rapid Re-Housing component of the project.

Rapid Re-Housing

The primary RRH services provided by Joint TH/RRH programs are listed below. While the RRH component must have all three primary services available, it is not required that a single entity provide all three nor that a household utilize them all. Joint TH/RRH core components should be based on the following core principles: housing first approach, household-driven services, housing retention focused practices, and collaboration with household to engage in the community. Supportive services provided by Joint TH/RRH programs must comply with grant funding requirements.

Housing Identification

1. Program has designated staff whose responsibility is to identify and recruit landlords and encourage them to rent to homeless households.
2. Program has designated staff trained on housing identification, landlord tenant rights and responsibilities, and other core competencies as well as the wider array of housing assistance available within a community.
3. Program has written policies and procedures for landlord recruitment activities.
4. Program offers a standard, basic level of support to all landlords who lease to program households. This support is detailed in a written policy distributed to landlords.
5. Program has a detailed policy for the type of assistance provided to help households find and secure housing. Staff explain and distribute this policy to households at entry to the program. Program has a written policy requiring staff to explain to household basic landlord-tenant rights and responsibilities and the requirements of their specific lease.
6. Program continually engages in the recruitment and retention of landlord partners and has methods of tracking landlord partners and unit vacancies, unit locations, characteristics, and costs.
7. The program provides households with multiple housing choices within practical constraints.
8. The program assists households in making an informed housing choice with the goal that the household will be able to maintain their housing after the program exits.
9. When closing financial assistance, the program provides information to landlords about how they can contact the program again if needed and what kind of follow-up assistance may be available.

Rent and Move-In Assistance

1. Program staff are trained in regulatory requirements of all program funding streams and in the ethical use and application of a program's financial assistance policies. This training is the responsibility of the agency.
2. The program has clearly defined policies and procedures for determining the amount of financial assistance provided to a household, as well as defined and objective standards for when case management and financial assistance should continue and end.
3. If households are expected to pay an amount toward their housing, the program has written policy and procedures for determining that amount, and it must be an amount that is reasonable for their income.
4. A progressive approach is used to determine the duration and amount of rent assistance. Policies detailing approach include decision guidelines and processes for reassessment.
5. Program provides, when needed, financial assistance with housing costs.
6. Program issues checks quickly and on time and has the capacity to track payments to landlords and other vendors.
7. The program can pay reasonable back rent and utility arrears that directly prevent a household from signing a lease.
8. Program helps households meet basic needs at move-in.
9. The process to transition the household off financial assistance is coordinated with case management efforts to assist program households assume and sustain their housing costs.

Case Management and Services

1. Case manager's job descriptions direct case managers to focus on housing and to use strengths-based practices.
2. Case managers work closely with housing locator staff to match the household to an appropriate unit as quickly as possible. As housing locator staffing is limited, housing-focused case managers are trained to be effective housing counselors who can facilitate housing search and placement tasks and landlord engagement, as appropriate. Housing-focused case managers ought to engage system movement by targeting services for long stayers as well as newcomers towards housing and/or to bridge housed participants through "move on" housing strategies to access longer term housing solutions and transition from Joint TH/RRH.
3. Case managers are trained in trauma-informed case management strategies and evidence-based practices, program policies and community resources.
4. Except where dictated by the funder, program households direct when, where, and how often case management meetings occur.
5. Case managers respect a program household's personal space as their own, scheduling appointments ahead of time, only entering when invited in, and respecting personal possessions and wishes.
6. When case management and service compliance is not mandated by federal or state regulation, services offered by a program have voluntary

participation.

7. The program has clear safety procedures for home visits that staff are trained on and that are posted clearly visible in office space and shared with program households at intake and shared with households and staff whenever changes are made.
8. Programs have clearly defined relationships with employment and income programs that can connect program households to when appropriate.
9. The program has clearly defined policies and objective standards for when case management should continue and end.
10. At enrollment or within 72 hours of enrollment, the program conducts a tenancy barriers assessment.
11. Program connects households to community resources that help households: resolve or navigate tenant problems that landlords may screen for on rental applications; obtain necessary documentation; prepare households for successful tenancy; and support other move-in activities.
12. The program offers basic tenancy skills coaching and/or learning opportunities to residents to enable them to maintain their tenancy and live independently within their homes (i.e., budgeting, lease compliance, repairs, neighbor interaction.)
13. Program staff work directly with the household and landlord to resolve tenancy issues without threatening the household's tenancy.
14. When appropriate, case managers work with households to build their communication skills to better respond to or negotiate with a landlord.
15. When necessary, case managers help households avoid evictions before they happen and maintain a positive relationship with the landlord.
16. Housing plans focus on how households can maintain a lease and address barriers to housing retention; improving understanding of landlord/tenant rights and responsibilities; and addressing other issues that have, in the past, resulted in housing crisis or housing loss.
17. Program, at a minimum, maintains a list of community resources to which households can be referred.
18. Case managers make referrals to appropriate community and mainstream resources.
19. As RRH rental assistance is short-term, case managers pay attention to households' incomes moving forward.
20. Case managers work with households to identify pathways for increasing earned income.
21. If necessary, households are assisted in identifying existing familial and personal connections that can help them maintain housing by providing support.
22. When closing a case, case managers are responsible for ensuring that all appropriate referrals have been made and information on

available community assistance has been shared.

23. When a referral to on-going support is made while a case is open or in the process of closing, case managers use a transitional approach and follow up to ensure that assistance is satisfactory.
24. When closing a case, case managers provide information about how to access assistance from the program again, if needed, and what kind of follow-up assistance may be available.

The following guidelines should be used when providing assessment and case management services to Joint TH/RRH households:

1. Programs will schedule an intake within three business days of referral.
2. Beginning with assessment, all decisions and case management should be household driven and housing focused.
3. The program will communicate with households at least weekly during housing identification.
4. Case management will be provided at least monthly, once housed, while receiving financial assistance.

Amount and Duration of Joint TH/RRH Assistance

The amount and duration of Joint TH/RRH assistance and services must be provided in compliance with funder requirements, including any elected YHDP (Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program) flexibilities approved by HUD and included in a project's grant contract. Total assistance provided through a Joint TH/RRH project must not exceed 24 months. The Joint TH/RRH project is a permanent housing project and assistance should be provided with the consistent priority of supporting the household in identifying and maintaining independent housing. In maintaining client choice as a priority, participants should always be offered transitional housing as an option to support individual needs while working towards accessing safe housing.

Transitional Housing

The transitional housing component of the joint project is intended to be an interim, crisis housing option to support household safety and stabilization while a household works towards accessing independent housing. While residing in the TH component, a household should always be dually supported by the RRH component in accessing independent housing. The GRCoC expects that households will receive the minimum length of assistance in the TH component to be able to access safe and stable housing.

Rapid Re-Housing

The amount and duration of all RRH services must be provided in compliance with grant funding requirements. RRH providers should refer to regulations or parameters associated with awarded grants for specific guidance on eligible RRH financial assistance. The maximum amount of rent per month is based on the lesser of Fair Market Rent (FMR) for the family size or rent reasonableness. The duration of RRH financial assistance should not exceed more than 12 consecutive months at a time except in extenuating circumstances, excluding arrears, and will not exceed more than 24 months total over a 36-month period. Projects must follow the conditions of their grant agreement and only provide activities that are both eligible and approved.

The percentage or amount of rent that each household must pay while receiving RRH assistance is determined on a case-by-case basis and is based on each household's assessment and needs. Factors that may impact the amount of rent households must pay could include income, barriers to housing, etc. The GRCoC expects that households will receive the minimum amount of assistance necessary to stabilize housing. RRH services providers should document the rationale for determining the amount in household case files.

1) As a recommendation, programs should establish a three to six-month projection with households prior to lease signing with care to ensure clear communication with a household that:
    a) RRH financial assistance is not meant to function like a subsidy or voucher, but can support rent portions or rent payment strategies such as 'pay ahead' or "incremental pay" methods for households to contribute to the longevity of their new lease, and
    b) RRH financial assistance is projected but not guaranteed and determined based upon program enrollment and recertification eligibility.
2) Programs will aim to assist households with up to 6 months of rental assistance but may assist households more than 6 months of financial assistance with stability benchmarks having review at 3 months, 6 months, 9 months, or even at 12 months:
    a) particularly in circumstances that may bridge the household to a move on strategy or housing resource to exit RRH but retain permanent housing or
    b) in the case of significant pandemic related or other destabilizing health issues that may cause hardship to pay inflated market rate rents.
    c) Households can be determined on a case-by-case basis to receive more than 12 months of assistance. Program should be able to demonstrate an internal process for regularly assessing the continuation of each household that receives 12 months of assistance or more.

Recertification
Households receiving Joint TH/RRH assistance must be recertified for eligibility at least once every three months. Each recertification will include a review of income and service needs, and households must be under 30% Area Median Income to qualify for continued financial assistance. Every 12 months, the program must recertify homeless status so households can continue to receive assistance.

Program Guidelines

Joint TH/RRH providers will have written program guidelines that outline program policies, procedures and expectations, and specify available services. Program guidelines should be minimal to ensure client and staff safety and should not add unnecessary barriers for clients.

Non-Discrimination

Providers must have a policy prohibiting discrimination against participants based on actual or perceived race, ethnicity, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, religion, national origin, ancestry, disability, marital status, age, source of income, familial status, or domestic or sexual violence victim status, and ensuring that all participants are afforded equal opportunities.

Confidentiality
All Joint TH/RRH providers will establish a written policy to ensure household confidentiality, including development and maintenance of signed household confidentiality agreements, which will be reviewed upon entry into the program.

Conflict of Interest

All Joint TH/RRH providers will establish a written policy to:

1. formally document conflict of interest amongst all employees, agents, officers, consultants, and board members, and
2. take appropriate action to ensure that all parties do not use their positions for a purpose that gives the appearance of being motivated by a desire for private gain for themselves or others.

Grievances & Appeals

All providers must have an agency-approved grievance policy and provide specific procedures to be followed for any disputed decision affecting assistance. Any individual receiving assistance must receive written notification of the grievance policy.

A grievance with termination should be reviewed or heard by an individual other than the person (or subordinate of that person) who made or approved the termination decision. Should the client or household disagree with the decision made by the initial reviewer, a second level must be available for an appeal at the CoC level. This two-level process, at a minimum, must consist of: (1) Written notice to the project participant containing a clear statement of the reasons for termination; (2) Prompt written notice of the final decision; and (3)

Written policy for continuing assistance to surviving family members, in the event of a death of a head of household, that establishes a reasonable grace period of continued assistance to surviving family.

Termination

Providers must have a documented termination policy. Termination policies should include a no tolerance policy for any act of fraud, such as failing to report financial assistance received, failing to report income, or misreporting income. In addition, staff should cease services to the household immediately if there is any real or perceived threat of violence or actual act of violence committed against a Case Manager or staff. In such cases, staff should report the incident to their supervisor and follow the agency protocol. Upon termination, all programs must require the completion of a letter of termination.

Data System

Joint TH/RRH Service providers must adhere to the HCIS policies approved by the GRCoC Board. Providers must use HCIS or a comparable data system if the agency is prohibited from using HCIS.

Joint TH/RRH programs will meet funder requirements to support CoC-level Continuous Quality Improvement efforts and goals stated in the Coordinated Community Plan (CCP) by participating in GRCoC CQI workgroups and initiatives.

All households enrolled in the Joint TH/RRH program must be entered into the agency's HCIS project in a timely manner. The GRCoC HCIS data requirements outlined below support consistent data collection and inform the Coordinated Entry prioritization process for housing resources. These requirements may be updated as needed to reflect system, software, or vendor changes and to ensure continued alignment with prioritization practices.

Joint TH/RRH project enrollments should remain open for the duration of program participation, and must be updated to reflect current housing status, including transitions between TH and RRH components, and program exits. Data should be entered and updated regularly to ensure accuracy. Providers should routinely review active enrollments to confirm that client records are complete, up to date, and that exits are recorded promptly when participation ends.

For projects participating in Coordinated Entry, required assessment fields, including any Coordinated Entry Assessment components, must be completed and kept current in accordance with GRCoC policy.

All households entering the Joint TH/RRH program must complete an intake and enrollment process to confirm eligibility, assess housing and service needs, and determine appropriate placement within the TH or RRH component. Client information must be entered into HCIS in a timely manner. Providers are required to obtain all necessary Releases of Information (ROIs) at intake to support service coordination, data sharing in accordance with GRCoC policy, and alignment with Coordinated Entry prioritization and referral processes, as applicable.

Emergency Transfer Plan (ETP) Documentation

All Emergency Transfer Plan (ETP) activity must be documented in an interim update within the client's HCIS record to ensure accurate tracking of transfer requests and related actions. To protect client safety and confidentiality, details related to ETP requests, including safety planning and transfer circumstances, must not be recorded in case notes. All ETP activities follow the GRCoC's CoC-wide Emergency Transfer Plan policy and applicable VAWA and HUD requirements.

**Data outcomes and performance measures will be published in a separate, forthcoming document and are not included in this section.*