

LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH REFERRAL GUIDELINES FOR INTERIM HOUSING PROGRAM

OVERVIEW

The Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (DMH) Interim Housing Program (IHP) provides individuals who are experiencing homelessness and have a serious mental illness with a short-term place to stay along with supportive services while they transition to permanent housing. IHP providers offer all participants a safe and clean shelter, 24-hour general oversight, three meals each day, clean linens, toiletries, group, social and recreational activities, housing navigation and case management services. Many IHP providers also have an on-site Mental Health Clinician and/or Licensed Vocational Nurse (LVN) or equivalent.

PARTICIPANT ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Adults:

Adults 18 years and older who have a serious mental illness (SMI), are experiencing homelessness and are able to self-administer their own medication.

Families:

Families (at minimum one adult with one minor child) that are experiencing homelessness in which a family member has a serious mental illness (SMI). The minor child(ren) must be in the legal custody of at least one of the adult family members. Adults must be able to self-administer their own medications.

Participants with the following conditions are not eligible for DMH IHP (*including but not limited to the below*)

- Requires psychiatric or physical health emergency/inpatient hospitalization or other 24-hour treatment
- Requires daily physician oversight for acute care needs, 24-hour nursing support, or other 24/7 care and supervision
- Currently exhibits combative, aggressive, or threatening behavior
- Has wounds/ulcers that require dressing changes, is unable to change dressing independently, and does not have a plan in place to address these needs
- Active Tuberculosis/C-DIFF/MRSA of sputum (possibly of the wound) or other communicable/contagious condition(s)
- Needs assistance with Activities of Daily Living (ADLs) including bathing, dressing, transferring, toileting, eating, and does not have a plan in place to address these needs
- Needs assistance with mobility/transfers and the safe use of Durable Medical Equipment (DME) such as walkers, wheelchairs, and other assistive devices
- Incontinent of bowel or bladder and not independently able to manage the use of incontinent supplies
- Has cognitive impairments that require 24/7 supervision, monitoring, redirection, or verbal cues or that place the participant at risk of wandering

Referring agencies should encourage their participants to engage in mental health services to ensure continuity of care, retention in interim housing and progress toward permanent housing.

REQUIRED REFERRAL DOCUMENTS

The following forms should be emailed to IHP@dmh.lacounty.gov:

1. Referral Form for DMH Interim Housing
2. Authorization for the Use and Disclosure of Health and Social Service Information (Universal Consent Form)

Both forms and additional information on the DMH Interim Housing Program can be found at [DMH Interim Housing Program - Department of Mental Health](#)

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Please do not simultaneously refer to interim housing beds operated by the Department of Homeless Services and Housing (HSH) and the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA). HSH, DMH, and LAHSA will consult with each other to determine the most appropriate placement for the participant based on their needs.

DMH IHP Administration will contact the referring entity if the referral is incomplete or requires additional information. Incomplete referrals may cause delays in processing. IHP Administration will notify the referring entity whether the participant is approved for a bed, denied, or placed on a waitlist.

INTERIM HOUSING ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

1. The referring agency should call/meet with the participant to confirm that they agree with the referral to IHP.
2. Submission of a new referral form is required if the participant is being re-referred after they decline placement, do not arrive within the arrival window, or exit from an IHP site.
3. Date and Time of Arrival
 - a. The participant must arrive at the IHP site within the timeframe specified in the referral approval email (generally next business day by 4:00 p.m.). If feasible, the referring agency should coordinate arrival time with the site.
 - b. Exceptions to the arrival date/time may be made on a case-by-case basis in collaboration with the IHP provider, and must be approved by DMH IHP Administration
 - c. The referring agency is responsible for transporting/coordinating transportation to the IHP site.
4. Service and Emotional Support Animals
 - a. Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), IHP sites must permit service animals.
 - b. Sites may have restrictions on the weight, number, type and/or breed of emotional support animals.
 - c. Participants with emotional support animals may be required to provide vaccination records for the animal and/or a signed letter from a mental health provider that documents that the individual has a mental health condition for which the animal will provide support.
 - d. If more information is needed on the difference between a Service Animal and Emotional Support Animal please reach out to DMH IHP Administration at IHP@dmh.lacounty.gov for support.