

Los Angeles County - Department of Mental Health

Housing and Job Development Division Federal Housing Subsidies Unit

CONTINUUM OF CARE PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Continuum of Care is a services-match grant which provides subsidized housing for individuals and families that meet the Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) definition of chronic homelessness. The Continuum of Care Program provides a combination of housing and supportive services to homeless persons with disabilities. The funds flow from HUD to the local City and County Housing Authorities. The Department of Mental Health (DMH) contracts with the Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles (HACLA) and the Los Angeles County Development Authority (LACDA) to issue Continuum of Care certificates to eligible consumers receiving services from DMH directly-operated clinics or contract agencies. A current Memorandum of Understanding between the Housing Authorities allows individuals to use City and County Continuum of Care certificates in both jurisdictions.

Individuals must meet eligibility criteria, the HUD definition of chronic homelessness, and minimum income requirements. The Housing Authority provides rental assistance and DMH provides supportive services equal to 25% or greater than the dollar amount of rent paid by the Housing Authorities. Through its Continuum of Care contracts with HACLA and LACDA, DMH houses approximately 1,700 households annually.

Program Objectives

To help individuals:

- Obtain and remain in permanent housing;
- Increase their independent living skills and/or income over time;
- Achieve greater self-determination and self-sufficiency.

Eligibility Criteria

Individuals must:

- Be at least 18 years of age;

- Have a diagnosis of severe and persistent mental illness including a co-occurring substance use disorder;
- Be matched to this housing resource through the Coordinated Entry System (CES)
- Agree to maintain active contact with the DMH system for case management and other mental health services as long as the certification is valid;
- Have a well-defined Housing Plan included in their Client Care Coordination Plan that is submitted with the Continuum of Care application;
- Meet HUD criteria for chronic homelessness.

HUD definition of Chronic Homelessness

(1) An individual who:

- a. Is homeless and lives in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter; and
- b. Has been homeless and living or residing in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter continuously for at least one year or on at least four separate occasions in the last 3 years; and
- c. Can be diagnosed with one or more of the following conditions: substance use disorder, serious mental illness, developmental disability, post-traumatic stress disorder, cognitive impairments resulting from brain injury, or chronic physical illness or disability;