



Washington State
Department of
Commerce

Guidelines

FOR THE

Consolidated Homeless Grant

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Version 2

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1 Grant Basics

1.1 Overview

The Consolidated Homeless Grant (CHG) has several fund sources, including state general fund and document recording fees. Throughout the guidelines the funding sources are referred to as CHG Standard, Permanent Supportive Housing for Chronically Homeless Families (PSH CHF), Eviction Prevention, and Housing and Essential Needs (HEN). Each of the funds has different eligibility requirements. These guidelines provide information on how to comply with requirements and Department of Commerce (Commerce) invites grantees to reach out for clarification, as needed.

Funding Source*	Allowable Interventions	Housing Status Eligibility	Income Eligibility	Where to Find Eligibility Requirements in Guidelines
CHG Standard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Emergency Shelter <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drop-In • Continuous Stay ✓ Transitional Housing ✓ Homelessness Prevention ✓ Rapid Re-Housing ✓ Permanent Supportive Housing ✓ Street Outreach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Homeless ✓ Homeless and a household member with a permanent disability ✓ At Risk of Homelessness 	At or Below 80% AMI (see section 3.5.1 for income exemptions for homeless households)	Homelessness Assistance Homelessness Prevention
Permanent Supportive Housing for Chronically Homeless Families (PSH CHF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Permanent Supportive Housing ✓ Street Outreach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Chronically homeless head of household with a permanent disability 	At or Below 80% AMI	Homelessness Assistance
Eviction Prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Homelessness Prevention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ At Risk of Homelessness 	At or Below 80% AMI	Homelessness Prevention
Housing and Essential Needs (HEN)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Transitional Housing (TH)** ✓ Homelessness Prevention (HP) ✓ Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) ✓ Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)** ✓ Street Outreach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Homeless ✓ At Risk of Homelessness 	HEN Referral	Housing and Essential Needs

*Allowable expenses are detailed in [Section 6 Allowable Expenses](#). The following guidelines sections are required for all funding sources: [Section 7 Requirements of all Lead Grantees and Subgrantees Providing Direct Service](#) and [Section 8 Additional Requirements of Lead Grantees and Subgrantees Providing Rent Assistance](#).

**See [Section 6.2.3 HEN Facility Support](#).

The State Homeless Housing Strategic Plan and Annual Report of the Homeless Grant Programs are located on the Department of Commerce [website](#).

1.2 Purpose Statement

The Office of Family and Adult Homelessness in the Homelessness Assistance Unit at the Department of Commerce administers state and federal funds to support homeless crisis response systems in WA State.

The Consolidated Homeless Grant is a critical resource in the crisis response system.

People living unhoused become stably housed when the system is low barrier, trauma informed, culturally responsive and Housing First oriented. People living unstably housed become stably housed when the system is oriented toward problem solving conversations and personal advocacy to help people identify practical solutions based on their own available resources.

We expect Commerce grantees, including county governments and nonprofits, to be leaders in their crisis response systems, facilitating partnership among service organizations and promoting evidence-based, anti-racist practices.

Grantees must respond to the disproportionality in access to services, service provision and outcomes and cannot simply rely on standard business practices to address inequity. Grantees have the responsibility to ensure all people eligible for services receive support and are served with dignity, respect and compassion regardless of circumstance, ability or identity.

This includes marginalized populations, Black, Native and Indigenous, People of Color, immigrants, people with criminal records, people with disabilities, people with mental health and substance use vulnerabilities, people with limited English proficiency, people who identify as transgender, people who identify as LGBTQ+, and other individuals that may not access mainstream support.

We are here to support your efforts. The Homelessness Assistance Unit provides access to continuous learning on trauma informed services, racial equity, LGBTQ+ competency and more. We can help you strategize outreach, coordinated entry and help you understand your data so we can meet Washington's vision that no person is left living outside.

1.3 Authorizing Statute and Fund Sources

Chapter [RCW 43.185c](#) Homeless Housing and Assistance authorizes these funds.

1.4 Allowable Interventions

All allowable housing interventions are defined below. Allowable interventions are dependent on fund source.

1.4.1 Temporary Housing Interventions

Temporary housing interventions are those in which the household must leave the shelter or unit at the end of their program participation. Households are considered homeless while enrolled in temporary housing interventions.

1.4.1.1 Emergency Shelter

Emergency Shelter (ES) provides short-term¹ temporary shelter (lodging) for those experiencing homelessness. Emergency Shelters can be facility-based or hotel/motel voucher.

1.4.1.1.1 Drop-in Shelter

Drop-in Shelters offer night-by-night living arrangements that allow households to enter and exit on an irregular or daily basis.

¹ Emergency Shelter programs are typically designed and intended to provide temporary shelter for short-term stays: up to three months. Clients are not required to exit after 90 days.

1.4.1.1.2 Continuous-stay Shelter

Continuous-stay Shelters offer living arrangements where households have a room or bed assigned to them throughout the duration of their stay.

1.4.1.2 **Transitional Housing**

Transitional Housing (TH) is subsidized, facility-based housing that is designed to provide long-term² temporary housing and to move households experiencing homelessness into permanent housing. Lease or rental agreements are required between the transitional housing project and the household.

1.4.2 **Permanent Housing Interventions**

Permanent housing is housing in which the household may stay as long as they meet the basic obligations of tenancy.

1.4.2.1 **Rapid Re-Housing**

Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) quickly moves households from homelessness into permanent housing by providing:

- ✓ Housing Identification Services: Recruit landlords to provide housing for RRH participants and assist households with securing housing.
- ✓ Financial Assistance: Provide assistance to cover move-in costs and deposits as well as ongoing rent and/or utility payments.
- ✓ Case Management and Services: Provide services and connections to community resources that help households maintain housing stability.

1.4.2.2 **Homelessness Prevention**

Homelessness Prevention (HP) helps households who are at risk of homelessness to maintain or obtain stable housing and avoid homelessness. Services include housing-focused case management and temporary rent subsidies. Homelessness prevention services are the same as the RRH services described above.

1.4.2.3 **Permanent Supportive Housing**

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) is subsidized, non-time-limited housing with support services for homeless households that include a household member with a permanent disability. Support services must be made available but participation is voluntary (see section 7.1.2). PSH may be provided as a rent assistance (scattered site) or facility-based model. For facility-based models, a lease or rental agreement is required between the PSH project and the household. The services and the housing are available permanently.

Households funded with PSH CHF must include a Head of Household who is chronically homeless and permanently disabled.

1.4.3 **Services Only Interventions**

1.4.3.1 **Street Outreach**

Street outreach is a strategy for engaging people experiencing homelessness who are otherwise not accessing services for the purpose of connecting them with emergency shelter, housing, or other critical services.

² Transitional Housing programs are typically designed and intended to provide temporary housing for long-term stays: up to two years.

2 Administrative Requirements of Lead Grantees

2.1 Homeless System Responsibilities

2.1.1 Homeless System Performance Requirements

Grantees must improve housing outcomes by making progress towards the statewide performance target. For each intervention type funded by CHG, grantees must adopt the required housing outcome performance measure outlined in Table A, in Appendix D: Homeless System Performance See Appendix D for more information.

2.1.2 Low Barrier Housing Project

Each county must have at least one low barrier project³ serving homeless adults and at least one low barrier project serving homeless households with children. By July 1, 2025, no less than 80% of a county's CHG funded projects (programs and facilities) must be low barrier.

All homeless housing projects adhere to state and federal anti-discrimination laws:

- ✓ All projects ensure equal access for people experiencing homelessness regardless of race, national origin, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, age, veteran or military status, disability, or the use of an assistance animal.
- ✓ Projects designed to serve families with children experiencing homelessness ensure equal access regardless of family composition and regardless of the age of a minor child.
- ✓ Projects that operate gender segregated facilities allow the use of facilities consistent with the person's gender expression or identity.

2.1.2.1 Intake & Project Eligibility

Low barrier projects have flexible intake schedules and require minimal documentation. At the minimum, homeless households are not screened out based on the following criteria:

- ✓ Having too little or no income
- ✓ Having poor credit or financial history
- ✓ Having poor or lack of rental history
- ✓ Having involvement with the criminal justice system
- ✓ Having active or a history of alcohol and/or substance use
- ✓ Having been impacted or affected by a crime
- ✓ The type or extent of disability-related services or supports that are needed
- ✓ Lacking ID or proof of U.S. Residency Status
- ✓ Other behaviors that are perceived as indicating a lack of "housing readiness," including resistance to receiving services

2.1.2.2 Project Participation

Low barrier projects have realistic and clear expectations. Rules and policies are narrowly focused on maintaining a safe environment and avoiding exits to homelessness. Low barrier projects do not have work or volunteer requirements.

³ Project types that can meet this requirement: Emergency Shelter, Transitional Housing, PH: Rapid Re-Housing, PH: Housing with Services (no disability requirement), and PH: Housing Only. Projects must operate year round and serve all homeless single adults or households with children (projects cannot be subpopulation specific, e.g. DV, HEN, youth, etc.).

Projects that require households to pay a share of rent allow reasonable flexibility in payment. Emergency shelters must not require households to pay a share of rent or program fees.

Households are not terminated from the project for the following reasons:

- ✓ Failure to participate in supportive services or treatment programs
- ✓ Failure to make progress on a housing stability plan
- ✓ Alcohol and/or substance use in and of itself is not considered a reason for termination
- ✓ Households residing in emergency shelter must not be exited to homelessness due to reaching a maximum stay limit.

If a household is terminated from a low barrier project due to violating rules focused on maintaining a safe environment, there must be a process in place for the household to be considered for re-enrollment if the household demonstrates unsafe behavior is unlikely to re-occur (i.e. engaged in new treatment plan, mental health services, medical care, etc.).

2.1.3 Coordinated Entry System

Each county must maintain a Coordinated Entry (CE) process. CE is a coordinated system of intake, assessment, and referral that gets households in a housing crisis connected to available resources in the community. The goal of CE is to help communities prioritize assistance to ensure people who need the assistance the most can receive it in a timely manner. Refer to the [Washington State Coordinated Entry Guidelines](#) for requirements. If the CHG lead grantee is a county government, projects funded by local homeless housing surcharge revenue (local document recording fees) must also participate in the CE process as described below.

Transitional Housing, Homelessness Prevention, Rapid Re-Housing, and Permanent Supportive Housing projects funded by CHG must participate in the county or regional CE by accepting referrals and must fill openings exclusively through the CE process.

Lead grantees may elect to opt out of the CE process for Homelessness Prevention projects if the county has enough funding to serve all households at risk of homelessness in need of services or if the project is operated by a By and For subgrantee as defined in these guidelines (Section 2.2.4). Lead grantees must receive approval from Commerce and provide evidence that they are meeting the need in their community and providing adequate outreach to their community if a mainstream housing provider organization is opting out of the CE process.

If the county or regional CE requires Emergency Shelters and Drop-in Shelters to participate in the county or regional CE process, Emergency Shelters and Drop-in Shelters funded by CHG must participate in the county or regional CE process by accepting referrals and must fill openings exclusively through the CE process.

Street Outreach projects funded by CHG must be linked to the county or regional CE by either performing mobile CE process services (e.g. assessment) or by providing referrals to CE.

Projects operated by victim service providers are not required but may elect to participate in the county or regional CE process.

2.1.4 Reporting Requirements

Lead grantees are responsible for submitting the following:

2.1.4.1 Local Homeless Housing Plan

Lead grantees must submit an updated county Local Homeless Housing Plan to Commerce at least every five years and an annual report each year. Local Plan Guidance is located on the Commerce State Strategic Plan, Annual Report and Audits [website](#).

2.1.4.2 Annual County Expenditure Report

Lead grantees must submit a complete and accurate Annual County Expenditure Report to Commerce. Commerce will annually score Annual County Expenditure Report data quality.

2.1.4.3 Point in Time Count

Lead grantees must ensure the collection and reporting of the annual Point in Time (PIT) Count of sheltered and unsheltered homeless persons for their county is in accordance with the Commerce Count Guidelines and must comply with PIT Count best practices published by Commerce, located on the Commerce Annual Point in Time Count [website](#).

2.1.4.4 Essential Needs Report

Lead grantees must submit an HEN Essential Needs Report at the end of each state fiscal year, which is a count of the total instances of Essential Needs services.

2.1.5 Training

Lead/subgrantees must identify staff to attend and complete trainings. These staff should include staff that provide direct services, supervisors of direct service staff, and staff that manage homeless grants.

The following trainings are required at least every three years and attendance must be documented:

- ✓ Trauma Informed Services
- ✓ Supporting survivors of domestic violence
- ✓ Local coordinated entry policies and procedures as required by lead CE entity
- ✓ Fair Housing
- ✓ Housing First
- ✓ Racial Equity
- ✓ LGBTQ+ competency
- ✓ Rapid Re-Housing
- ✓ Progressive Engagement and Problem-Solving (Diversion)

Other recommended trainings include mental health first aid, crisis intervention, professional boundaries, and case management.

In addition, lead/subgrantee staff are highly encouraged to attend the annual [Washington State Conference on Ending Homelessness](#).

Costs to attend trainings are an eligible program expense (see Section 6.3).

Visit the Commerce [Homeless Services Grantee Trainings](#) website for available online trainings.

2.1.6 Benefit Verification System Requirements

Commerce maintains a data share agreement with the Department of Social and Health Services

(DSHS) so homeless housing grantees can access the Benefits Verification System (BVS) to confirm HEN program eligibility. The BVS can also be used to confirm benefits and financial eligibility for homeless housing programs.

Lead grantees manage BVS User access for their staff and subgrantees. Upon approval by Commerce, lead grantees may also appoint another agency as the BVS lead for their county.

BVS leads are responsible for the following:

- ✓ Review User requests to confirm requesting agency is a subgrantee and staff have a business need to access the BVS system.
- ✓ Confirm that each User request includes a signed DSHS Non-Disclosure form.
- ✓ Retain all signed DSHS Non-Disclosure forms.
- ✓ Maintain an Excel spreadsheet identifying current and past BVS Users. Spreadsheet must be in format designated by Commerce.
- ✓ Report to Commerce within one business day when User no longer require access to BVS.
- ✓ Provide access to DSHS Non-Disclosure forms and User spreadsheet for inspection within one business day of request by Commerce or DSHS.

BVS leads are also responsible for the following, annually:

- ✓ Require Users to re-sign DSHS Non-Disclosure form.
- ✓ Review BVS User spreadsheet for accuracy and notify Commerce of any changes.
- ✓ Notify Commerce via email upon completion of annual requirements.

2.2 Grant Management

2.2.1 Changes to Guidelines

Commerce may revise the guidelines at any time. All lead grantees will be sent revised copies. Lead grantees are responsible for sending revisions to subgrantees in a timely manner.

2.2.2 Commerce Monitoring

Commerce will monitor lead grantees' grant activities, including coordinated entry. Lead grantees will be given a minimum of 30 days' notice unless there are special circumstances that require immediate attention. The notice will specify the monitoring components.

2.2.3 Subgrantee Requirements

The Grant General Terms & Conditions Section 32 or 15 identifies subgrantee requirements. In addition, all subgrantee agreements must be time-limited and have defined roles and responsibilities for each party, detailed budgets and performance terms. Commerce reserves the right to directly contact subgrantees at any time for data quality, monitoring, fiscal and other issues.

Lead grantees may enter into an agreement with any other local government, Council of Governments, Housing Authority, Community Action Agency, nonprofit community or neighborhood-based organization, federally recognized Indian tribe in the state of Washington, or regional or statewide nonprofit housing assistance organizations who operate programs to end homelessness within a defined service area.

Lead grantees must provide Commerce with copies of subgrant agreements (upon request) and notify Commerce if subgrants are terminated during the grant period.

Lead grantees must notify Commerce of any changes in selection of subgrantees funded with CHG, or changes in the interventions of those subgrantees.

2.2.3.1 Subgrantee Risk Assessment and Monitoring

Lead grantees are responsible for ensuring subgrantee compliance with all requirements identified in the CHG guidelines. The lead grantee must conduct a risk assessment and develop a monitoring plan for each subgrantee within six months of contracting CHG to the subgrantee. The risk assessment must inform the monitoring plan for each subgrantee. Monitoring plans must include monitoring dates, the type of monitoring (remote, on-site), and the program requirements being reviewed.

The lead grantee must maintain policies and procedures that guide the risk assessment, monitoring activities, and monitoring frequency.

Commerce reserves the right to require lead grantees to undertake special reviews when an audit or other emerging issue demands prompt intervention and/or investigation.

2.2.3.2 Subgrantee Performance Requirements

Housing outcome performance requirements must be included in CHG subgrantee agreements for applicable intervention types. Grantees may customize subgrantee performance requirements by establishing agency specific benchmarks which take into account past performance, facility type, target population and other variables. See Appendix D: Homeless System Performance for more information.

2.2.4 Eviction Prevention By and For Organization Subgrant Requirement

At least 10 percent of the Eviction Prevention total award must be subgranted to organizations that serve and are substantially governed by marginalized populations (By and For organizations⁴). Subgrant activities may include the full scope of homelessness prevention program activities.

Marginalized communities may include ethnic and racial minorities; immigrants and refugees; individuals who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender; individuals with disabilities or who are deaf; and Native Americans.

Lead grantees must make a reasonable effort to subgrant with By and For organizations. If a lead grantee is not able to execute a subagreement, they may ask Commerce for an exemption from this requirement by submitting the Eviction Prevention Sub Contracting Exemption Request Form in the application. An exemption request must include a plan to spend 10 percent of the grant in a manner that will improve racial equity for historically underserved communities.

2.2.5 By and For Engagement

Commerce expects grantees to be anti-racist leaders in their crisis response systems and facilitate partnerships among organizations that respond to the disproportionality in services and outcomes for communities that don't seek assistance from mainstream organizations. At minimum, this includes acknowledging By and For agency subject matter expertise in serving their communities, including

⁴By and For Organizations are operated by and for the community they serve. Their primary mission and history is serving a specific community and they are culturally based, directed, and substantially controlled by individuals from the population they serve. At the core of their programs, the organizations embody the community's central cultural values. These communities may include ethnic and racial minorities; immigrants and refugees; individuals who identify as LGBTQ+, individuals with disabilities or who are deaf; and Native Americans.

them in homeless response planning and decision making and ensuring resources are equitably distributed to communities most impacted. While the new eviction rent assistance funds legislatively require lead grantees to set aside, at least 10% of the funding for By and For service delivery, this direction should also influence the overall county homeless crisis response systems.

Recommendations:

- ✓ Ensuring local boards and councils are diverse and representative of the population in need of services.
- ✓ Engaging By and For organizations at the beginning of planning processes and not solely for feedback on final drafts.
- ✓ Identifying and addressing barriers to delivering services in partnership with By and For organizations.

2.3 Fiscal Administration

2.3.1 Budget Caps

- ✓ CHG Standard Administration - up to 15 percent of the CHG Standard and PSH CHF contracted budget may be allocated to administration.
- ✓ HEN Administration - up to 7 percent of the HEN contracted budget may be allocated to HEN administration.
- ✓ Eviction Prevention Administration – up to 15 percent of the total grant for the lead grantee and up to 15 percent of each subgrantee grant total may be allocated to administration.
- ✓ Budgeted amounts in these four funding categories cannot be changed by moving funds from one of these categories to another.

2.3.2 Budget Categories

The following table maps the budget categories to the allowable expenses.

Fund Source	Budget Categories	Allowable Expenses - linked to relevant sections of the Guidelines
CHG Standard	Admin	Administration
	Rent	Rent
	Facility Support	Facility Support
	Operations	Operations, including Flexible Funding
PSH CHF	PSH CHF Rent/Fac Support	Rent and Facility Support
	PSH CHF Operations	Operations, including Flexible Funding
HEN	HEN Admin	Administration
	HEN Rent/Fac Support	Rent and Facility Support
	HEN Operations	Operations, including Flexible Funding
Eviction Prevention	Eviction Prevention Admin	Administration
	Eviction Prevention Rent	Rent
	Eviction Prevention Operations	Operations, including Flexible Funding

2.3.3 Reimbursements

Lead grantees must bill Commerce monthly for reimbursement of allowable costs. Invoices are due on the 20th of the month following the provision of services. Final invoices for a biennium may be due sooner than the 20th. If the lead grantee fails to submit an invoice within a three-month period, without a reasonable explanation, Commerce may take corrective action as outlined in the lead grantee contracted Scope of Work. Exceptions to billing procedures can be negotiated with Commerce on a case-by-case basis.

Invoices must be submitted online using the Commerce Contract Management System (CMS) through Secure Access Washington (SAW).

2.3.3.1 Back-up Documentation

All invoices must include the Voucher Detail Worksheet (if grantee has subgrantees) and the required HMIS reports. Invoices may not be paid until the report(s) are received and verified. Commerce may require a lead grantee to submit additional documentation. Lead grantees must retain original invoices submitted by their subgrantees.

2.3.4 Budget Revisions

Revisions must be submitted using the Budget Revision Tool and approved by Commerce. Budget Caps must be maintained with each revision.

A contract amendment is required when revisions (in one or cumulative transfers) reach more than 10 percent of the grant total.

3 Homelessness Assistance (funded with CHG Standard and PSH CHF)

3.1 Homelessness Assistance Allowable Interventions

All housing intervention definitions can be found in Section 1.4.

3.1.1 Temporary Housing Interventions

- ✓ Emergency Shelter (ES)
 - Drop-in Shelter
 - Continuous-stay Shelter
- ✓ Transitional Housing (TH)

3.1.2 Permanent Housing Interventions

- ✓ Rapid Re-Housing (RRH)
- ✓ Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)

3.1.3 Services Only Interventions

- ✓ Street Outreach

3.2 Homelessness Assistance Household Eligibility

A household is one or more individuals seeking to obtain housing together. The entire household must be considered for eligibility determination and services. A household does not include friends or family that are providing temporary housing. Refer to Appendix E: Household Eligibility Requirements.

A household's primary nighttime residence, where they sleep the majority of the time, is used for determining eligibility.

A household's current nighttime residence, where they slept last night, is used for determining HMIS project entry.

Eligible households for homelessness assistance must meet both housing status and income requirements as detailed in the following sections.

3.2.1 CHG Standard

Housing Status		Income*
Homeless	AND	At or below 80% area median income

*Household income must not exceed 80 percent of area median income. Lead grantees may determine to target households with a lower area median income.

3.2.2 Permanent Supportive Housing for Chronically Homeless Families (PSH CHF)

Eligibility for PSH CHF:

- ✓ Head of household (HOH) must meet housing status detailed below and have a disability as defined in section 3.8, and

- ✓ Household must meet income status and have dependents. Dependent is defined as any household member who is not the head, co-head, or spouse, but is: under the age of 18 years; disabled (of any age); or a full-time student (of any age).

Housing Status		Income*
HOH Chronically Homeless	AND	At or below 80% area median income

*Household income must not exceed 80 percent of area median income. Lead grantees may determine to target households with a lower area median income. Homelessness Assistance Housing Status Eligibility

3.3 Homelessness Assistance Housing Status Eligibility

3.3.1 Homeless

Households are homeless if they are unsheltered or residing in a temporary housing program, as defined below.

3.3.1.1 Unsheltered Homeless:

- ✓ Living outside or in a place that is not designed for, or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a vehicle, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or campground.
- ✓ Fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, human trafficking, or other dangerous or life-threatening conditions that relate to violence against the household member(s), including children, that have either taken place within the household's primary nighttime residence or has made the household member(s) afraid to return to their primary nighttime residence.

3.3.1.2 Sheltered Homeless:

- ✓ Residing in a temporary housing program including shelters, transitional or interim housing, and hotels and motels paid for by charitable organizations or government programs.
- ✓ Exiting a system of care or institution where they resided for 90 days or less AND who resided in an emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation immediately before entering that system of care or institution.
- ✓ Residing in a trailer or recreational vehicle that is parked illegally or in a location that is not intended for long-term stays (i.e. parking lots).

3.3.2 Chronically Homeless⁵

1. A homeless individual with a disability⁶ who:
 - ✓ Lives in a place not meant for human habitation or in an emergency shelter; and
 - ✓ Has been homeless (as described above) continuously for at least 12 months or on at least 4 separate occasions in the last 3 years where the combined occasions must total at least 12 months.

⁵ Section 3.3.2 summarizes HUD's definition of chronically homeless. Refer to 24 CFR part 578 for the full definition.

⁶ Refer to Section 3.8 of the guidelines to read more on disability.

- Occasions separated by a break of at least seven nights.
 - Stays in institution of fewer than 90 days do not constitute a break.
2. An individual who has been residing in an institutional care facility for fewer than 90 days and met all of the criteria in paragraph (1) of this definition, before entering that facility; or
 3. A family with an adult head of household (or if there is no adult in the family, a minor head of household) who meets all of the criteria in (1) or (2) of this definition, including a family whose composition has fluctuated while the head of household has been homeless.

3.4 Homelessness Assistance Documentation of Housing Status

Lead/subgrantees must verify and document eligible housing status prior to program entry. Refer to the *CHG Verification of Household Eligibility and Income Recertification Form* for allowable documentation.

The *CHG Verification of Household Eligibility and Income Recertification Form* and housing status documentation must be kept in the client file. Documentation must be dated within 30 days of program entry.

3.4.1 Housing Status Eligibility Exemption

Households entering emergency shelter are exempt from housing status requirements.

3.5 Homelessness Assistance Income Eligibility

The combined household income must not exceed 80 percent of area median gross income as defined by HUD. Lead grantees can determine to target households with a lower area median income.

Income limits are based on Area Median Income (AMI) which can be located for each county at: www.huduser.gov (Data Sets, Income Limits).

Income is money that is paid to, or on behalf of, any household member. Income includes the current gross income (annualized) of all adult (18 years and older) household members and unearned income attributable to a minor. Income eligibility determinations are based on the household's income at program entry. Income inclusions and exclusions are listed in the Electronic Code of Federal Regulations, www.ecfr.gov, Title 24 – Housing and Urban Development: Subtitle A 0-99: Part 5: Subpart F: Section [5.609 Annual Income](#).

Gross Income is the amount of income earned before any deductions (such as taxes and health insurance premiums) are made.

Current Income is the income that the household is currently receiving. Income recently terminated should not be included.

3.5.1 Income Eligibility Exemptions

Income eligibility verification is never required for Drop-in Shelter or for households receiving only flexible funding.

The following are exempt from income eligibility requirements for the first 90 days of program participation:

- ✓ Households entering Transitional Housing

- ✓ Households entering a Rapid Re-Housing program
- ✓ Households entering a Continuous-stay Shelter

Households residing in Domestic Violence Shelters past 90 days may be exempt from income requirements on a case by case basis, as determined by the lead/subgrantee, if needed in order to ensure safety of the household.

Households receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) must not have their TANF benefit count towards income.

3.6 Homelessness Assistance Documentation of Income Eligibility

Lead/subgrantees must verify and document income eligibility prior to program entry.

CHG Verification of Household Eligibility and Income Recertification Form, all allowable income documentation, and the *CHG Income Eligibility Worksheet* (or equivalent) must be kept in the client file. Documentation must be dated within 30 days.

Adult household members that have no income are required to complete a *CHG Self-Declaration Form*.

3.6.1 Annualizing Wages and Periodic Payments

Use the *CHG Income Eligibility Worksheet* (or equivalent) to calculate income based on hourly, weekly, or monthly payment information. Add the gross amount earned in each payment period that is documented and divide by the number of payment periods. This provides an average wage per payment period. Depending the schedule of payments, use the following calculations convert the average wage into annual income:

- ✓ Hourly wage multiplied by hours worked per week multiplied by 52 weeks.
- ✓ Weekly wage multiplied by 52 weeks.
- ✓ Bi-weekly (every other week) wage multiplied by 26 bi-weekly periods.
- ✓ Semi-monthly wage (twice a month) multiplied by 24 semi-monthly periods.
- ✓ Monthly wage multiplied by 12 months.

The *CHG Income Eligibility Worksheet* is not required for households that have no income.

3.7 Homelessness Assistance Eligibility Recertification

Lead/subgrantees must document recertification of household income eligibility at least every three months using the *CHG Verification of Household Eligibility and Income Recertification Form*.

Income recertification is not required for CHG Standard PSH or PSH CHF.

3.7.1 Income Ineligible at Recertification

If households are determined income ineligible, they may remain in the program for an additional three months. Case management may continue for an additional six months after the determination of income ineligibility to support the household transition to self-sufficiency.

3.8 Additional Eligibility Requirements for Permanent Supportive Housing

To be eligible for CHG Standard PSH, a household must be homeless (as defined in section 3.3.1) AND include at least one household member who has a disability.

To be eligible for PSH CHF, the head of household must meet homelessness and disability criteria identified in the definition of chronically homeless in Section 3.3.2.

Disabilities are expected to be long-continuing or indefinite in duration and sustainability impedes the household member's ability to live independently.

Disability includes: a physical, developmental, mental, or emotional impairment, including impairment caused by alcohol or drug abuse, post-traumatic stress disorder, or brain injury. A person will also be considered to have a disability if he or she has Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) or any conditions arising from the etiologic agent for 86 Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome, including infection with the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV).

3.8.1 Documentation of a Disability

Lead/subgrantees must verify and document the disability prior to program entry. Acceptable documentation of the disability must include one the following:

- ✓ Written verification of the disability from a professional licensed by the state to diagnose and treat the disability and his or her certification that the disability is expected to be long continuing or of indefinite duration and substantially impedes the individual's ability to live independently.
- ✓ Written verification from the Social Security Administration.
- ✓ Disability check receipt (Social Security Disability Insurance check or Veteran Disability Compensation).
- ✓ Other documentation approved by Commerce.

CHG Verification of Household Eligibility and Income Recertification Form and all allowable disability documentation must be kept in the client file. If unable to document disability at program entry with the above methods, program staff must record observation of disability. Required documentation (above) must be obtained within 45 days of program enrollment.

3.8.2 Maintaining Homeless Status for Permanent Housing

While receiving Rapid Re-Housing assistance, households maintain their homeless status for purposes of eligibility for other permanent housing placements.

4 Homelessness Prevention (funded with CHG Standard and Eviction Prevention)

4.1 Homelessness Prevention Allowable Housing Intervention

All housing intervention definitions can be found in Section 1.4.

4.1.1 Permanent Housing Interventions

- ✓ Homelessness Prevention (HP)

4.2 Homelessness Prevention Household Eligibility

A household is one or more individuals seeking to obtain or maintain housing together. The entire household must be considered for eligibility determination and services. A household does not include friends or family that are providing temporary housing. Refer to Appendix E: Household Eligibility Requirements.

A household's primary nighttime residence, where they sleep the majority of the time, is used for determining eligibility.

A household's current nighttime residence, where they slept last night, is used for determining HMIS project entry.

Eligible households for homelessness prevention must meet both housing status and income requirements as detailed in the following sections.

Housing Status		Income*
At Risk of Homelessness	AND	At or below 80% area median income

*Household income must not exceed 80 percent of area median income. Lead grantees may determine to target households with a lower area median income.

4.3 Homelessness Prevention Housing Status Eligibility

4.3.1 At Risk of Homelessness

Households are at risk of homelessness if they meet one of the following conditions:

- ✓ Have a missed rent payment and currently owe all or part of a rent payment (current month or past months); OR
- ✓ Has moved because of economic reasons 2 or more times during the 60 days immediately preceding the application for assistance; OR
- ✓ Is living in the home of another because of economic hardship; OR
- ✓ Has been notified that their right to occupy their current housing or living situation will be terminated within 21 days after the date of application for assistance; OR
- ✓ Lives in a hotel/motel and the cost is not paid for by charitable organizations or by Federal, State, or local government programs for low-income individuals; OR

- ✓ Lives in an SRO or efficiency apartment unit in which there reside more than 2 persons or lives in a larger housing unit in which there reside more than one and a half persons per room; OR
- ✓ Is exiting a publicly funded institution or system of care.

4.4 Homelessness Prevention Documentation of Housing Status

Lead/subgrantees must verify and document eligible housing status prior to program entry. Refer to the *CHG Verification of Household Eligibility and Income Recertification Form* for allowable documentation.

The *CHG Verification of Household Eligibility and Income Recertification Form* and housing status documentation must be kept in the client file. Documentation must be dated within 30 days of program entry.

4.4.1 Targeted Prevention

Homelessness prevention programs must prioritize households most likely to become homeless, and must use either the *CHG Targeted Prevention Eligibility Screening Form* or other tool approved by Commerce. This form must be kept in the client file.

If modifying the *CHG Targeted Prevention Eligibility Screening Form* or using another tool, the risk factors must be evidence informed. Submit the screening tool to your Commerce grant manager for approval.

4.5 Homelessness Prevention Income Eligibility

The combined household income must not exceed 80 percent of area median gross income as defined by HUD. Lead grantees can determine to target households with a lower area median income.

Income limits are based on Area Median Income (AMI) which can be located for each county at: www.huduser.gov (Data Sets, Income Limits).

Income is money that is paid to, or on behalf of, any household member. Income includes the current gross income (annualized) of all adult (18 years and older) household members and unearned income attributable to a minor. Income eligibility determinations are based on the household's income at program entry. Income inclusions and exclusions are listed in the Electronic Code of Federal Regulations, www.ecfr.gov, Title 24 – Housing and Urban Development: Subtitle A 0-99: Part 5: Subpart F: Section [5.609 Annual Income](#).

Gross Income is the amount of income earned before any deductions (such as taxes and health insurance premiums) are made.

Current Income is the income that the household is currently receiving. Income recently terminated should not be included.

4.5.1 Income Eligibility Exemptions

Income eligibility verification is never required for households receiving only flexible funding.

4.6 Homelessness Prevention Documentation of Income Eligibility

Lead/subgrantees must verify and document income eligibility prior to program entry.

CHG Verification of Household Eligibility and Income Recertification Form, all allowable income documentation, and the *CHG Income Eligibility Worksheet* (or equivalent) must be kept in the client file. Documentation must be dated within 30 days.

Adult household members that have no income are required to complete a *CHG Self-Declaration Form*.

4.6.1 Annualizing Wages and Periodic Payments

Use the *CHG Income Eligibility Worksheet* (or equivalent) to calculate income based on hourly, weekly, or monthly payment information. Add the gross amount earned in each payment period that is documented and divide by the number of payment periods. This provides an average wage per payment period. Depending the schedule of payments, use the following calculations convert the average wage into annual income:

- ✓ Hourly wage multiplied by hours worked per week multiplied by 52 weeks.
- ✓ Weekly wage multiplied by 52 weeks.
- ✓ Bi-weekly (every other week) wage multiplied by 26 bi-weekly periods.
- ✓ Semi-monthly wage (twice a month) multiplied by 24 semi-monthly periods.
- ✓ Monthly wage multiplied by 12 months.

The *CHG Income Eligibility Worksheet* is not required for households that have no income.

4.7 Homelessness Prevention Eligibility Recertification

Lead/subgrantees must document recertification of household income eligibility at least every three months using the *CHG Verification of Household Eligibility and Income Recertification Form*.

4.7.1 Income Ineligible at Recertification

If households are determined income ineligible, they may remain in the program for an additional three months. Case management may continue for an additional six months after the determination of income ineligibility to support the household transition to self-sufficiency.

4.8 Landlords Applying for Homelessness Prevention Assistance on Behalf of Tenant

Lead/subgrantees must allow landlords to initiate a request for assistance on behalf of their tenants by completing the *Certification of Payment Obligation Form*. Eligibility is based on tenant eligibility. At minimum, a reasonable attempt to contact the tenant must be made by the lead/subgrantee using the information provided from the landlord. The lead/subgrantee must create a process for what is reasonable based on the agency and staffing capacity.

If a tenant is unresponsive, ineligible, or eligibility cannot be determined, assistance must be denied.

5 Housing and Essential Needs (funded with HEN)

5.1 Allowable Interventions

All housing intervention definitions can be found in Section 1.4.

5.1.1 Temporary Housing Interventions

- ✓ Transitional Housing (TH)

5.1.2 Permanent Housing Interventions

- ✓ Homelessness Prevention (HP)
- ✓ Rapid Re-Housing (RRH)
- ✓ Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)

5.1.3 Services Only Interventions

- ✓ Street Outreach

5.2 HEN Household Eligibility

A household is one or more individuals seeking to obtain or maintain housing together. The entire household must be considered for eligibility determination and services. A household does not include friends or family that are providing temporary housing. Refer to Appendix E: Household Eligibility Requirements.

A household's primary nighttime residence, where they sleep the majority of the time, is used for determining eligibility.

A household's current nighttime residence, where they slept last night, is used for determining HMIS project entry.

Eligible HEN households must meet both housing status and income requirements as detailed in the following sections.

Housing Status		Income
Homeless	AND	HEN Referral ⁷
OR		
At Risk of Homelessness		

5.3 HEN Housing Status Eligibility

5.3.1 Homeless

Households are homeless if they are unsheltered or residing in a temporary housing program, as defined below.

⁷ HEN Referral includes households who have a HEN Referral and households enrolled in General Assistance (ABD recipient) and General Assistance Pregnancy (Pregnant Women Assistance recipient) from the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) as documented in the Benefits Verification System (BVS).

5.3.1.1 Unsheltered Homeless:

- ✓ Living outside or in a place that is not designed for, or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a vehicle, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or campground.
- ✓ Fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, human trafficking, or other dangerous or life-threatening conditions that relate to violence against the household member(s), including children, that have either taken place within the household's primary nighttime residence or has made the household member(s) afraid to return to their primary nighttime residence.

5.3.1.2 Sheltered Homeless:

- ✓ Residing in a temporary housing program including shelters, transitional or interim housing, and hotels and motels paid for by charitable organizations or government programs.
- ✓ Exiting a system of care or institution where they resided for 90 days or less AND who resided in an emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation immediately before entering that system of care or institution.
- ✓ Residing in a trailer or recreational vehicle that is parked illegally or in a location that is not intended for long-term stays (i.e. parking lots).

5.3.2 At Risk of Homelessness

Households are at risk of homelessness if they meet one of the following conditions:

- ✓ Have a missed rent payment and currently owe all or part of a rent payment (current month or past months); OR
- ✓ Has moved because of economic reasons 2 or more times during the 60 days immediately preceding the application for assistance; OR
- ✓ Is living in the home of another because of economic hardship; OR
- ✓ Has been notified that their right to occupy their current housing or living situation will be terminated within 21 days after the date of application for assistance; OR
- ✓ Lives in a hotel/motel and the cost is not paid for by charitable organizations or by Federal, State, or local government programs for low-income individuals; OR
- ✓ Lives in an SRO or efficiency apartment unit in which there reside more than 2 persons or lives in a larger housing unit in which there reside more than one and a half persons per room; OR
- ✓ Is exiting a publicly funded institution or system of care.

5.4 HEN Documentation of Housing Status

Lead/subgrantees must verify and document eligible housing status prior to program entry. Refer to the *CHG Verification of Household Eligibility and Income Recertification Form* for allowable documentation.

The *CHG Verification of Household Eligibility and Income Recertification Form* and housing status documentation must be kept in the client file. Documentation must be dated within 30 days of program entry.

5.4.1 Targeted Prevention

Homelessness prevention programs must prioritize households most likely to become homeless, and must use either the *CHG Targeted Prevention Eligibility Screening Form* or other tool approved by Commerce. This form must be kept in the client file.

If modifying the CHG Targeted Prevention Eligibility Screening Form or using another tool, the risk factors must be evidence informed. Submit the screening tool to your Commerce grant manager for approval.

5.5 HEN Referral

5.5.1 Documentation of HEN Referral⁸

In place of income verification, lead/subgrantees must verify and document the household's HEN Referral from the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) as documented in the Benefits Verification System (BVS) prior to program entry.

The *CHG Verification of Household Eligibility and Income Recertification Form* and HEN Referral documentation must be kept in the client file.

For Pregnant Women Assistance (PWA) recipients with a HEN Referral, BVS will only display active PWA households. If a household is no longer on the program (e.g. birth of baby), BVS will no longer display an active status. Contact your Commerce CHG grant manager to help determine PWA status. The referral to HEN remains valid for 24 consecutive months.

5.6 HEN Eligibility Recertification

Lead/subgrantees must document recertification of the household's HEN Referral from DSHS as documented in the BVS at least every three months. Both the HEN Referral and updated *CHG Verification of Household Eligibility and Income Recertification Form* must be kept in the client file.

Recertification is not required for HEN households who are a PWA recipient up to 24 months.

5.6.1 HEN Ineligible at Recertification

If households do not have a HEN Referral at recertification and are determined ineligible for HEN, HEN funding cannot be used to support that household any further. Consider using other CHG funding such as CHG Standard or Eviction Prevention to support the household transition to self-sufficiency. If other CHG funding is used for an ineligible household they may remain in the program for an additional three months and case management may continue for an additional six months.

⁸ HEN Referral includes households who have a HEN Referral and households enrolled in General Assistance (ABD recipient) and General Assistance Pregnancy (Pregnant Women Assistance recipient) from DSHS as documented in BVS.

6 Allowable Expenses

6.1 Rent

- ✓ Monthly rent and any combination of first and last months' rent. Rent may only be paid one month at a time, although rental arrears, pro-rated rent, and last month's rent may be included with the first month's payment. Monthly rent is not time-limited.
- ✓ Rental arrears and associated late fees. Rental arrears may be paid if the payment enables the household to obtain or maintain permanent housing. Arrears is not time-limited.
 - Rental arrears is any missed rent payment currently owed (full or partial), including the current month or past months.
 - Rental arrears for HEN households can be paid for a time period when the household was not HEN enrolled.
- ✓ Lot rent for RV or manufactured home.
- ✓ Costs of parking spaces when connected to a unit.
- ✓ Incentives paid to landlords, including reimbursement for damages.
- ✓ Security deposits for households moving into new units.
- ✓ Hotel/Motel expenses for households if no suitable shelter bed is available during housing search or when a hotel/motel unit is used as permanent housing.
- ✓ Utilities which are included in rent.
- ✓ Landlord administrative fees required with rent.
- ✓ Utility payments for households also receiving rental assistance.
- ✓ Utility arrears may be paid if the payment enables the household to obtain or maintain permanent housing. Utility arrears are not time-limited.
- ✓ Utility-only assistance (including arrears) can be provided when no other [utility assistance](#), such as [LIHEAP](#), is available to prevent a shut-off, and documented using the *Utility-Only Assistance Form*.
- ✓ Utility deposits for a household moving into a new unit.
- ✓ Application fees, background, credit check fees, and costs of urinalyses for drug testing of household members if necessary/required for rental housing.
- ✓ Other costs as approved by Commerce.

6.1.1 Special Circumstances

- ✓ Master-lease: Security deposit and monthly rent is allowable when an organization master-leases a unit, and then sub-leases the property to eligible households in the context of a Rapid Re-Housing or Permanent Supportive Housing program.
- ✓ Temporary absence: If a household must be temporarily away from the unit, but is expected to return (such as temporary incarceration, hospitalization, or residential treatment), lead/subgrantees may pay for the household's rent for up to 60 days and charge the grant for eligible costs. While a household is temporarily absent, he or she may continue to receive case management. Any temporary absence must be documented in the client file.
- ✓ Subsidized housing: rent/utility assistance may be used for move-in costs (security deposits, first and last month's rent) for subsidized housing (where household's rent is adjusted based on

income), including project- or tenant-based housing.⁹ Rental arrears or utility arrears assistance may be used for subsidized housing.

6.1.2 Ineligible Expenses

- ☒ Ongoing rent/utilities for subsidized housing
- ☒ Rent and rent/utility assistance in combination with facility support
- ☒ Cable deposits or services
- ☒ Mortgage assistance and utility assistance for homeowners

6.2 Facility Support

- ✓ Lease or rent payment on a building used to provide temporary housing or permanent supportive housing
- ✓ Hotel/Motel expenses to provide temporary housing
- ✓ Move-in costs (security deposits, first and last month's rent) for permanent housing
- ✓ Utilities (gas /propane, phone, electric, internet, water and sewer, garbage removal)
- ✓ Maintenance (janitorial/cleaning supplies, pest control, fire safety, materials and contract or staff maintenance salaries and benefits associated with providing the maintenance, mileage for maintenance staff)
- ✓ Security and janitorial (salaries and benefits associated with providing security, janitorial services)
- ✓ Essential facility equipment and supplies (e.g. common-use toiletries, food served in shelters, bedding, mats, cots, towels, microwave, pet food and crates, etc.)
- ✓ Expendable transportation costs directly related to the transportation of eligible households (bus tokens and fuel for a shelter van)
- ✓ On-site and off-site management costs related to the building
- ✓ Facility specific insurance (mortgage insurance is not allowable) and accounting
- ✓ Costs for securing permanent housing including: application fees, background check fees, credit check fees, utility deposits, and costs of urinalyses for drug testing of household members if necessary/required for housing
- ✓ Other expenses as approved by Commerce

6.2.1 Special Circumstances

- ✓ Master-lease: Facility costs are allowable when an organization master-leases a building and then sub-leases the property to eligible households in the context of a Transitional Housing or Permanent Housing program.

6.2.2 Ineligible Expenses

- ☒ Replacement or operating reserves
- ☒ Debt service
- ☒ Construction or rehabilitation of shelter facilities
- ☒ Facility support in combination with rent and rent/utility assistance
- ☒ Mortgage payment for the facility

6.2.3 HEN Facility Support

Lease payments and other facility costs are allowable with HEN funding for transitional housing

⁹ In this context tax credit units are not considered subsidized housing.

(section 1.4.1.2) and permanent housing (section 1.4.2). Emergency shelter is not allowable.

HEN facility support must be proportionally billed according to an estimate of the number of HEN households expected to occupy the facility.

6.2.4 Maintenance Activities vs. Building Rehabilitation

Building maintenance is an allowable facility support expenses.

Maintenance activities include cleaning activities; protective or preventative measures to keep a building, its systems, and its grounds in working order; and replacement of existing appliances or objects that are not fixtures or part of the building. Maintenance activities should fix, but not make improvements that would add value to the building.

Maintenance activities do not include the repair or replacement of fixtures or parts of the building. A fixture is an object that is physically attached to the building and cannot be removed without damage to the building. Fixtures also include, but are not limited to, kitchen cabinets, built in shelves, toilets, light fixtures, staircases, crown molding, sinks and bathtubs. Maintenance activities do not include the installment or replacement of systems designed for occupant comfort and safety such as HVAC, electrical or mechanical systems, sanitation, fire suppression, and plumbing.

Building rehabilitation and capital improvements are not allowable facility support expenses.

These typically include those items that are done building-wide or affect a large portion of the property such as roof replacement, exterior/interior common area painting, major repairs of building components, etc. See Appendix F: Examples of Maintenance Activities.

6.3 Operations

Operations expenses are directly attributable to a particular program or to the homeless crisis response system.

- ✓ Salaries and benefits for staff costs directly attributable to the program or to the homeless system, including but not limited to program staff, information technology (IT) staff, human resources (HR) staff, bookkeeping staff, and accounting staff.
- ✓ Office space, utilities, supplies, phone, internet, and training related to grant management and/or service delivery/conferences/travel and per diem.
- ✓ Equipment up to \$5,000 per grant period unless approved in advance by Commerce.

6.3.1 Homeless Crisis Response System Expenses

- ✓ Point-in-Time counts
- ✓ Annual report/housing inventory
- ✓ Local homeless plans
- ✓ Coordinated entry planning, implementation and operations
- ✓ State data warehouse and Homeless Management Information System
- ✓ Interested landlord list and landlord outreach activities
- ✓ Participation in local Continuum of Care

6.3.2 Program Expenses

- ✓ Intake and assessment, including time spent assessing a household, whether or not the

household is determined eligible

- ✓ Housing Stability Services. This includes developing an individualized housing and service plan, monitoring and evaluating household progress, identifying creative and immediate housing solutions outside of the traditional homeless service system (diversion), [SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery \(SOAR\)](#), and assuring that households' rights are protected.
- ✓ Housing Search and Placement Services. This includes services or activities designed to assist households in locating, obtaining, and retaining suitable housing, tenant counseling, assisting households to understand leases, inspections, securing utilities, making moving arrangements, and representative payee services concerning rent and utilities.
- ✓ Mediation and outreach to property owners/landlords related to locating or retaining housing (landlord incentives)
- ✓ Outreach services
- ✓ Optional support services for individuals in permanent supportive housing, including case management and connections to resources
- ✓ Data collection and entry
- ✓ General liability insurance and automobile insurance
- ✓ Other costs as approved in advance by Commerce

6.3.3 Flexible Funding

Flexible Funding is the provision of goods, payments of expenses, or purchase of merchant gift cards or vouchers not included in other allowable expense categories, which helps a household increase housing stability or meet essential household needs.

Essential household needs includes personal health and hygiene items, cleaning supplies, transportation passes and other personal need items. Essential household need items are available to all eligible households. Verification of housing status is not required for households with a HEN Referral. Essential needs distribution does not need to be documented in housing stability plans.

Households accessing emergency shelter with pets that require essential veterinary services to enter, such as visits for core vaccinations (i.e. rabies, distemper, parvovirus), flea treatment, and sterilization (spay or neuter), can be paid for on behalf of the household.

All eligible households are eligible for Flexible Funding. Households receiving only Flexible Funding and not ongoing assistance are exempt from income eligibility requirements. Verification of housing status is required. Flexible Funding payments must be paid directly to a third party on behalf of the household and noted in a household's housing stability plan.

6.4 Administration

CHG Standard Administration - up to 15 percent of the CHG Standard and PSH CHF contracted budget may be allocated to administration.

HEN Administration - up to 7 percent of the HEN contracted budget may be allocated to HEN administration.

Eviction Prevention Administration - up to 15 percent of the total grant for for the lead grantee and up to 15 percent of each subgrantee grant total.

Allowable administrative costs benefit the organization as a whole and cannot be attributed specifically to a particular program or to the homeless crisis response system. Administrative costs may include the same types of expenses that are listed in program operations (such as IT staff and office supplies), in the case that these costs are benefiting the agency as a whole and are not attributed to a particular program or the homeless system. Administrative costs may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- ✓ Executive director salary and benefits
- ✓ General organization insurance
- ✓ Organization wide audits
- ✓ Board expenses
- ✓ Organization-wide membership fees and dues
- ✓ Washington State Quality Award (WSQA) expenses
- ✓ General agency facilities costs (including those associated with executive positions) such as rent, depreciation expenses, and operations and maintenance

All amounts billed to administration must be supported by actual costs. If actual costs in the contract period meet the budget cap, that amount may be charged in equal monthly amounts.

- ✓ Billed directly such as IT services that are billed by the hour.
- ✓ Shared costs that are allocated directly by means of a cost allocation plan.
- ✓ Costs related to executive personnel such that a direct relationship between the cost and the benefit cannot be established must be charged indirectly by use of an indirect cost rate which has been appropriately negotiated with an approved cognizant agency or by use of the 10 percent de minimus rate.

7 Requirements of all Lead Grantees and Subgrantees Providing Direct Service

7.1 Service Delivery

Commerce promotes evidence-based service delivery models that efficiently move people experiencing homelessness into permanent destinations.

7.1.1 Access to Homeless Housing Assistance

Coordinated entry intake must not require identification, social security cards, birth certificates, or other documentation not required by funders. Households experiencing homelessness should be provided temporary housing if available while documentation is being obtained. Flexible Funding can be used to assist homeless households in obtaining required documentation to access housing.

Programs should limit eligibility criteria to those required by funders and/or facility structure (for example, funding for veterans or unit size suitable for families with children).

Commerce may not support adding additional eligibility requirements to projects funded with CHG unless CHG funds are used in conjunction/braided with other funds for a program that has that requirement. If you are considering adding new additional requirements you must first check with Commerce for review and approval.

7.1.2 Voluntary Services

Programs must not terminate or deny services to households based on refusal to participate in supportive services. Supportive services are helping or educational resources that include support groups, mental health services, alcohol and substance abuse services, life skills or independent living skills services, vocational services and social activities.

Supportive services do not include housing stability planning or case management.

PSH CFH eligible households must be offered a referral to Foundational Community Supports (FCS). A FCS provider directory can be found [here](#). Households are not required to participate in FSC services.

7.1.3 Progressive Engagement

Lead/subgrantees must employ a progressive engagement (PE) service model. Progressive Engagement includes the following components:

- ✓ Whenever possible, households experiencing a housing crisis should be diverted from entering homeless housing programs through problem-solving conversations, linkages to mainstream and natural supports, and/or flexible, and light-touch financial assistance.
- ✓ Initial assessment and services address the immediate housing crisis with the minimal services needed.
- ✓ Frequent re-assessment determines the need for additional services.
- ✓ Services are individualized and responsive to the needs of each household.
- ✓ Households exit to permanent housing as soon as possible.
- ✓ Having already received assistance does not negatively impact a household's eligibility if they face homelessness again.

Income eligibility recertification (every 3 months) can be included in case management and an assessment that determines the need for additional services, but shouldn't be considered the only approach to a PE service model.

7.1.4 Assessment and Housing Stability Planning

A problem-solving diversion conversation should occur prior to a full, standardized assessment. Lead/subgrantees must assess each household's housing needs and facilitate planning with the goal of obtaining or maintaining housing stability. Housing stability planning must be housing-focused and client-driven.

Assessments and housing stability planning must be documented.

Assessments and housing stability planning are not required for Drop-in Shelters.

7.1.5 Choice of Housing and Portability

Households have the right to housing choice and can reject housing and service options without retribution or limiting their access to other forms of assistance.

Grantees cannot terminate assistance if a household chooses to relocate to a jurisdiction outside the grantee's service area. Grantees should work with the household to maintain meaningful case management (e.g. phone, home visits, video calls) and continue rental assistance until the household is no longer eligible or declines participation.

7.2 HMIS

Lead/subgrantees providing direct service must enter client data into the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) for all temporary and permanent housing interventions regardless of funding source in accordance with the most current [HUD HMIS Data Standards](#).

Additionally, if the lead grantee is a county/city government, all Emergency Shelter, Transitional Housing, Safe Haven, Homelessness Prevention or any Permanent Housing¹⁰ type programs funded with local document recording fees must enter client data in HMIS.

For assistance with a HMIS related question or issue, submit a ticket through Commerce's [HMIS Helpdesk Form](#). Please visit the Commerce HMIS [website](#) for forms, information on training, past newsletters and additional HMIS related resources.

7.2.1 Data Quality

Grantees are required to provide quality data to the best of their ability. Maintaining good data quality is important for effective program evaluation. Data quality has four elements: completeness, timeliness, accuracy, and consistency.

7.2.1.1 Completeness

Completeness of data is measured by the percentage of incomplete fields in required data elements.

Agencies are expected to collect **first name, last name, date of birth, and race and ethnicity** from clients that give consent on the [HMIS consent form](#). **Agencies will never require a client to provide this information even if they have consented, but should gather it to the best of their ability.**

All clients, consenting and non-consenting, must have complete **prior living situation and exit destination** data.

¹⁰ PH – Permanent Supportive Housing, PH – Housing Only, PH – Housing with Services, PH – Rapid Re-Housing

Examples of incomplete entries:

Incomplete Entries	
Data Element	Incomplete if...
Name*	[Quality of Name] field contains Partial, Street name, or Code name, Client doesn't know, Client prefers not to answer, or Data not collected; or [First Name] or [Last Name] is missing.
Date of Birth*	[Quality of DOB] field contains Approximate, Partial DOB reported, Client doesn't know, Client prefers not to answer, or Data not collected; or [Date of Birth] is missing.
Race and Ethnicity*	[Race] field contains Client doesn't know, Client prefers not to answer, Data not collected, or is missing.
Prior Living Situation	[Prior Living Situation] is Client doesn't know, Client prefers not to answer, Data not collected, or is missing.
Destination	[Destination] is Client doesn't know, Client prefers not to answer, No exit interview completed, Data not collected, or is missing.

*Only measured for consenting clients.

Expected completeness measures for project types:

Expected Completeness Measures				
Data Element	Emergency Shelter	Night-by-Night/Drop-in Emergency Shelter	All other Housing Project Types	Street Outreach
Name*	85%	80%	95%	90%
Date of Birth*	85%	80%	95%	90%
Race and Ethnicity*	85%	80%	95%	90%
Prior Living Situation	85%	80%	100%	85%
Destination	80%	50%	95%	50%

*Only measured for consenting clients.

7.2.1.2 Timeliness

Client data should be entered into HMIS as close to the date of collection as possible. Entering data as soon as possible supports data quality by avoiding backlogs of pending data and allowing near real time analysis and reporting.

Grantees must enter/update project client/household data in HMIS **within 14 calendar days** following the date of project enrollment/exit.

Counties not using the State HMIS (data integration counties), must work with the HMIS Manager to provide full CSV exports every three months/quarterly. When Commerce is able to accept monthly imports, Counties must upload data to the State's HMIS using XML or CSV schema compliant with current HUD HMIS Data Standards. Uploads must occur no later than the 30th calendar day following the end of each month. Counties not able to export and upload data to the State HMIS using an approved format must use the State HMIS for direct data entry.

7.2.1.3 Accuracy

Data entered into HMIS must reflect the real situation of the client/household as closely as possible.

Accurate data is necessary to ensure that any project reporting fairly represents the work of the project and each client's story.

Examples of data accuracy:

Elements of Data Accuracy	
Date of Birth and Project Start Date	Ensure the two are not the same dates.
Prior Living Situation data elements	Ensure responses for Prior living situation, Length of stay in prior living situation, Approximate date homelessness started, Number of times the client has experienced homelessness in the last 3 years, and Number of months experiencing homelessness in the last 3 years do not conflict with each other.
Disabling Condition	Ensure the Yes/No answer does not conflict with the specific types of disabling conditions.
Health Insurance	Ensure the Yes/No answer does not conflict with the specific types of health insurance.
Monthly Income	Ensure the Yes/No answer does not conflict with the specific sources of monthly income.
Non-Cash Benefits	Ensure the Yes/No answer does not conflict with the specific sources of non-cash benefits.
Relationship to Head of Household	Ensure there is only one Head of Household for any given household (including clients served individually) and that this element is entered and accurate for all household members.
Veteran Status	Ensure individuals under 18 years of age are not identified as veterans.
Project Population Specifics	Ensure that projects only serving individuals only enroll individuals and not multi-person households. Ensure that projects only serving families with children only enroll families with children. Ensure that projects only serving clients of a specific age range only enroll clients of that age range.

7.2.1.4 Consistency

Consistent data helps ensure that any reporting generated by a project is understood. Data consistency is important for effectively communicating the processes and outcomes of a project.

All data will be collected, entered, and stored in accordance with the [Agency Partner Agreement](#).

All data elements and responses will be entered per the [HUD Data Standards Manual](#). To avoid inconsistency, agencies should use language on intake forms that closely matches the elements and responses in HMIS.

Clients who refuse consent must be made anonymous per [Department of Commerce Guidance](#).

7.2.2 Consent for Entry of Personally Identifying Information

7.2.2.1 Identified Records

- ✓ Personally identifying information (PII)¹¹ must not be entered into HMIS unless all adult household members have provided informed consent.
- ✓ Informed consent must be documented with a signed copy of the *Client Release of Information and Informed Consent Form* in the client file. If electronic consent has been received, a copy does not need to be printed for the client file but must be available in HMIS. If telephonic consent has been received, complete the consent form the first time the household is seen in person. See [HMIS Agency Partner Agreement](#).

¹¹ PII includes name, social security number, birthdate, address, phone number, email, and photo.

7.2.2.2 Anonymous Records

The following types of records must be entered anonymously:

- ✓ Households in which one adult member does not provide informed consent for themselves or their dependents
- ✓ Households entering a domestic violence program or currently fleeing or in danger from a domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, human trafficking or a stalking situation
- ✓ Minors under the age of 13 with no parent or guardian available to consent to the minor's information in HMIS
- ✓ Households in programs which are required by funders to report HIV/AIDS status

7.2.2.3 Special Circumstances

If the reporting of the HIV/AIDS status of clients is not specifically required, the HIV/AIDS status must not be entered in HMIS.

If a combination of race, ethnicity, gender, or other demographic data could be identifying in your community, those data should not be entered for anonymous records.

7.2.3 HMIS Data Suppression Policy

7.2.3.1 Data Suppression

Data suppression refers to various methods or restrictions that are applied to datasets, reports or visualizations in order to protect the identities, privacy and personal information of individuals.

In Washington State, [RCW 43.185C.180](#) and [RCW 43.185C.030](#) specify that all personal information in the HMIS is confidential and that the identity and right of privacy of these individuals must be protected.

Personal Identifiable Information (PII) is a separate topic and must never be disclosed to any entity that does not have HMIS access or is not part of your data sharing agreement.

7.2.3.2 When Data Suppression Is Required

It is the policy of the HMIS program to suppress data when the data contains demographic detail, the numbers are small enough to potentially identify a person, and:

- ✓ Will be in a public space or presentation, or
- ✓ Will be shared with an entity that is not covered in the [HMIS Consent Form](#).

In these cases, any non-zero counts that are under 11 will be suppressed.

Additional suppression will be needed when the suppressed value can be derived from other reported values. For example, when you can calculate the suppressed value by subtracting other values from the grand total.

The exceptions to data suppression are zero values or values that fall under an “unknown” category type. Both of these circumstances do not contribute any valuable information that could identify a person or reveal confidential data and thus, is not subject to suppression.

Learn more about how to apply data suppression and which data sharing entities are required to meet this policy in the [HMIS Data Suppression Policy document](#).

7.3 Habitability

7.3.1 For Rent Assistance

Documented habitability is required for all housing units into which households will be moving, except when a household moves in with friends or family or into a hotel/motel unit. Housing units must be documented as habitable prior to paying the rent subsidy. Documentation must be kept in the client file.

Habitability can be documented by the *Landlord Habitability Standards Certification Form* or inspection. Both methods are valid for the length of time the household is a tenant in the housing unit. If the housing unit is provided to a different household within 12 months of documented habitability, an additional certification/inspection is not required.

7.3.1.1 Allowable Methods for Unit Habitability Determination

The *CHG Landlord Habitability Standards Certification Form* references the state Landlord Tenant Act (RCW 59.18.060) and requires the landlord (as defined in RCW 59.18.030) to certify that the unit meets the safety and habitability standards detailed in the law. The landlord's failure to comply with the law may result in termination of the rent subsidy.

OR

Inspections: in lieu of (or in addition to) the above landlord certification, lead/subgrantees may choose to inspect all housing units. Lead/subgrantees may use the *Commerce Housing Habitability Standards (HHS) Form* or the *HUD Housing Quality Standards (HQS) Inspection Form*.

Documentation of habitability certification or inspection must be kept in the client file.

7.3.1.2 Habitability Complaint Procedure

Each household must be informed in writing of the habitability complaint process and assured that complaints regarding their housing unit's safety and habitability will not affect the household's eligibility for assistance.

Lead/subgrantee must have a written procedure describing the response to complaints regarding unit safety and habitability. The procedure must include:

- ✓ Mandatory inspection when a complaint is reported using the HHS Form, HQS Inspection Form, or documenting the specific complaint in an alternate format that includes follow-up and resolution.

7.3.2 For Facilities

All facilities must conduct and document an inspection at least once a year using the HHS Form or HQS Inspection Form.

7.4 Lead Based Paint Assessment

To prevent lead poisoning in young children, lead/subgrantees must comply with the Lead-Based Paint Poisoning Prevention Act of 1973 and its applicable regulations found at 24 CFR 35, Parts A, B, M, and R.

A visual assessment must be conducted on an annual basis thereafter (as long as assistance is provided.) Visual assessments must be conducted by a HUD-Certified Visual Assessor and must be documented on the HQS Inspection Form or HHS Form and maintained in the client file.

For a guide to compliance see Appendix G: Lead-Based Paint Visual Assessment Requirements.

7.4.1 For Rent Assistance

A lead-based paint visual assessment must be completed prior to providing rapid re-housing or homelessness prevention rent assistance if a child under the age of six or pregnant woman resides in a unit constructed prior to 1978.

7.4.2 For Facilities

All facilities that may serve a child under the age of six or a pregnant woman constructed prior to 1978 must conduct an annual lead-based paint visual assessment which is documented on the HQS Inspection Form or HHS Form, and readily accessible for review.

7.4.3 Exceptions to the Lead-Based Paint Visual Assessment Requirement

Visual assessments are not required under the following circumstances:

- ✓ Zero-bedroom or SRO-sized units;
- ✓ X-ray or laboratory testing of all painted surfaces by certified personnel has been conducted in accordance with HUD regulations and the unit is officially certified to not contain lead-based paint;
- ✓ The property has had all lead-based paint identified and removed in accordance with HUD regulations;
- ✓ The unit has already undergone a visual assessment within the past 12 months –obtained documentation that a visual assessment has been conducted; or
- ✓ It meets any of the other exemptions described in 24 CFR Part 35.115(a).

If any of the circumstances outlined above are met, lead/subgrantees must include the information in the client file.

7.5 Additional Requirements

7.5.1 Fraud and Other Loss Reporting

Lead/subgrantees must inform Commerce in writing of all known or suspected fraud or other loss of any funds or other property furnished under this grant. Reasonable attempts must be made to prevent fraud and ineligible use of funds.

7.5.2 Personal Identifying Information

Personal identifying information must never be sent electronically unless sent via a secure file transfer. Request a secure file transfer login credentials from Commerce.

7.5.3 Grievance Procedure

Lead/subgrantees must have a written grievance procedure for households seeking or receiving services which includes the household's right to review decisions and present concerns to program staff not involved in the grievance.

This procedure must:

- ✓ Clearly describe how households can request a review or report concerns

- ✓ Be accessible to all households seeking or receiving services

7.5.4 Termination and Denial of Service Policy

Lead/subgrantees must have a termination and denial policy.

This policy must:

- ✓ Describe the reasons a household would be denied services and/or terminated from program participation
- ✓ Describe the notification process
- ✓ Ensure households are made aware of the grievance procedure

7.5.5 Records Maintenance and Destruction

Lead/subgrantees must maintain records relating to this grant for a period of six years following the date of final payment. See General Terms and Conditions, Section 26 RECORDS MAINTENANCE.

Paper records derived from HMIS which contain personally identifying information must be destroyed within seven years after the last day the household received services from the lead/subgrantee.

7.5.6 Client File Check List

Lead/subgrantee must use the *CHG Client File Checklist* to record the contents of each client file.

Programs may create their own checklist but the components of the *CHG Client File Checklist* must be included.

7.5.7 Consent to Review Information in the Benefits Verification System

All household members must provide informed consent for lead/subgrantees to review confidential information in the Benefits Verification System (BVS) on the form *DSHS 14-012(x)(REV 02/2003)*. See Appendix H: Access to the DSHS Benefits Verification System Data Security Requirements for more information. This form must be kept in the client file.

7.5.8 Prohibitions

- ✓ Lead/subgrantee may not require households to participate in a religious service as a condition of receiving program assistance.
- ✓ Lead/subgrantees may not deny emergency shelter to households that are unable to pay fees for emergency shelter.
- ✓ If a program serves households with children, the age of a minor child cannot be used as a basis for denying any household's admission to the program.

7.5.9 Nondiscrimination

Lead/subgrantees must comply with all federal, state and local nondiscrimination laws, regulations and policies, including the Washington State Law against Discrimination, RCW 49.60, as it now reads or as it may be amended. RCW 49.60 currently prohibits discrimination or unfair practices because of race, creed, color, national origin, families with children, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, age, honorably discharged veteran or military status, or the presence of any sensory, mental, or physical disability or the use of a trained guide dog or service animal by a person with a disability.

Lead/subgrantees must comply with the Federal Fair Housing Act and its amendments as it now reads or as it may be amended. The Fair Housing Act currently prohibits discrimination because of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability or family status. The Fair Housing Act prohibits enforcing a neutral rule or policy that has a disproportionately adverse effect on a protected class.

Local nondiscrimination laws may include additional protected classes.

Lead/subgrantees serving households with children must serve all family compositions. If a program operates gender-segregated facilities, the program must allow the use of facilities consistent with the client's gender expression or identity.

All emergency shelter facilities must meet the Americans with Disabilities Act standards.

8 Additional Requirements of Lead Grantees and Subgrantees Providing Rent Assistance

8.1 Washington Residential Landlord-Tenant Act

Lead/subgrantees must provide information on the Washington Residential Landlord Tenant Act ([RCW 59.18](#)) to households receiving rent assistance.

For more information on this law, visit Washington Law Help, housing page, tenant rights at www.washingtonlawhelp.com.

8.2 Rental Agreements

Client files must contain one of the following types of agreements if rent assistance is paid on their behalf: Intent to Rent, Lease, or Certification of Payment Obligation.

If the rent assistance paid is move-in costs (security deposits, first and last month's rent) only, an Intent to Rent form is allowable. If the rent assistance will exceed move-in costs to include on-going rent, a lease or Certification of Payment Obligation is required.

8.2.1 Intent to Rent

At a minimum, an Intent to Rent form must contain the following:

- ✓ Name of tenant
- ✓ Name of landlord
- ✓ Address of rental property
- ✓ Rent rate
- ✓ Signature of landlord/date

8.2.2 Lease

At a minimum, the lease or rental agreement between the lead/subgrantee and the landlord OR the household and the landlord must contain the following:

- ✓ Name of tenant
- ✓ Name of landlord
- ✓ Address of rental property
- ✓ Occupancy (who gets to live at the rental)
- ✓ Term of agreement (lease start and end date)
- ✓ Rent rate and date due
- ✓ Deposits (if any and what for/term)
- ✓ Signature of tenant/date
- ✓ Signature of landlord/date

8.2.3 Certification of Payment Obligation

A *CHG Certification of Payment Obligation* is required for rent subsidies paid to a friend or family member who is not in the business of property management. This form must be kept in the client file.

8.3 Dispute Resolution Center Partnerships

Lead/subgrantees must coordinate with their local Dispute Resolution Centers (DRC) if one exists within the service area. DRCs can be an essential pathway to collaborate and negotiate for mutual

gain to prevent evictions and maintain positive landlord relationships.

There are many ways to partner with a DRC. The following list is not comprehensive and grantees should work towards a partnership that makes sense for their community.

- ✓ Embed a release of information in your intake process to be able to communicate with DRC staff.
- ✓ Train DRC staff on Eviction Prevention program eligibility.
- ✓ Receive Eviction Prevention referrals from the DRC.
- ✓ Engage with DRC staff to help resolve communication challenges between landlords and households.
- ✓ Invite DRC staff to participate in rent assistance provider meetings.
- ✓ Partner households with DRC staff to help establish repayment plans when appropriate.

8.4 Payment Standards to Determine Rent Limit

Lead/subgrantees must choose either the HUD Fair Market Rent or the Rent Reasonableness payment standard to be used for all units receiving a rent subsidy, including arrears, and must be completed before the rent subsidy is paid.

8.4.1 Payment Standards Options

8.4.1.1 HUD's Fair Market Rent

Fair Market Rent (FMR) sets rent limits on the subsidy provided to the household. FMR is established by HUD (<http://www.huduser.org/portal/datasets/fmr.html>) and is updated each federal fiscal year (October 1). For this grant, rent calculations do not need to include the cost of utilities.

If a hotel/motel room is being used as permanent housing, compare it to a studio/efficiency unless the room is a suite with separate bedrooms.

Lead/subgrantees must set a rent limit policy for their service area using a percentage of FMR that does not exceed 150 percent FMR. The rent limit is the maximum rent that can be paid for a unit of a given size.

OR

8.4.1.2 Rent Reasonableness

Rent reasonableness means the total rent charged for a unit must be reasonable in relation to the rents being charged during the same time period for comparable units in the private unassisted market and must not be in excess of rents being charged by the owner during the same time period for comparable non-luxury unassisted units.

To make this determination, the grantee should consider (a) the location, quality, size, type, and age of the unit; and (b) any amenities, housing services, maintenance and utilities to be provided by the owner. Comparable rents can be checked by using a market study, by reviewing comparable units advertised for rent, or with a note from the property owner verifying the comparability of charged rents to other units owned (for example, the landlord would document the rents paid in other units). For more information, see HUD's guide at <https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/CoC-Rent-Reasonableness-and-FMR.pdf>.

The rental assistance paid cannot exceed the actual rental cost.

Lead/Subgrantees must establish rent reasonableness policies and procedures for documenting comparable rents. Policies and procedures must include:

- ✓ A methodology for documenting comparable rents
- ✓ Standards for certifying comparable rents as reasonable

Documentation of rent reasonableness must be kept in the client file. HUD's Rent Reasonableness Form or comparable form must be used, see HUD's worksheet on rent reasonableness at <https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/2098/home-rent-reasonableness-checklist-and-certification/>.

8.4.2 Rent Limit Exceptions

The FMR rent limit policy or rent reasonableness policies and procedures may also include a description of how exceptions are made when circumstances require a rent amount that exceeds the limit.

8.5 Determining Rent Subsidy

Lead/subgrantees must have a standardized procedure for determining the amount of rent subsidy for each household. The procedure should include a consideration of the household's resources and expenses. Although each household may receive a different amount of rent subsidy, the procedure for determining the subsidy must be standardized.

Client files must include documentation of the subsidy amount and the determination process. Rent subsidy should be adjusted when there is a change in household circumstance, income, or need.

HEN households cannot be required to pay any of their ABD cash benefit or other earned income reported to DSHS towards their rent.

Households receiving TANF cannot be required to pay any of their TANF benefit towards their rent.

9 Washington State's Landlord Mitigation Law

Washington State's Landlord Mitigation Law ([RCW 43.31.605](#)) became effective on June 7, 2018 to provide landlords with an incentive and added security to work with tenants receiving rental assistance. The program offers up to \$1,000 to the landlord in reimbursement for some potentially required move-in upgrades, up to fourteen days' rent loss and up to \$5,000 in qualifying damages caused by a tenant during tenancy. A move in/move out condition report is required for a landlord to receive reimbursement.

For more information, please visit the Commerce Landlord Mitigation Program [website](#).

10.1 Appendix A: Required and Recommended Forms

The following forms are required, if applicable. Forms may be modified if all of the content is included. All forms are posted on the Commerce CHG [website](#).

- ✓ Consolidated Homeless Grant Verification of Household Eligibility and Income Recertification (sections 3.4;3.6;3.7;3.8.1;4.4;4.6;4.7;5.4;5.5.1;5.6)
- ✓ Consolidated Homeless Grant Income Eligibility Worksheet (section 3.6 and 4.6)
- ✓ Consolidated Homeless Grant Utility-Only Assistance form (section 6.1)
- ✓ Client Release of Information and Informed Consent Form (section 7.2.2.1)
- ✓ Consolidated Homeless Grant Landlord Habitability Standards Certification Form OR Commerce Housing Habitability Standards (HHS) Form OR HUD Housing Quality Standards (HQS) Inspection Form— including Lead-based Paint Visual Assessment (section 7.3)
- ✓ Consolidated Homeless Grant Client File Checklist (section 7.5.6)
- ✓ DSHS 14-012(x)(REV 02/2003) for BVS (section 7.5.7)
- ✓ Consolidated Homeless Grant Certification of Payment Obligation (section 8.2.3)
- ✓ Consolidated Homeless Grant Targeted Prevention Eligibility Screening Form (section 4.4.1 and 5.4.1) or other tool approved by Commerce
- ✓ Rent Reasonableness Form (section 8.4.1)

The following form is recommended.

- ✓ Move in/move out condition report (section 9)

10.2 Appendix B: Required Policies and Procedures

- ✓ Coordinated Entry Policies (section 2.1.3)
- ✓ Habitability Complaint Procedure (section 7.3.1.2)
- ✓ Grievance Procedure (section 7.5.3)
- ✓ Termination and Denial of Service Policy (section 7.5.4)
- ✓ Rent Limit Policy or Rent Reasonableness Policies and Procedures (section 8.4)
- ✓ Determining Rent Subsidy Procedure (section 8.5)

10.3 Appendix C: Client File Documentation

The following chart summarizes the documentation required in each client file, depending on the type of service provided. Other documentation may be required based on individual circumstances. CHG Required Forms are found on the Commerce CHG [website](#).

Documentation	Drop-in Shelter	Continuous Stay Shelter	Transitional Housing	Rapid Re-housing Rent Assistance	Permanent Supportive Housing	Homelessness Prevention Rent Assistance
Client File Checklist		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
HMIS Client Release of Information and Informed Consent Form (unless DV <u>OR</u> client refuses consent)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
DSHS 14-012(x)(REV 02/2003) for BVS, if applicable		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CHG Verification of HH Eligibility and Income Recertification Form (with associated documentation)		If staying longer than 90 days	✓	✓	✓	✓
CHG Income Eligibility Worksheet (or equivalent, where applicable)		If staying longer than 90 days	✓	CHG Standard only	✓	CHG Standard and Eviction Prevention only
Targeted Prevention Eligibility Screening Form						✓
Rent Reasonableness Form, if applicable				✓	✓	✓
Landlord Habitability Certification <u>OR</u> HHS or HQS			✓	✓	✓	✓ as applicable
Lead-based Paint Assessment, if applicable			✓	✓	✓	✓
Utility-Only Assistance Form, if applicable						✓
Lease <u>OR</u> Certification of Payment Obligation				✓	✓	✓
Intent to Rent, if applicable				✓		✓
Household Rent subsidy amount / Rent determination process				✓	✓	✓
Assessment and Housing Stability Planning		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Temporary Absence, if applicable				✓	✓	✓

10.4 Appendix D: Homeless System Performance Requirements

10.4.1 Data Sources

The Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) is the data source for calculating the baseline and performance results.

Compliance is measured at the system intervention level. This means data from all applicable projects are included, without regard to fund sources.

For example, to monitor compliance with ‘Increase Percent Exits to Permanent Housing from Rapid Re-Housing’, all Rapid Re-Housing projects in a given community will be included in the calculation.

Data for the previous state fiscal year will serve as the baseline. Performance results can be found on the CHG Performance Tracker which is updated quarterly:

<https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/comhau/viz/CHGPerformanceTrackerV2/OutcomesDashboard>

Please see page 7 of the CHG Performance Tracker [reporting specifications](#) to learn about which destinations are categorized as positive outcome destinations and permanent housing destinations.

10.4.2 Housing Outcome Performance Requirements

For each intervention type funded by CHG, grantees must adopt the required housing outcome performance measure outlined in Table A below.

Grantees must improve housing outcomes by making progress towards the statewide performance target. The performance target is the level of desirable performance and is an indicator of a high performing system.

Additionally, [RCW 43.185C.185](#) requires that Commerce ensure racial equity within homeless service system program outcomes. Commerce will evaluate a system’s outcomes by assessing housing outcomes of exited households across racial and ethnic demographics for any potential disparities¹². To be considered in compliance of the equitable outcomes performance measure, the housing outcomes of the exited households across racial and ethnic demographics should not be significantly less than the overall rate¹³. If racial or ethnic disparities in housing outcomes are identified in the data, Commerce will determine if the requirement has been met on a case by case basis.

¹² For the equitable outcomes measure, disparities are defined as instances in which the outcome rate of a particular racial or ethnic category is significantly less than the overall rate.

¹³ The “overall rate” refers to the rate of a particular intervention type’s total exits to positive outcomes. This is inclusive of all ethnic or racial categories.

Example: Exits from Transitional Housing to Positive Exits

	Overall rate (All households)	Rate for Black/African American households	Disparity Identified
Example Community A	80%	60%	Yes
Example Community B	75%	75%	No

Grantees that do not make progress towards performance targets and/or whose outcome data reveals racial or ethnic disparities will enter into a performance improvement plan with Commerce which will include investigation into the potential causes and technical assistance to address the identified barriers to progress.

NOTE ON HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION: The performance measure for Homelessness Prevention is in a testing period and there is no available baseline data. This contract period will serve to test the performance measure, gather baseline data and determine the performance target. This measure will NOT be included in performance monitoring.

Table A: Required Housing Outcome Performance Measures

Intervention Type	Performance Measure	HMIS Calculation	Performance Target
Drop In Emergency Shelter ¹⁴	Increase Exits to Positive Outcomes	Of people in ES who exited, those who exited to Positive Outcome destinations	Target: 50%
Emergency Shelter (ES) ¹⁵	Increase Exits to Permanent Housing	Of people in ES who exited, those who exited to permanent housing destinations	Target: 50%
Transitional Housing (TH)	Increase Exits to Permanent Housing	Of people in TH who exited, those who exited to permanent housing destinations	Target: 80%
Rapid Re-Housing (RRH)	Increase Exits to Permanent Housing	Of people in RRH who exited, those who exited to permanent housing destinations	Target: 80%
Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) or any Permanent Housing type (excluding RRH)	Increase Exits to or Retention of Permanent Housing	Of people in PSH, those who remained in PSH or exited to permanent housing destinations	Target: 95%
All of the interventions above	Equitable Outcomes	Each calculation above, disaggregated by race and ethnicity	Outcomes across racial and ethnic demographics should not be significantly less than the overall rate
TESTING: Homelessness Prevention (HP)	TESTING: Housing Retention after 1 month Housing Retention after 6 months	TESTING: Of the people in HP who exited to a permanent housing destination, those who did not enter the homeless system after exit	Not established

¹⁴ Drop In Emergency Shelters offer night-by-night living arrangements that allow households to enter and exit on an irregular or daily basis and often use a Night-By-Night tracking method in HMIS.

¹⁵ Excludes Drop in Emergency Shelters

10.4.3 Equitable Access

[RCW 43.185C.185](#) requires that Commerce promote racial equity within homeless service system program access. Commerce will support communities in improving equitable access by publishing equitable access data (see below) and developing resources and facilitating activities focused on data literacy, barriers to equitable access, and strategies that improve equitable access. These resources and activities include grantee workshops, one-on-one technical assistance opportunities, data visualizations, trainings and toolkits.

To serve as baseline data and as a tool to assess the impact of equitable access strategies, Commerce will maintain the [Washington Balance of State Equitable Access Dashboard](#) that compares the race and ethnicity of households entering the homeless system as measured using HMIS data to the race and ethnicity of the homeless and unstably housed population as reported in the [Snapshot of Homelessness Report](#) (tables 6 and 8 in the report). At this time, this will not be considered a formal performance measure and will not be included in performance monitoring. However, communities are still expected to use this data to identify underserved populations, assess the impact of their access strategies, and ultimately work to improve equitable access as needed.

10.4.4 Subgrantee Agreements

Housing outcome performance requirements must be included in CHG subgrantee agreements for applicable intervention types. Grantees may customize subgrantee performance requirements by establishing agency specific benchmarks which take into account past performance, facility type, target population and other variables.

10.5 Appendix E: Household Eligibility Requirements

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS			
	HOUSING STATUS	INCOME AT ENROLLMENT	INCOME AT RECERTIFICATION
Flex Funding	Homeless OR Chronically homeless OR At risk of homelessness	At or below 80% AMI OR HEN Referral OR None if not receiving ongoing rent assistance	None
Drop-in Shelter	None	None	None
Continuous-stay Shelter	None	None	At or below 80% AMI
Transitional Housing	Homeless	None	At or below 80% AMI
Rapid Re-Housing (CHG Standard)	Homeless	None	At or below 80% AMI
Homelessness Prevention (CHG Standard and Eviction Prevention)	At risk of homelessness	At or below 80% AMI	At or below 80% AMI
HEN Rapid Re-Housing	Homeless	DSHS HEN Referral ¹⁶	DSHS HEN Referral
HEN Homelessness Prevention	At risk of homelessness	DSHS HEN Referral	DSHS HEN Referral
Permanent Supportive Housing (CHG Standard)	Homeless and a household member with a permanent disability	At or below 80% AMI	None
Permanent Supportive Housing for Chronically Homeless Families (PSH CHF)	Chronically homeless head of household with a permanent disability	At or below 80% AMI	None

¹⁶ HEN Referral includes households who have a HEN Referral and households enrolled in General Assistance (ABD recipient) and General Assistance Pregnancy (Pregnant Women Assistance recipient) from DSHS as documented in BVS.

10.6 Appendix F: Examples of Maintenance Activities

ALLOWABLE EXPENSES		
Cleaning Activities	Protective or Preventative Measures to Keep a Building, its Systems, and its Grounds in Working Order	Replacing Existing Appliances or Objects That Have Broken or are Clearly Past Their Useful Life, are not Fixtures or Part of the Building (See above for definition of "fixtures.")
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cleaning gutters and downspouts • Lawn and yard care (mowing, raking, weeding, trimming/pruning trees and shrubs) • Cleaning a portion of interior or exterior of building, including graffiti removal • Washing windows • Litter pick up and trash collection • Removing snow/ice • Unclogging sinks and toilets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fixing gutters • Mending cracked plaster • Patching roof • Caulking, weather stripping, re-glazing. • Replacing a broken window or screen • Reapplication of protective coatings • Fixing plumbing leaks • Repainting previously painted surface (including limited scraping)* • Waterproofing (sealant) • Servicing and maintenance of mechanical systems • Replacing a carpet square or patching carpet • Fixing alarm systems • Installing temporary fencing 	<p>Replacing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kitchen appliances where removal would not cause any damage (for example dishwashers, stoves, refrigerators) • Light bulbs • Washing and drying machines • Air filters • Furniture
* Non-destructive methods only (e.g., no sandblasting or high pressure spraying).		

10.7 Appendix G: Lead-Based Paint Visual Assessment Requirements

To prevent lead-poisoning in young children, Lead/Subgrantees must comply with the Lead-Based Paint Poisoning Prevention Act of 1973 and its applicable regulations found at 24 CFR 35, Parts A, B, M, and R.

Disclosure Requirements

For ALL properties constructed prior to 1978, landlords must provide tenants with:

- ✓ Disclosure form for rental properties disclosing the presence of known and unknown lead-based paint;
- ✓ A copy of the “Protect Your Family from Lead in the Home” pamphlet.

Both the disclosure form and pamphlet are available at: <https://www.epa.gov/lead/real-estate-disclosure>

It is recommended that rent assistance providers also share this information with their clients.

Determining the Age of the Unit

Lead/Subgrantees should use formal public records, such as tax assessment records, to establish the age of a unit. These records are typically maintained by the state or county and will include the year built or age of the property. To find online, search for your county name with one of the following phrases:

- ✓ “property tax records”
- ✓ “property tax database”
- ✓ “real property sales”

Print the screenshot for the case file. If not available online, the information is public and can be requested from the local authorities.

Conducting a Visual Assessment

Visual assessments are required when:

- ✓ The leased property was constructed before 1978;

AND

- ✓ A child under the age of six or a pregnant woman will be living in the unit occupied by the household receiving rent assistance.

A visual assessment must be conducted prior to providing rent assistance to the unit and on an annual basis thereafter (as long as assistance is provided). Lead/Subgrantees may choose to have their program staff complete the visual assessments or they may procure services from a contractor. Visual assessments must be conducted by a HUD-Certified Visual Assessor.

Anyone may become a HUD-Certified Visual Assessor by successfully completing a 20-minute online training on HUD’s website at:

<http://www.hud.gov/offices/lead/training/visualassessment/h00101.htm>

If a visual assessment reveals problems with paint surfaces, Lead/Subgrantees cannot approve the unit for assistance until the deteriorating paint has been repaired. Lead/Subgrantees may wait until the repairs are completed or work with the household to locate a different (lead-safe) unit.

Locating a Certified Lead Professional and Further Training

To locate a certified lead professional in your area:

- ✓ Call your state government (health department, lead poison prevention program, or housing authority).
- ✓ Call the National Lead Information Center at 1-800-424-LEAD (5323).
- ✓ Go to the US Environmental Protection Agency website at <https://www.epa.gov/lead> and click on "Find a Lead-Safe Certified Firm."
- ✓ Go to Washington State Department of Commerce Lead-Based Paint Program website at <http://www.commerce.wa.gov/building-infrastructure/housing/lead-based-paint/lead-based-paint-program-lbpabatement/> and click on "Find a Certified LBP Firm" under Other Resources.

Information on lead-based programs in Washington State can be found at <http://www.commerce.wa.gov/building-infrastructure/housing/lead-based-paint/>.

For more information on the Federal training and certification program for lead professionals, contact the National Lead Information Center (NLIC) at <https://www.epa.gov/lead/forms/lead-hotline-national-lead-information-center> or 1-800-424-LEAD to speak with an information specialist.

The Lead Safe Housing Rule as well as a HUD training module can be accessed at http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/healthy_homes/enforcement/lshr

10.8 Appendix H: Access to the DSHS Benefits Verification System Data Security Requirements

1. **Definitions.** The words and phrases listed below, as used in this Appendix, shall each have the following definitions:
 - a. “Authorized User(s)” means an individual or individuals with an authorized business requirement to access DSHS Confidential Information.
 - b. “Hardened Password” means a string of at least eight characters containing at least one alphabetic character, at least one number and at least one special character such as an asterisk, ampersand or exclamation point.
 - c. “Unique User ID” means a string of characters that identifies a specific user and which, in conjunction with a password, passphrase or other mechanism, authenticates a user to an information system.
 - d. “Contractor” means CHG Lead/subgrantees.
2. **Data Transport.** When transporting DSHS Confidential Information electronically, including via email, the Data will be protected by:
 - a. Transporting the Data within the (State Governmental Network) SGN or Contractor’s internal network, or;
 - b. Encrypting any Data that will be in transit outside the SGN or Contractor’s internal network. This includes transit over the public Internet.
3. **Protection of Data.** The Contractor agrees to store Data on one or more of the following media and protect the Data as described:
 - a. **Hard disk drives.** Data stored on local workstation hard disks. Access to the Data will be restricted to Authorized User(s) by requiring logon to the local workstation using a Unique User ID and Hardened Password or other authentication mechanisms which provide equal or greater security, such as biometrics or smart cards.
 - b. **Network server disks.** Data stored on hard disks mounted on network servers and made available through shared folders. Access to the Data will be restricted to Authorized Users through the use of access control lists which will grant access only after the Authorized User has authenticated to the network using a Unique User ID and Hardened Password or other authentication mechanisms which provide equal or greater security, such as biometrics or smart cards. Data on disks mounted to such servers must be located in an area which is accessible only to authorized personnel, with access controlled through use of a key, card key, combination lock, or comparable mechanism.

For DSHS Confidential Information stored on these disks, deleting unneeded Data is sufficient as long as the disks remain in a Secured Area and otherwise meet the requirements listed in the above paragraph. Destruction of the Data as outlined in Section 5. Data Disposition may be deferred until the disks are retired, replaced, or otherwise taken out of the Secured Area.
 - c. **Optical discs (CDs or DVDs) in local workstation optical disc drives.** Data provided by DSHS on optical discs which will be used in local workstation optical disc drives and which will not be transported out of a Secured Area. When not in use for the contracted purpose, such discs must be locked in a drawer, cabinet or other container to which only Authorized Users have the key, combination or mechanism required to access the contents of the container. Workstations which access DSHS Data on optical discs must be located in an area which is

accessible only to authorized personnel, with access controlled through use of a key, card key, combination lock, or comparable mechanism.

- d. **Optical discs (CDs or DVDs) in drives or jukeboxes attached to servers.** Data provided by DSHS on optical discs which will be attached to network servers and which will not be transported out of a Secured Area. Access to Data on these discs will be restricted to Authorized Users through the use of access control lists which will grant access only after the Authorized User has authenticated to the network using a Unique User ID and Hardened Password or other authentication mechanisms which provide equal or greater security, such as biometrics or smart cards. Data on discs attached to such servers must be located in an area which is accessible only to authorized personnel, with access controlled through use of a key, card key, combination lock, or comparable mechanism.
- e. **Paper documents.** Any paper records must be protected by storing the records in a Secured Area which is only accessible to authorized personnel. When not in use, such records must be stored in a locked container, such as a file cabinet, locking drawer, or safe, to which only authorized persons have access.
- f. **Remote Access.** Access to and use of the Data over the State Governmental Network (SGN) or Secure Access Washington (SAW) will be controlled by DSHS staff who will issue authentication credentials (e.g. a Unique User ID and Hardened Password) to Authorized Users on Contractor staff. Contractor will notify DSHS staff immediately whenever an Authorized User in possession of such credentials is terminated or otherwise leaves the employ of the Contractor, and whenever an Authorized User's duties change such that the Authorized User no longer requires access to perform work for this Contract
- g. **Data storage on portable devices or media.**
 - (1) Except where otherwise specified herein, DSHS Data shall not be stored by the Contractor on portable devices or media unless specifically authorized within the terms and conditions of the Contract. If so authorized, the Data shall be given the following protections:
 - (a) Encrypt the Data with a key length of at least 128 bits
 - (b) Control access to devices with a Unique User ID and Hardened Password or stronger authentication method such as a physical token or biometrics.
 - (c) Manually lock devices whenever they are left unattended and set devices to lock automatically after a period of inactivity, if this feature is available. Maximum period of inactivity is 20 minutes.
 - Physically Secure the portable device(s) and/or media by
 - (d) Keeping them in locked storage when not in use
 - (e) Using check-in/check-out procedures when they are shared, and
 - (f) Taking frequent inventories
 - (2) When being transported outside of a Secured Area, portable devices and media with DSHS Confidential Information must be under the physical control of Contractor staff with authorization to access the Data.
 - (3) Portable devices include, but are not limited to; smart phones, tablets, flash memory devices (e.g. USB flash drives, personal media players), portable hard disks, and laptop/notebook/netbook computers if those computers may be transported outside of a Secured Area.
 - (4) Portable media includes, but is not limited to; optical media (e.g. CDs, DVDs),

magnetic media (e.g. floppy disks, tape), or flash media (e.g. CompactFlash, SD, MMC).

h. Data stored for backup purposes.

(1) DSHS data may be stored on portable media as part of a Contractor's existing, documented backup process for business continuity or disaster recovery purposes. Such storage is authorized until such time as that media would be reused during the course of normal backup operations. If backup media is retired while DSHS Confidential Information still exists upon it, such media will be destroyed at that time in accordance with the disposition requirements in Section 5. Data Disposition

(2) DSHS Data may be stored on non-portable media (e.g. Storage Area Network drives, virtual media, etc.) as part of a Contractor's existing, documented backup process for business continuity or disaster recovery purposes. If so, such media will be protected as otherwise described in this exhibit. If this media is retired while DSHS Confidential Information still exists upon it, the data will be destroyed at that time in accordance with the disposition requirements in Section 5. Data Disposition.

4. Data Segregation.

- a. DSHS Data must be segregated or otherwise distinguishable from non-DSHS data. This is to ensure that when no longer needed by the Contractor, all DSHS Data can be identified for return or destruction. It also aids in determining whether DSHS Data has or may have been compromised in the event of a security breach. As such, one or more of the following methods will be used for data segregation.
- b. DSHS Data will be kept on media (e.g. hard disk, optical disc, tape, etc.) which will contain no non-DSHS data. And/or,
- c. DSHS Data will be stored in a logical container on electronic media, such as a partition or folder dedicated to DSHS Data. And/or,
- d. DSHS Data will be stored in a database which will contain no non-DSHS data. And/or,
- e. DSHS Data will be stored within a database and will be distinguishable from non-DSHS data by the value of a specific field or fields within database records.
- f. When stored as physical paper documents, DSHS Data will be physically segregated from non-DSHS data in a drawer, folder, or other container.
- g. When it is not feasible or practical to segregate DSHS Data from non-DSHS data, then both the DSHS Data and the non-DSHS data with which it is commingled must be protected as described in this exhibit.

- 5. Data Disposition.** When the contracted work has been completed or when no longer needed, except as noted in Section 3. Protection of Data b. Network Server Disks above, Data shall be returned to DSHS or destroyed. Media on which Data may be stored and associated acceptable methods of destruction are as follows:

Data Stored On:	Will be Destroyed By:
Server or workstation hard disks, or Removable media (e.g. floppies, USB flash drives, portable hard disks) excluding optical discs	Using a “wipe” utility which will overwrite the Data at least three (3) times using either random or single character data, or Degaussing sufficiently to ensure that the Data cannot be reconstructed, or Physically destroying the disk
Paper documents with sensitive or Confidential Information	Recycling through a contracted firm provided the contract with the recycler assures that the confidentiality of Data will be protected.
Paper documents containing Confidential Information requiring special handling (e.g. protected health information)	On-site shredding, pulping, or incineration
Optical discs (e.g. CDs or DVDs)	Incineration, shredding, or completely defacing the readable surface with a coarse abrasive
Magnetic tape	Degaussing, incinerating or crosscut shredding

- 6. Notification of Compromise or Potential Compromise.** The compromise or potential compromise of DSHS shared Data must be reported to the Department of Commerce Contact designated in the Grant Agreement within one (1) business day of discovery.

Data shared with Subcontractors. If DSHS Data access provided under this Contract is to be shared with a subcontractor, the Contract with the subcontractor must include all of the data security provisions within this Contract and within any amendments, attachments, or exhibits within this Contract.

10.9 Appendix I: Access to the DSHS HEN Referral List Data Security Requirements

As required under RCW 43.185.C 230 and RCW 74.62.030, the Lead/sub grantee may use the **HEN Referral List** information for the sole purpose of improving access to HEN assistance for individuals determined eligible for a referral to HEN.

Access to Data shall be limited to staff whose duties specifically require access to such Data in the performance of their assigned duties.

Prior to making Data available to its staff, the Data Recipient shall notify all such staff of the Use and Disclosure requirements.

All staff accessing the data must sign a [DSHS Nondisclosure of Confidential Information – Non Employee](#) form prior to accessing the Data.

The Lead/sub grantee shall maintain a list of such staff and their signed [DSHS Nondisclosure of Confidential Information – Non Employee](#) forms. These forms must be updated annually and submitted to Commerce upon request.

Limitations on Use of Data: If the Data and analyses generated by the Lead/sub grantee contain personal information about DSHS clients, then any and all reports utilizing these Data shall be subject to review and approval by Commerce prior to publication in any medium or presentation in any forum.

1. **Definitions.** The words and phrases listed below, as used in this Exhibit, shall each have the following definitions:
 - a. “AES” means the Advanced Encryption Standard, a specification of Federal Information Processing Standards Publications for the encryption of electronic data issued by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (<http://nvlpubs.nist.gov/nistpubs/FIPS/NIST.FIPS.197.pdf>).
 - b. “Authorized Users(s)” means an individual or individuals with a business need to access DSHS Confidential Information, and who has or have been authorized to do so.
 - c. “Business Associate Agreement” means an agreement between DSHS and a contractor who is receiving Data covered under the Privacy and Security Rules of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996. The agreement establishes permitted and required uses and disclosures of protected health information (PHI) in accordance with HIPAA requirements and provides obligations for business associates to safeguard the information.
 - d. “Category 4 Data” is data that is confidential and requires special handling due to statutes or regulations that require especially strict protection of the data and from which especially serious consequences may arise in the event of any compromise of such data. Data classified as Category 4 includes but is not limited to data protected by: the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), Pub. L. 104-191 as amended by the Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health Act of 2009 (HITECH), 45 CFR Parts 160 and 164; the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. §1232g; 34 CFR Part 99; Internal Revenue Service

Publication 1075 (<https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p1075.pdf>); Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration regulations on Confidentiality of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Patient Records, 42 CFR Part 2; and/or Criminal Justice Information Services, 28 CFR Part 20.

- e. “Cloud” means data storage on servers hosted by an entity other than the Contractor and on a network outside the control of the Contractor. Physical storage of data in the cloud typically spans multiple servers and often multiple locations. Cloud storage can be divided between consumer grade storage for personal files and enterprise grade for companies and governmental entities. Examples of consumer grade storage would include iTunes, Dropbox, Box.com, and many other entities. Enterprise cloud vendors include Microsoft Azure, Amazon Web Services, and Rackspace.
- f. “Encrypt” means to encode Confidential Information into a format that can only be read by those possessing a “key”; a password, digital certificate or other mechanism available only to authorized users. Encryption must use a key length of at least 256 bits for symmetric keys, or 2048 bits for asymmetric keys. When a symmetric key is used, the Advanced Encryption Standard (AES) must be used if available.
- g. “FedRAMP” means the Federal Risk and Authorization Management Program (see www.fedramp.gov), which is an assessment and authorization process that federal government agencies have been directed to use to ensure security is in place when accessing Cloud computing products and services.
- h. “Hardened Password” means a string of at least eight characters containing at least three of the following four character classes: Uppercase alphabetic, lowercase alphabetic, numeral, and special characters such as an asterisk, ampersand, or exclamation point.
- i. “Mobile Device” means a computing device, typically smaller than a notebook, which runs a mobile operating system, such as iOS, Android, or Windows Phone. Mobile Devices include smart phones, most tablets, and other form factors.
- j. “Multi-factor Authentication” means controlling access to computers and other IT resources by requiring two or more pieces of evidence that the user is who they claim to be. These pieces of evidence consist of something the user knows, such as a password or PIN; something the user has such as a key card, smart card, or physical token; and something the user is, a biometric identifier such as a fingerprint, facial scan, or retinal scan. “PIN” means a personal identification number, a series of numbers which act as a password for a device. Since PINs are typically only four to six characters, PINs are usually used in conjunction with another factor of authentication, such as a fingerprint.
- k. “Portable Device” means any computing device with a small form factor, designed to be transported from place to place. Portable devices are primarily battery powered devices with base computing resources in the form of a processor, memory, storage, and network access. Examples include, but are not limited to, mobile phones, tablets, and laptops. Mobile Device is a subset of Portable Device.
- l. “Portable Media” means any machine readable media that may routinely be stored or moved independently of computing devices. Examples include magnetic tapes, optical discs (CDs or DVDs), flash memory (thumb drive) devices, external hard

- drives, and internal hard drives that have been removed from a computing device.
- m. "Secure Area" means an area to which only authorized representatives of the entity possessing the Confidential Information have access, and access is controlled through use of a key, card key, combination lock, or comparable mechanism. Secure Areas may include buildings, rooms or locked storage containers (such as a filing cabinet or desk drawer) within a room, as long as access to the Confidential Information is not available to unauthorized personnel. In otherwise Secure Areas, such as an office with restricted access, the Data must be secured in such a way as to prevent access by non-authorized staff such as janitorial or facility security staff, when authorized Contractor staff are not present to ensure that non-authorized staff cannot access it.
 - n. "Trusted Network" means a network operated and maintained by the Contractor, which includes security controls sufficient to protect DSHS Data on that network. Controls would include a firewall between any other networks, access control lists on networking devices such as routers and switches, and other such mechanisms which protect the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of the Data.
 - o. "Unique User ID" means a string of characters that identifies a specific user and which, in conjunction with a password, passphrase or other mechanism, authenticates a user to an information system.
2. **Authority.** The security requirements described in this document reflect the applicable requirements of Standard 141.10 (<https://ocio.wa.gov/policies>) of the Office of the Chief Information Officer for the state of Washington, and of the DSHS Information Security Policy and Standards Manual. Reference material related to these requirements can be found here: <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/fsa/central-contract-services/keeping-dshs-client-information-private-and-secure>, which is a site developed by the DSHS Information Security Office and hosted by DSHS Central Contracts and Legal Services.
3. **Administrative Controls.** The Lead/sub grantee must have the following controls in place:
- a. A documented security policy governing the secure use of its computer network and systems, and which defines sanctions that may be applied to Lead/sub grantee staff for violating that policy.
4. **Authorization, Authentication, and Access.** In order to ensure that access to the Data is limited to authorized staff, the Lead/sub grantee must:
- a. Have documented policies and procedures governing access to systems with the shared Data.
 - b. Restrict access through administrative, physical, and technical controls to authorized staff.
 - c. Ensure that user accounts are unique and that any given user account login ID and password combination is known only to the one employee to whom that account is assigned. For purposes of non-repudiation, it must always be possible to determine which employee performed a given action on a system housing the Data based solely on the login ID used to perform the action.
 - d. Ensure that only authorized users are capable of accessing the Data.

- e. **Ensure that an employee's access to the Data is removed immediately:**
 - (1) **Upon suspected compromise of the user credentials.**
 - (2) **When their employment is terminated.**
 - (3) **When they no longer need access to the Data.**
- f. Have a process to periodically review and verify that only authorized users have access to systems containing DSHS Confidential Information.
- g. When accessing the Data from within the Lead/sub grantee's network (the Data stays within the Lead/sub grantee's network at all times), enforce password and logon requirements for users within the Lead/sub grantee network, including:
 - (1) A minimum length of 8 characters, and containing at least three of the following character classes: uppercase letters, lowercase letters, numerals, and special characters such as an asterisk, ampersand, or exclamation point.
 - (2) That a password does not contain a user's name, logon ID, or any form of their full name.
 - (3) That a password does not consist of a single dictionary word. A password may be formed as a passphrase which consists of multiple dictionary words.
 - (4) That passwords are significantly different from the previous four passwords. Passwords that increment by simply adding a number are not considered significantly different.
- h. When accessing Confidential Information from an external location (the Data will traverse the Internet or otherwise travel outside the Lead/sub grantee network), mitigate risk and enforce password and logon requirements for users by employing measures including:
 - (1) Ensuring mitigations applied to the system don't allow end-user modification.
 - (2) Not allowing the use of dial-up connections.
 - (3) Using industry standard protocols and solutions for remote access. Examples would include RADIUS and Citrix.
 - (4) Encrypting all remote access traffic from the external workstation to Trusted Network or to a component within the Trusted Network. The traffic must be encrypted at all times while traversing any network, including the Internet, which is not a Trusted Network.
 - (5) Ensuring that the remote access system prompts for re-authentication or performs automated session termination after no more than 30 minutes of inactivity.
 - (6) Ensuring use of Multi-factor Authentication to connect from the external end point to the internal end point.
- i. Passwords or PIN codes may meet a lesser standard if used in conjunction with another authentication mechanism, such as a biometric (fingerprint, face recognition, iris scan) or token (software, hardware, smart card, etc.) in that case:
 - (1) The PIN or password must be at least 5 letters or numbers when used in conjunction with at least one other authentication factor

- (2) Must not be comprised of all the same letter or number (11111, 22222, aaaaa, would not be acceptable)
 - (3) Must not contain a “run” of three or more consecutive numbers (12398, 98743 would not be acceptable)
 - j. If the contract specifically allows for the storage of Confidential Information on a Mobile Device, passcodes used on the device must:
 - (1) Be a minimum of six alphanumeric characters.
 - (2) Contain at least three unique character classes (upper case, lower case, letter, number).
 - (3) Not contain more than a three consecutive character run. Passcodes consisting of 12345, or abcd12 would not be acceptable.
 - k. Render the device unusable after a maximum of 10 failed logon attempts.
5. **Protection of Data.** The Lead/sub grantee agrees to store Data on one or more of the following media and protect the Data as described:
- a. **Hard disk drives.** For Data stored on local workstation hard disks, access to the Data will be restricted to Authorized User(s) by requiring logon to the local workstation using a Unique User ID and Hardened Password or other authentication mechanisms which provide equal or greater security, such as biometrics or smart cards.
 - b. **Network server disks.** For Data stored on hard disks mounted on network servers and made available through shared folders, access to the Data will be restricted to Authorized Users through the use of access control lists which will grant access only after the Authorized User has authenticated to the network using a Unique User ID and Hardened Password or other authentication mechanisms which provide equal or greater security, such as biometrics or smart cards. Data on disks mounted to such servers must be located in an area which is accessible only to authorized personnel, with access controlled through use of a key, card key, combination lock, or comparable mechanism.
For DSHS Confidential Information stored on these disks, deleting unneeded Data is sufficient as long as the disks remain in a Secure Area and otherwise meet the requirements listed in the above paragraph. Destruction of the Data, as outlined below in Section 8 Data Disposition, may be deferred until the disks are retired, replaced, or otherwise taken out of the Secure Area.
 - c. **Optical discs (CDs or DVDs) in local workstation optical disc drives.** Data provided by DSHS on optical discs which will be used in local workstation optical disc drives and which will not be transported out of a Secure Area. When not in use for the contracted purpose, such discs must be Stored in a Secure Area. Workstations which access DSHS Data on optical discs must be located in an area which is accessible only to authorized personnel, with access controlled through use of a key, card key, combination lock, or comparable mechanism.
 - d. **Optical discs (CDs or DVDs) in drives or jukeboxes attached to servers.** Data provided by DSHS on optical discs which will be attached to network servers and which will not be transported out of a Secure Area. Access to Data on these discs will be restricted to Authorized Users through the use of access control lists which will grant access only after the Authorized User has authenticated to the

network using a Unique User ID and Hardened Password or other authentication mechanisms which provide equal or greater security, such as biometrics or smart cards. Data on discs attached to such servers must be located in an area which is accessible only to authorized personnel, with access controlled through use of a key, card key, combination lock, or comparable mechanism.

- e. **Paper documents.** Any paper records must be protected by storing the records in a Secure Area which is only accessible to authorized personnel. When not in use, such records must be stored in a Secure Area.
- f. **Remote Access.** Access to and use of the Data over the State Governmental Network (SGN) or Secure Access Washington (SAW) will be controlled by DSHS staff who will issue authentication credentials (e.g. a Unique User ID and Hardened Password) to Authorized Users on Contractor's staff. Contractor will notify DSHS staff immediately whenever an Authorized User in possession of such credentials is terminated or otherwise leaves the employ of the Contractor, and whenever an Authorized User's duties change such that the Authorized User no longer requires access to perform work for this Contract.
- g. **Data storage on portable devices or media.**
 - (1) Except where otherwise specified herein, DSHS Data shall not be stored by the Lead/sub grantee on portable devices or media unless specifically authorized within the terms and conditions of the Grant. If so authorized, the Data shall be given the following protections:
 - (a) Encrypt the Data.
 - (b) Control access to devices with a Unique User ID and Hardened Password or stronger authentication method such as a physical token or biometrics.
 - (c) Manually lock devices whenever they are left unattended and set devices to lock automatically after a period of inactivity, if this feature is available. Maximum period of inactivity is 20 minutes.
 - (d) Apply administrative and physical security controls to Portable Devices and Portable Media by:
 - i. Keeping them in a Secure Area when not in use,
 - ii. Using check-in/check-out procedures when they are shared, and
 - iii. Taking frequent inventories.
 - (2) When being transported outside of a Secure Area, Portable Devices and Portable Media with DSHS Confidential Information must be under the physical control of Lead/sub grantee staff with authorization to access the Data, even if the Data is encrypted.
- h. **Data stored for backup purposes.**
 - (1) DSHS Confidential Information may be stored on Portable Media as part of a Lead/sub grantee's existing, documented backup process for business continuity or disaster recovery purposes. Such storage is authorized until such time as that media would be reused during the course of normal backup operations. If backup media is retired while DSHS Confidential Information still exists upon it, such media will be

destroyed at that time in accordance with the disposition requirements below in Section 8 *Data Disposition*.

- (2) Data may be stored on non-portable media (e.g. Storage Area Network drives, virtual media, etc.) as part of a Lead/sub grantee's existing, documented backup process for business continuity or disaster recovery purposes. If so, such media will be protected as otherwise described in this exhibit. If this media is retired while DSHS Confidential Information still exists upon it, the data will be destroyed at that time in accordance with the disposition requirements below in Section 8 *Data Disposition*.

i. **Cloud storage.** DSHS Confidential Information requires protections equal to or greater than those specified elsewhere within this exhibit. Cloud storage of Data is problematic as neither DSHS nor the Lead/sub grantee has control of the environment in which the Data is stored. For this reason:

- (1) DSHS Data will not be stored in any consumer grade Cloud solution, unless all of the following conditions are met:
 - (a) Lead/sub grantee has written procedures in place governing use of the Cloud storage and Contractor attests in writing that all such procedures will be uniformly followed.
 - (b) The Data will be Encrypted while within the Lead/sub grantee network.
 - (c) The Data will remain Encrypted during transmission to the Cloud.
 - (d) The Data will remain Encrypted at all times while residing within the Cloud storage solution.
 - (e) The Lead/sub grantee will possess a decryption key for the Data, and the decryption key will be possessed only by the Lead/sub grantee and/or DSHS.
 - (f) The Data will not be downloaded to non-authorized systems, meaning systems that are not on either the DSHS or Lead/sub grantee networks.
 - (g) The Data will not be decrypted until downloaded onto a computer within the control of an Authorized User and within either the DSHS or Lead/sub grantee's network.
- (2) Data will not be stored on an Enterprise Cloud storage solution unless either:
 - (a) The Cloud storage provider is treated as any other Sub-Contractor, and agrees in writing to all of the requirements within this exhibit; or,
 - (b) The Cloud storage solution used is FedRAMP certified.
- (3) If the Data includes protected health information covered by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), the Cloud provider must sign a Business Associate Agreement prior to Data being stored in their Cloud solution.

6. **System Protection.** To prevent compromise of systems which contain DSHS Data or through which that Data passes:

- a. Systems containing DSHS Data must have all security patches or hotfixes applied

- within 3 months of being made available.
- b. The Lead/sub grantee will have a method of ensuring that the requisite patches and hotfixes have been applied within the required timeframes.
- c. Systems containing DSHS Data shall have an Anti-Malware application, if available, installed.
- d. Anti-Malware software shall be kept up to date. The product, its anti-virus engine, and any malware database the system uses, will be no more than one update behind current.

7. Data Segregation.

- a. DSHS Data must be segregated or otherwise distinguishable from non-DSHS data. This is to ensure that when no longer needed by the Lead/sub grantee, all DSHS Data can be identified for return or destruction. It also aids in determining whether DSHS Data has or may have been compromised in the event of a security breach. As such, one or more of the following methods will be used for data segregation.
 - (1) DSHS Data will be kept on media (e.g. hard disk, optical disc, tape, etc.) which will contain no non-DSHS Data. And/or,
 - (2) DSHS Data will be stored in a logical container on electronic media, such as a partition or folder dedicated to DSHS Data. And/or,
 - (3) DSHS Data will be stored in a database which will contain no non-DSHS data. And/or,
 - (4) DSHS Data will be stored within a database and will be distinguishable from non-DSHS data by the value of a specific field or fields within database records.
 - (5) When stored as physical paper documents, DSHS Data will be physically segregated from non-DSHS data in a drawer, folder, or other container.
- b. When it is not feasible or practical to segregate DSHS Data from non-DSHS data, then both the DSHS Data and the non-DSHS data with which it is commingled must be protected as described in this exhibit.

- 8. Data Disposition.** When the contracted work has been completed or when the Data is no longer needed, except as noted above in Section 5.b, Data shall be returned to DSHS or destroyed. Media on which Data may be stored and associated acceptable methods of destruction are as follows:

Data stored on:	Will be destroyed by:
Server or workstation hard disks, or Removable media (e.g. floppies, USB flash drives, portable hard disks) excluding optical discs	Using a "wipe" utility which will overwrite the Data at least three (3) times using either random or single character data, or Degaussing sufficiently to ensure that the Data cannot be reconstructed, or Physically destroying the disk
Paper documents with sensitive or Confidential Information	Recycling through a contracted firm, provided the contract with the recycler

	assures that the confidentiality of Data will be protected.
Paper documents containing Confidential Information requiring special handling (e.g. protected health information)	On-site shredding, pulping, or incineration
Optical discs (e.g. CDs or DVDs)	Incineration, shredding, or completely defacing the readable surface with a coarse abrasive
Magnetic tape	Degaussing, incinerating or crosscut shredding

9. **Notification of Compromise or Potential Compromise.** The compromise or potential compromise of DSHS shared Data must be reported to COMMERCE and DSHS Privacy Officer at dshsprivacyofficer@dshs.wa.gov designated within one (1) business day of discovery. Lead/sub grantee must also take actions to mitigate the risk of loss and comply with any notification or other requirements imposed by law or DSHS.
10. **Data shared with Subcontractors.** If DSHS Data provided under this Grant is to be shared with a subcontractor, the Grant with the subcontractor must include all of the data security provisions within this Grant and within any amendments, attachments, or exhibits within this Grant. If the Lead grantee cannot protect the Data as articulated within this Grant, then the contract with the sub grantee must be submitted to COMMERCE for review and approval.