

Project-Based Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) Funded Via the Consolidated RFP: Workflow Overview

Background/Purpose: As part of Mayor Bowser’s commitment to creating affordable housing and ending homelessness, the District has developed a Consolidated RFP for affordable housing projects. Under the Bowser Administration, DCHD has done significant work to promote the creation of Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) by aligning the Consolidated RFP with the Interagency Council on Homelessness (ICH) Strategic Plan, Homeward DC. The Consolidated RFP makes available the three funding sources needed for PSH – capital, operating, and service funding – in one RFP. As projects have come online, there have been a number of lessons learned regarding where policy needs to be clarified, where operational changes may be needed, and where additional tweaks to future rounds of the RFP could be helpful. A group of ICH stakeholders (government, service providers, and developer reps) met in March to map out our understanding of the workflow process in order to identify where common questions and challenges were emerging. This document attempts to summarize that conversation.

Step in Process	Lead Entity	Timeline	Next Steps/Action Tracker
<p>1. Developer and PSH service provider are awarded a project through the DHCD consolidated RFP.</p> <p><i>Items for discussion/clarification:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do PSH service providers need to come from a qualified pool of PSH service providers? • What guidance is available on how to become a qualified PSH service provider? • What are the eligibility requirements and tenant selection commitments for PSH units with DBH funding only or both DBH and DHS funding? • Can developer change their choice of PSH service provider after an award? What is the process? 	<p>DHCD makes selections from Consolidated RFP</p>	<p>Consolidated RFPs and award announcements generally happen twice a year</p>	
<p>2. Developer/PSH service provider meet to review project plan, building design, and talk about steps needed by both before project plan is finalized at closing.</p> <p><i>Items for discussion/clarification:</i></p> <p><i>As we try to troubleshoot issues related to owners with high screening criteria – we had questions about whether we could take additional steps to mitigate the issue at the solicitation phase or as part of closing.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could DHCD add requirements? For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A written tenant selection plan (for all units, or minimally PSH units) 	<p>Developer and PSH provider</p>	<p>Ahead of closing</p>	

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<p><i>documenting specifically how the developer and service provider will work together to fill PSH units through CAHP, what credit/criminal/rental history screening criteria will be used, and if/how credit/criminal/rental history screening criteria will be adjusted to make the units accessible to the PSH population.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Notice of any application fees for other fees required, and a plan for making sure these fees are not a barrier to the PSH applicants (ideally, waiving them)</i> ● <i>Could we require the developer to forgo additional screening of clients referred for PSH, since they will be screened by DCHA with regard to eligibility for the voucher?</i> ● <i>Are there standard documents that can be offered to improve/ease the process?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Sample Developer/Service Provider MOUs</i> ○ <i>Sample HCA agreement (showing the scope of services and expectations between DHS and service providers)</i> ○ <i>Credit/criminal/rental history screening criteria for PSH tenants</i> ● <i>Can DHCD/ICH provide legal guidance about how making units accessible to PSH tenants is permissible under encouraged by Fair Housing laws?</i> 			
<p>3. Affordable housing project proceeds through normal process (underwriting, permits, closing, etc.)</p>	<p>Developer, DHCD</p>	<p>Often can take 2-3 years</p>	
<p>4. Developer/PSH service provider meet to review updated project plans and building design as needed.</p> <p><i>Items for discussion/clarification:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>It some cases, it seems that there is not always much contact between the developer and provider until it is time to lease up, at which point things get accelerated and processes start breaking down (because partners are not on the same page and not enough time is allowed for each step). Are there actions we can take to incentivize better planning and communication?</i> 	<p>Developer and PSH provider</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	

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<p>5. Developer/PSH service provider keep CAHP and DHS updated about anticipated opening date (just estimates, these projections typically shift).</p> <p>Note: Developer/PSH service provider should discuss with DHS/ICH/CAHP Administrators whether there should be a special target population for the PSH units given system needs.</p>	Developer/PSH provider	Ongoing	
<p>6. CAHP system is identifying a pool of tenants likely to be matched to project, and taking steps to engage them and help with document collection.</p> <p><i>Items for discussion/clarification:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Developer/PSH service provider is providing a list of eligibility and screening criteria for units so CAHP can best target pool of tenants.</i> 	CAHP System, Developer/PSH Service Provider	6 months before anticipated project opening	
<p>7. PSH provider contacts DHS/OCP about establishing/expanding Human Care Agreement to be able to accept CAHP referrals.</p> <p>DHS/OCP establishes or expands Human Care Agreement (HCA).</p> <p><i>Items for discussion/clarification:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Developer has funding agreements with DHCD, DCHA, and (often) DCHFA.</i> • <i>Developer typically has an MOU with the PSH Service Provider.</i> • <i>PSH Service Provider has a funding agreement with DHS, but there is no direct agreement between the Developer and DHS. What leverage do we have to ensure developer is taking the clients intended to be served through PSH?</i> • <i>What agreements in place when DBH is the service provider?</i> <p>Note 1: ICH, DHS, and DHCD to coordinate during budget prep to identify service funding needed for project-based PSH units coming online during next fiscal year.</p> <p>Note 2: Because DBH is using CSAs to provide services, property owners have voiced concern about inconsistent services and lack of a single point of contact. This is connected to issues related to client choice and Medicaid reimbursement within the DBH system. Issue to be referred to ICH Medicaid for follow up.</p>	Service Provider initiates.	7 months before anticipated project opening	Follow up on Note 2: Per discussion with Dr. Royster, we will refer this issue to ICH Medicaid Work Group for follow up.

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8. Developer/PSH service provider notify CAHP when project is ready for tenant referrals.	Developer/PSH provider	4 ½ months before anticipated project opening	CAHP Leadership Team Follow-Up
9. CAHP matches individuals to site-based PSH project <i>Items for CAHP discussion/clarification:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only match individuals who are engaged and document ready? 	CAHP System Administrator	4 months before anticipated project opening	CAHP Leadership Team Follow-Up
10. PSH service provider and any outreach providers assigned locate and engage the matched tenants, help with document collection, and submit housing applications to developer.	PSH service provider	Can take 2-4 weeks (presumes matched tenant is already engaged, has or is close to having documents), start process 12-14 weeks before project opening	CAHP Leadership Team Follow-Up
11. Developer/Property Manager does internal screening for eligibility and credit/criminal background screening. <i>Items for CAHP discussion/clarification:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently, service providers report that some property managers will not share their screening criteria. This makes it difficult to pull people from the CAHP registry that will make it through their process. What remedies are possible? 	Developer/Property Manager	Can take 1-2 weeks, start process 10 weeks before project opening	
12. Developer submits approved applications to DCHA. 13. DCHA approves applications and does unit inspections. 15. DHS pays security deposit to developer (when does DHS need notice?)	Multiple Partners	8 weeks before project opening	

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<p><i>Items for CAHP discussion/clarification:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Additional process mapping needed to detail steps for this portion of the process. Providers report process for project-based PSH units different than tenant-based PSHP units. Can they be streamlined through use of DHS Step Tool?</i> <i>Additionally, concerns were raised about inspections taking 2-3 months (can units be pre-inspected? Is there a time limit on the inspection?), paperwork expiring (what are DCHFA's requirements and how do they intersect with this process?), and complications getting security deposits paid.</i> 			
<p>16. Tenant signs lease and HAP; final arrangements re: move-in are made; provider continues working with client per the terms of their Human Care Agreement with DHS.</p>	<p>Developer/PSH provider</p>	<p>At project opening</p>	