**Central Upper Peninsula**

**Michigan Balance of State Continuum of Care**

Covering Alger, Baraga, Delta, Dickinson, Iron, Houghton, Keweenaw, Marquette, Menominee, Schoolcraft Counties

**Homelessness Shelter Policies**

Shelter for those experiencing homelessness in the 10 counties of the Central Upper Peninsula is provided through the coordination of services by a variety of physical shelter facilities and the night-by-night use of hotels or motels. Funding for these services may be provided through a combination of federal funding, state funding, and local philanthropy. All shelters are bound by the guidelines of each of their federal or state funding sources while coordinating with other regional resources. The coordination of these services includes the following standards:

**Whenever possible, a discussion about finding alternatives to shelter by staying with friends or family is encouraged prior to shelter entry.**

**Eligibility Criteria**:

The household (individual or family) is literally homeless, meaning the household lacks a fixed, regular, safe, and adequate nighttime residence or has a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not meant for human habitation.

**Shelters shall be low-barrier and allow for equal access, including but not limited to**:

* The shelter is accessible for all clients in accordance with: a. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act; b. Title II of the American Disabilities Act; c. Title III of the American Disabilities Act; d. The Fair Housing Act (42 U.S.C. 3601 et seq.); e. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act; f. HUD’s Equal Access in Accordance with Gender Identity Rule; and g. Michigan’s Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act
* Sobriety is not a condition for entry, stay, or access to services. Rules address behaviors, not the cause of behaviors, to ensure safety and security of guests and the facility
* Does not discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or family composition

1. Within shelters serving family groups, allowing all family members to be sheltered together. Family is defined by HUD, as a group of persons residing together, and such group includes, but is not limited to:
   1. A family with or without children (a child who is temporarily away from the home because of placement in foster care is considered a member of the family);
   2. An elderly family;
   3. A near-elderly family;
   4. A disabled family;
   5. A displaced family; and,
   6. The remaining member of a tenant family.

(From: <https://www.hudexchange.info/faqs/programs/emergency-solutions-grants-esg-program/program-requirements/eligible-participants/how-is-the-definition-of-family-that-was-included/)>

* Having the capacity to serve consumers that need accessibility accommodations.

**Shelters shall refer clients, on the next business day, to the Coordinated Entry Call Center housed at the HARA to receive:**

* Shelter diversion services and referral to local Housing Advocacy/Street Outreach services
* Intense shelter Diversion by Street Outreach while in shelter; should engage with clients multiple times in the first 7 days to resolve homelessness
* Assessment (according to MIBOSCOC Coordinated Entry Policy) of need for further housing program resources
* Placement on the MSHDA Housing Choice Voucher list with homeless preference

**Only under the following circumstances may the Shelter Provider refuse services:**

* The shelter facility is at capacity
* Persons seeking assistance have a documented history of (or is currently) being disruptive, abusive, or excessively disorderly or other characteristics not conducive to staying in an emergency shelter.
  + Denials shall focus on evaluating current exhibited behavior, weighted against the severity of the previous offense. While past issues should not automatically bar a person from accessing services, the provider must consider if the risk to staff or other program participants is too great to allow entrance.
  + If services are refused by the above criteria, all efforts should be made to refer the household to another shelter service that is able to accommodate them.
  + Denial shall be authorized by someone other than the intake worker. If only one person is available, there must be a process to engage other staff in reviewing the denial within 48 business hours.

**Motel/Hotel extensions are prioritized as follows:**

* Extensions are only available Nov-April
* Prioritizes motel/hotel extensions for:
  + Families with children
  + Youth under 25 years
  + Housing or in-patient Substance Use Disorder treatment facility is identified and is available after the initial 7-day stay
  + Adults with physician documentation of short-term health condition that requires temporary shelter

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One of the most difficult parts of providing shelter to those experiencing homelessness is that there are limited shelter resources available throughout the Central UP 10 counties leaving persons without shelter at times. Those limited resources must be prioritized in some way so that those who need shelter the most are able to receive it. To that end, the Central UP Local Planning Body has developed this process for those seeking shelter when the first point of contact is by accessing the Coordinated Entry Call Center and/or Street Outreach.

**First determine:**

Is there a physical shelter space available for the presenting population to be considered? Ask more about the following:

1. Do they need transportation to the shelter?
   1. Do they have a car?
   2. Is there public transportation available?
   3. Are there local community resources available for transportation?
2. Will they be able to continue with the following while in shelter?
   1. Are you currently working? Where?
   2. Do you have kids currently in school? (may be working on reunification)
   3. Are there court or probation limitations to where they reside?
   4. Do you have other services or supports you are currently using in your area (health or mental health services, daycare, family supports, etc)?
3. If no resolution to #1 & 2:
4. What would you need to be able to stay in this shelter and get to your job/ kid(s) to school/ to your supports as often as needed?
5. Are you interested in moving to (the area where shelter is available) and potentially finding a new job/school/support in that area?

**If no physical shelter options:**

Is a motel/hotel shelter an appropriate option?

1. Is there funding available?
2. Is the contact happening during business hours?
   1. If yes, the above procedure should be followed.
   2. If no, the after-hours provider will determine that the household is eligible for shelter and cannot access a local shelter and then make a hotel referral through the next business day. After this, the household will need to contact Coordinated Entry for assessment.
3. Do they fit into one of the prioritized categories (November-April only)?
4. If no, complete process for entering them into a hotel/motel for 7 days and communicate that the household will not be eligible for extension.