



What is Mercer Housing Now?

Mercer Housing Now is a demonstration project using funding from a HUD demonstration grant and NJ Division of Family Development to implement a seamless rapid rehousing system for Mercer County. It includes families on TANF and those who are not eligible for TANF and provides for a centralized screening process to determine eligibility.

What are the goals of the demonstration?

1. To demonstrate a seamless system with a single point of entry and screening.
2. To demonstrate a rapid re-housing strategy for families who are homeless and have moderate barriers to housing.

Mercer Housing Now implements all the components of a rapid rehousing program; housing search, direct financial assistance (rent, security, utilities), landlord mediation, case management, flexible funding/wrap-around services and short-term rental assistance.

What role will the County Welfare Agency (CWA) play in the demonstration?

MCBOSS, the Mercer CWA plays a key role in the demonstration. Families who become homeless are seen by the CWA to determine their eligibility for Emergency Assistance (EA). Emergency Assistance pays for shelters, transitional housing and Temporary Rental Assistance (TRAs).

The demonstration will utilize TRAs and home-based case management to rapidly rehouse families with moderate barriers to housing. The CWA will provide the screening to determine eligibility for the rapid rehousing demonstration for both TANF families and Non-TANF families. The CWA case managers will be part of the rapid rehousing team.

How is rental assistance paid for?

- Family on TANF - MCBOSS uses TRA for up to 18 months; review every 3 months.
- Family not on TANF - HUD grant pays short term rental assistance up to 18 months; review every 3 months.

How will home-based case management be provided?

The case management service will be RFP'd. The case management provider will be referred to as the rapid rehousing provider and will be responsible for working with MCBOSS and the shelter/transitional provider to quickly move family into housing and provide services to stabilize that housing. They will be involved in housing search, work with landlords, and work with family to determine what financial assistance is needed (rent, security, utilities etc) and ongoing case management and linkage to services to help families stabilize their housing. MCBOSS case managers will be part of the rapid rehousing team.

How much does the rental assistance and case management cost per person?

- Rental Assistance is based on the average TRA in Mercer County
\$600 a month/ \$7200 annually.
- Case management is \$585 a month/ \$7000 annually

What is Rapid Re-housing?

Rapid re-housing is a set of strategies to help families quickly move out of homelessness and into permanent housing.

Philosophy

When people are stably housed, everything else stabilizes.

What's different?

Creates the infrastructure necessary to move families quickly from homeless to housing

- Funding up front for housing related expenses; rent, security, utilities
- Housing search and landlord support
- Provides services once family is stably housed

Engages family in the solution to their

- housing crisis immediately

What are the components of rapid re-housing?

- Housing search
- Direct financial assistance
 - Rent, security, utilities
- Landlord mediation/someone to act as intermediary with landlord
- Case management focused on housing stabilization/what is needed to maintain housing
- Flexible funding/wrap-around services to meet families needs
- Short-term rental assistance

Who are the target population(s)?

Families with moderate housing barriers.

Example of barriers

- Poor or no rental history
- Eviction history
- No high school diploma
- History of substance abuse but not currently using

What is present in the successful rapid re-housing programs?

- System response
- Centralized screening criteria
- Focus on housing stabilization
- Flexibility based on needs
- Home-based case management and wrap-around services