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**SAPC INFORMATION NOTICE 25-04**

April 11, 2025

TO: Recovery Bridge Housing and Recovery Housing Providers

FROM: Gary Tsai, M.D., Bureau Director *AT*  
Substance Abuse Prevention and Control Bureau

**SUBJECT: RECOVERY HOUSING INFORMATIONAL NOTICE**

The California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) awarded Behavioral Health Bridge Housing (BHBH) program funds to the Los Angeles County, Department of Public Health, Substance Abuse Prevention and Control Bureau (SAPC) to address the immediate housing needs of people experiencing homelessness (PEH) who have serious behavioral health conditions including a serious mental illness and/or substance use disorder (SUD). The funding provides an opportunity for SAPC to introduce a new service, Recovery Housing (RH).

RH is low barrier recovery-oriented interim housing provided for young adults (ages 18-20) and adults (ages 21+) who have substance use disorders and minimal risk of acute biomedical and mental health issues that would prevent them from being safely housed. Certain populations, such as PEH, are particularly at risk for relapse without access to housing and should be prioritized for this benefit. Participants in RH must be interested in living in recovery-oriented housing and be interested in following RH requirements. However, while it is encouraged, concurrent enrollment in treatment is not a condition of residing in RH.

The purpose of this Informational Notice is to provide information on RH, a new service that will be available to participants within the SAPC treatment network.

**Participant Eligibility:**

- In need of a stable, safe, and recovery-oriented living environment to best support their substance use recovery.
- Engaged in SUD treatment and/or RBH in the last 90 days at a DPH-SAPC contracted agency.
- Able to conduct activities of daily living independently.

Program participation is voluntary and the participant must choose recovery-oriented housing. Those placed in RH must be allowed to continue receiving Medications for Addiction Treatment (MAT) when clinically indicated and cannot be excluded from admission. RH providers need to have policies and procedures to ensure a patient-centered process for RH patients receiving MAT.

Additionally, the RH program will ensure participants are continuously engaged in SAPC housing navigation or other housing navigation services, or participants have already established a housing plan for when they are discharged from RH.

**Participant Prioritization:**

The following high-risk populations must be prioritized for RH according to the following ranking:

1. CARE program participants
2. Pregnant and parenting people
3. History of intravenous drug use
4. Patients with high utilization of treatment services
5. People experiencing chronic homelessness
6. People who are justice-involved without alternative options for recovery housing
7. Young Adults (ages 18-20)
8. PEH stepping down from residential treatment
9. Person living with HIV/AIDS
10. LGBTQIA populations

**Program Length:**

Adult (18+) participants may be authorized and reimbursed for a cumulative total of up to 12 months within the last 2 years (does not need to be consecutive) if they meet the eligibility criteria specified above. SAPC wants to avoid planned transitions out of RH to unsheltered homelessness. SAPC will consider one extension up to 3 months beyond the 12 months allowance on a case-by-case basis.

If a provider would like to request an extension, they must submit a written request to SAPC explaining the circumstances and a final determination will be made by SAPC.

**Referral Process:**

Referrals for RH should be made directly to SAPC. The referral can be made by:

- Any SUD treatment provider within the SAPC network
- A service provider (e.g., Department of Mental Health, Interim Housing Provider)
- The participant themselves (self-referral)
- One of the SAPC entryways:
  - Connecting to Opportunities for Recovery and Engagement (CORE) Centers
  - Substance Abuse Service Helpline (SASH)
  - Client Engagement and Navigation Services (CENS)

**Admission/Referral Procedure:**

- Referring party must complete a Recovery Housing Referral Form (Attachment I) up to 30 days but no later than 3 days prior to intended intake date.
- Submit Recovery Housing Referral Form via a secure email to [DPH-SAPC\\_HSU@ph.lacounty.gov](mailto:DPH-SAPC_HSU@ph.lacounty.gov)
- SAPC team will review the referral and respond with a disposition within one business day.
- If there are beds available, SAPC staff will coordinate with referring party and the RH provider to place the participant in the available bed.
- Only participants approved by SAPC will be placed in the beds.
- If there are no current available beds, participant will be added to a waitlist.

**Conditions of Referral Process:**

- Agencies operating RH cannot restrict access to this benefit to only their own agency's treatment patients.
- Agencies are required to accept referrals to available beds from other network providers and refer their patients to other available RH beds if they have met their capacity.

**Discharge Procedure:**

- Complete and submit Recovery Housing Discharge Form (Attachment II) to SAPC at [DPH-SAPC\\_HSU@ph.lacounty.gov](mailto:DPH-SAPC_HSU@ph.lacounty.gov) within one business day of client discharge.

**Participant Discharge from RH:**

- Relapse is not treated as an automatic cause for eviction from housing or termination from the program.
- Discharge from housing only occurs under the following conditions:
  - Participant is no longer interested in residing in RH and voluntarily leaves

- on their own accord.
- When a participant's behavior substantially disrupts or impacts the welfare of the recovery community in which the participant resides.
- If the participant is no longer able to benefit from RH due to becoming medically or psychiatrically unstable, the provider will work to refer the client to a more appropriate treatment or housing setting.
- Participants may apply to reenter the program if they express a renewed commitment to living in a recovery-oriented housing setting and if they have not yet exceeded the program limit of 12 months within the last 2 years.
- Participants who determine they are no longer interested in living in recovery-oriented housing or who are discharged from the program must be assisted with accessing other housing and service options.

### **Program Requirements:**

- SAPC-contracted beds must only be dedicated for SAPC-approved participants. Providers utilizing SAPC-contracted beds for non-SAPC members (i.e., not approved by SAPC) are out of compliance with SAPC contract requirements.

### **Facility Requirements:**

- Programs must meet or exceed National Alliance for Recovery Residences (NARR) standards of care, including ensuring that there is 50 or more square feet per bed per sleeping room (NARR standard Core Principle E.14.d) and that there is a minimum of one sink, toilet and shower per six residents (NARR standard Core Principle E.14.e): <https://narronline.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/NARR-Standard-3.0.pdf>.

### **Considerations:**

- Incorporate low-barrier policies whenever possible, including:
  - Separate beds (or housing) for participants who lapse and are under the influence while still maintaining housing placement and if not disruptive to other residents.
  - Establishing a "buddy support system" after a participant lapses to support individuals during this transition phase to maintain their recovery and recovery-oriented housing.
  - Differentiating between a "relapse" and a "lapse" and continuing housing placement for participants that lapse.
    - Relapse: Re-engaging in substance use with no plans on stopping use.
    - Lapse: Re-engaging in substance use but acknowledging that the use was a mistake and still being committed to recovery and following recovery-oriented housing rules.

- Encouraging an increase in participation in self-help meetings as applicable when a participant lapses.
- Not treating a lapse as an automatic cause for eviction from housing or termination from the program.
- Providing a warm hand-off to an appropriate level of care or other service, with an open-door policy for them to return when ready, in instances where participants must be discharged.
- Ensuring smooth treatment/service referrals when participants do need to be discharged from recovery-oriented housing so that they do not feel abandoned, but rather feel supported in that transition, with an open door to return when they are ready.
- Providers should consider establishing an intake agreement with participants to outline house rules and roles and responsibilities of participant and RH provider.
- Toxicology testing (aka: drug testing) is allowed in RH facilities. However, a positive toxicology (drug/alcohol) test is not automatic grounds for immediate removal from the program. The provider should work with the participants to refer them to SUD treatment or a higher level of care if they are interested. If they are not interested in a referral to SUD treatment or a higher level of care, the provider should assist with finding a more appropriate housing type.

**Billing Procedure:**

As described above, providers are eligible for reimbursement for RH services provided only to individuals approved and placed by SAPC. Providers will be reimbursed in accordance with the following respective rates below:

Recovery Housing Day Rate	Recovery Housing Day Rate (Pregnant/Parenting Women and Children)
\$60.50	\$65.00

To be reimbursed, providers must submit approved invoices and follow the steps described below. Additional information is available in Attachment IV:

1. Complete an RH Bed Claim Submission (Attachment III) for services provided during the previous month. Complete one RH Bed Claim Submission per site.
2. Submit the completed RH Bed Claim Submission to SAPC Finance at [SAPC-Finance@ph.lacounty.gov](mailto:SAPC-Finance@ph.lacounty.gov) by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month, for the previous month.

Providers must ensure RH Bed Claims Submissions are completed accurately and submitted by the deadline to ensure timely processing and payment. SAPC will review invoices, including validating participant placement and dates of service.

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Attachments

- I. Recovery Housing Referral Form
- II. Recovery Housing Discharge Form
- III. RH Bed Claim Submission
- IV. RH Billing Procedure