

Wait list protocol for Maine DHHS Shelter Plus Care (SPC)

1. All eligible applicants, will be recorded on an applicant wait list. A Local Administrative Agent may close the waitlist if the number of applicants exceeds 20% of the LAA's SPC allocation.
2. Shelter Plus Care assistance is designed to link rental assistance with supportive services for people with severe, long-term, indefinite disabilities who are experiencing literal homelessness. Primarily DHHS SPC assistance is awarded to people with a diagnosed severe mental illness or people with co-occurring severe mental illness and chronic drug or alcohol abuse problems. As funding allows, other eligible populations are awarded assistance. These populations include people diagnosed with the following conditions without a co-occurring severe mental illness diagnosis: chronic alcohol or drug abuse and HIV/AIDS if the condition is disabling.
3. Per HUD regulations, a person shall be considered to have a disability if such person has a physical, mental, or emotional impairment which is expected to be of long-continued and indefinite duration; substantially impedes his or her ability to live independently; and is of such nature that such ability could be improved by more suitable housing conditions.
4. Per HUD regulations a person is literally homeless if he/she is currently residing in an emergency shelter, or living in places not meant for human habitation or residing in transitional housing if they were directly admitted from an emergency shelter or a place not meant for human habitation.
5. New SPC awards shall be issued by the Local Administrative Agency in an amount up to but not exceeding each agency's target allocation of vouchers. Within available resources, the CAA in consultation with the Director of Housing Resource Development may modify a particular LAA's target allocation and/or the statewide pool of available vouchers to better meet the needs of persons on the waitlist.
6. Factors to be considered in making award determinations include: date and time of completed application, determination of eligibility status, availability of appropriate SPC voucher.
 - a. Application Processing**
 - i. All applications will receive a date/time stamp when they are received by the LAA.
 - ii. LAA's will only enter completed applications on the wait list.
 - iii. Complete applications:
 1. Will contain all required documentation
 2. Will be reviewed by the LAA against eligibility standards.
 3. Will be placed on waitlist if eligibility standards are met
 4. Will utilize the date/time stamp associated with the final documentation submitted. (Example: Application is submitted on 9/1/2010 2:03pm without the disability document. Disability documentation is submitted on 9/3/2010 at 10:34AM. 9/3/2010 at 10:34am will be the application's date/time stamp.)
 - iv. Incomplete applications
 1. Will be returned to sender and will include a letter/checklist of missing items needed to determine eligibility.
 2. Will not retain the date/time stamp of original submission
 - b. Eligibility Status**
 - i. Eligibility Status will be determined at time of application, and again at time of award if literal homeless documentation is older than 14 days. All eligibility standards (disability, homelessness, income) will be confirmed via third party verification.
 1. Eligible applicants will be sent either a waitlist letter or voucher award letter.
 2. Ineligible applicants will be sent a denial letter which will include the reason for denial and the DHHS Subsidy Appeal Procedure.

c. Voucher Characteristics

- i. For every SPC grant, the Department contracts with HUD for a specific composition of unit characteristics. All contracts must meet these minimum requirements **before** temporary expansion slots can be issued to other eligible households. Units are assigned to each LAA based on this contract. The designation categories are a combination of the following criteria:
 - 1. designated unit size; and
 - 2. designated city or county; and
 - 3. designated disability target; and
 - 4. designated for use by persons experiencing chronic homelessness.
- ii. The CAA is responsible for DHHS's compliance with the HUD contracts and will notify the LAA if temporary expansion slots become available under any particular grant. These additional vouchers may be restricted by unit size but are not restricted regarding disability type.

d. Voucher Release:

- i. LAA will review the waitlist to locate an eligible household.
 - ii. If the first household on the waitlist does not meet the available voucher criteria then the LAA will continue down the waitlist and award the voucher to the first household which meets the voucher requirements.
 - iii. The eligible waitlist applicant will be sent a letter to the last know mailing address and be given 10 days to verify their current living situation. If no mailing address is available the LAA should verbally contact staff/family at the last known living situation.
 - iv. Literal homeless living situation documentation must be within 14 days of the voucher award letter.
 - v. Once literal homelessness is confirmed the applicant will be issued a voucher award letter.
7. Waitlist Log. LAA will create and maintain a log of approved applications utilizing at minimum the following fields from the list below. The LAA may add to this list upon approval from the CAA. The Department and/or CAA may request the waitlists from time to time.
- 1. LAA Name
 - 2. Preferred County
 - 3. Date of Completed Application
 - 4. Time of Completed Application
 - 5. Name (Last, First)
 - 6. Primary Disability
 - 7. Chronically Homeless
 - 8. Status of Application
 - 9. Reason for removal from Wait List
 - 10. Grant Name
 - 11. Owes \$
 - 12. Notes
 - 13. Other fields designated at LAAs discretion