

Multnomah County
Aging, Disability & Veterans Services Division
Safety Net Program: Emergency Housing Assistance
Emergency Shelter Assistance Guidelines

PURPOSE: To provide emergency shelter to clients of the ADVSD network who would be endangered by a lack of housing. Shelter may include emergency placement in a community based care setting such as an adult care home or residential care facility, or in a motel.

Access to this program is contingent upon availability of limited funds. If demand exceeds capacity/budget, ADVSD reserves the right to limit or terminate program services.

ELIGIBILITY:

To be eligible for assistance, an applicant must be a resident of Multnomah County (to meet the residency requirement, the applicant must have continuously lived in Multnomah County for at least sixty days prior to the request and have the intent to remain a resident of Multnomah County indefinitely; this program is not intended to assist individuals in establishing residency in Multnomah County) and:

1. **Same as general eligibility for Emergency Housing Assistance Program** (e.g. age, disability, Multnomah County resident, financial need)
2. Must have a physical or mental impairment or combination of impairments, or be of advanced age so that the lack of shelter would create a significant risk to health or safety.
3. Have a need for shelter based on one of the following:
 - Homelessness or at risk
 - Residing in housing which poses an **immediate and significant health risk**, or
 - At risk because of domestic violence or care giver abuse
4. **Unable to safely use existing homeless shelters** because of the factors indicated in “2”; or cannot access a shelter because there are no shelter beds available. *Note: a client without a tuberculosis (TB) card would be considered temporarily unable to access the shelter system and could be provided assistance for up to five nights while actively attempting to obtain a TB card.*
5. **Have a plan for housing stability after assistance is provided** or be in the process of developing a plan (client must be working with a housing specialist or a community provider if they are working on a plan).
6. **Must be suitable for the emergency shelter being requested.** Clients who need assistance with personal care, for example, may not be safe in a motel. Clients actively abusing drugs or alcohol or who have behavioral issues that could pose a risk to other persons would not be appropriate for an unsupervised emergency shelter placement.

7. All other community resources must be explored before accessing this fund.

ELIGIBLE EXPENSES:

Up to **\$65** a night may be authorized for shelter in a motel, adult care home, residential care or assisted living facility.

USE:

- Emergency shelter assistance (sometimes referred to as a “voucher”) is typically requested by an Adult Protective Services investigator, After-Hours Consultant, community social worker, or other social service professional on behalf of the applicant. Only in rare, usually weather-related circumstances, will assistance be provided directly to applicants at their request. Assistance is limited in this way to ensure that funding is appropriately used in supporting a long term plan for housing stability.
- All emergency shelter assistance must be screened by ADVSD Program Staff before issuance except in the following situations:
 - APS determines that an emergent need exists and is unable to contact ADVSD Program Staff for approval.
 - After-Hours: After-Hours Consultants are delegated the authority to issue motel vouchers if they feel this is appropriate and will contact the on-call ADVSD manager for assistance with other type of shelter placements.
 - An ADVSD manager or supervisor determines that an emergent need for sheltering exists and is unable to contact ADVSD Program Staff for approval.

Assistance issued in this way should be for the shortest period necessary for ADVSD Program Staff to review the emergency shelter request.

PROCEDURE FOR REQUESTING EMERGENCY SHELTER:

The procedure for requesting assistance varies depending on the circumstance.

1. The issuing worker should complete the ADVSD Emergency Shelter Intake Form and email it to advsd.safetynet@multco.us. If approved, the worker completes the bottom portion of the payment form (Program Staff will forward you this upon approval) and faxes it to the motel or facility to complete. The completed voucher is then faxed to ADS (503-988-6199) or mailed to:
Emergency Housing Assistance Program
PO Box 40488 Portland OR 97240-0488
2. Vouchers should generally be issued for the shortest period possible. Motel vouchers are usually issued one week at a time. An applicant can be vouchered for a maximum of four weeks. A revised Housing Plan form will be needed for each week, even when the anticipated need exceeds this.
3. Generally speaking, the motel or adult care home/facility needs to be identified by the case manager and/or applicant and contact information must be provided within the application.

4. When possible, Medicaid should be retroactively used to cover the cost of facility stays if eligibility is determined after admission.
5. Applicants who need assistance with personal care should not be vouchered into a motel unless arrangements are also made for their care needs.
6. Applicants with on-going substance addiction disorders should not be vouchered into a motel.
7. Applicants who may pose risk to others if unsupervised should not be vouchered into a motel.

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