



Frequently Asked Questions ABC's Homeless Housing Programs

What programs are offered through ABC?

- **Tenant Based Rental Assistance** programs for homeless individuals diagnosed with a serious mental illness who are currently enrolled in the Regional Behavioral Health Authority (RBHA). The current RBHA is Magellan and its contracted service providers: Southwest Network, CHOICES of AZ, People of Color Network and Partners in Recovery.
- **Transitional Housing Programs** offered through House of Refuge (HR) for homeless families.
- **Shelter Programs** provided by NOVA Safe Haven including a day program, as well as residential and supportive services for persons diagnosed with a serious mental illness.
- **Permanent Housing Programs** for persons diagnosed with HIV/AIDS offered through both Southwest Behavioral Health Services and Phoenix SHANTI Group.
- **Permanent Housing Programs** for persons diagnosed with a serious mental illness and enrolled in the RBHA offered through Southwest Behavioral Health Services.
- **Section 8 Mainstream Program** for persons with disabilities managed by HOM Inc. (Waitlist is currently closed)

ABC accepts applications for our Tenant Based Rental Assistance Program. All other programs have a separate application process and different criteria respectively. To apply for these programs or for more information, please contact the individual providers. For more information on each provider, visit our website at www.azabc.org.

How do I apply to ABC's Tenant Based Rental Assistance Program?

First, the applicant must meet the following criteria:

1. Be currently enrolled with the RBHA (Regional Behavioral Health Authority [Magellan])
2. Be homeless according to HUD's definition of homelessness*
3. Be able to live independently.**

Second, an ABC Housing Application must be submitted by the case manager and faxed to ABC at (602) 712-9222. Please contact ABC at (602) 712-9200 ext. 207 for further instructions on how to submit an application. Incomplete applications **will not** be accepted, and the applicant **will not** be placed on the waitlist until a complete application is received.

* HUD Definition of Homelessness

Homelessness

In general, a person is considered homeless if, without HUD assistance, he or she would have to spend the night in a homeless shelter or in a place not meant for human habitation.

More specifically, an individual is considered homeless if he or she is:

- Sleeping in an emergency shelter.
- Sleeping in places not meant for human habitation, such as cars, parks, sidewalks, or abandoned or condemned buildings.

- Living in a transitional housing program for homeless persons such as Ozanam Manor, UMOM, Labor's Community Services, The Haven House, etc. **Halfway Houses, Drug Rehab, or living with family or friends does not meet the HUD homeless definition.**

Chronic Homelessness

A person is considered to be chronically homeless if he or she:

- Meets all criteria of HUD's definition of homelessness and
- Has continuously met the homeless definition for 1 year or more or
- Has had four or more episodes of homelessness in the past three years (detailed documentation including dates of the episodes **must** be included for the applicant to be considered chronically homeless
- has an adult head of household (or a minor head of household if no adult is present in the household) with a diagnosable substance use disorder, serious mental illness, developmental disability (as defined in section 102 of the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000 (42 U.S.C. 15002)), post traumatic stress disorder, cognitive impairments resulting from a brain injury, or chronic physical illness or disability, including the co-occurrence of 2 or more of these conditions.

**** Independent Living**

Individual should be able to perform daily activities such as housekeeping, personal care, communication, money management, and an ability to follow program rules as well as abiding by a lease.

What should be included with my application to make it complete?

A complete application includes the application form with **complete** applicant information signed and dated by both the applicant and their case manager, the verification of homelessness form (2 pages), a certification of disability (2 pages) signed by a doctor or nurse at the respective clinic, as well as a letter of verification of homelessness. The letter should be submitted by the case manager on letterhead, signed and dated explaining how the case manager knows the applicant is homeless (i.e. Case manager has witnessed the client on a certain intersection or area of town, the applicant brings all their belongings to the clinic with them, or, in the case that the applicant is in transitional housing for persons originally homeless from the streets, a letter from the transitional housing program verifying the applicants participation in the program. This information should be obtained through first party outreach by the case manager. Please include as much detail as possible, and for applicants claiming chronic homeless* status, dates should be included as well.

What happens after the application has been submitted?

ABC will review the application and approve or deny the application. If approved, the applicant will be placed on the Homeless Housing Waitlist. If the application is denied, the case manager will receive a notification with information on how to appeal the decision. It is the case manager's responsibility to follow up on the applicant's status on the waitlist.

How long is the wait on the Homeless Housing Waitlist?

It is difficult to determine the length of time an applicant is on the Homeless Waitlist. Housing placement is based on the date the applicant's application was submitted. This process is based on the availability of grant funds. You may email ABC's Housing Specialist Nicky Stevens to find out the status of an applicant on the waitlist nickys@azabc.org, or contact her at (602) 712-9200 x207

What is Priority Placement?

An applicant may be eligible for priority placement on the Homeless Housing Waitlist if his or her medical doctor submits a letter stating that the applicant has a medical condition that requires immediate placement into housing and that the health of the consumer would be jeopardized if not housed expeditiously. (All documentation must be on the doctors' letterhead; documentation submitted on a prescription pad **will not** be accepted.)

What if the applicant finds alternative housing?

The case manager must submit a Termination Form to ABC for any applicant that finds alternative housing while on the Homeless Waitlist. The applicant will be removed from the waitlist and the homeless housing application will be terminated. Termination forms are available by contacting ABC.

What happens when the applicant reaches the top of the waitlist?

1) ABC will contact the case manager to verify the applicant's homeless status. The case manager will be asked to complete an *updated letter of verification of homelessness* if the application was received in excess of 30 days prior. As stated above this should be a detailed narrative on letterhead which describes the case manager's first hand knowledge of the applicant's homelessness. Once ABC certifies the applicant's homeless application, ABC will then schedule the applicant for the next homeless housing briefing. ABC will notify the case manager with a *Briefing Notice* with the date, time, and location of the briefing.

2) The housing briefing, which is approximately two hours, is an overview of the program, and the housing representative will provide the applicant with the forms and instructions on how to locate a housing unit. The case manager or member of the applicant's clinical team must be present at the briefing and should assist the client, as needed, in their housing search. Applicants must bring their ID and Social Security Card if they have one, as well as identification for any persons over 18 that will be living in the unit. All persons over 18 living in the unit should themselves also be present at the briefing. Once the applicant has selected and been approved for tenancy at a unit, the housing provider will conduct a Housing Quality Standards (HQS) inspection prior to move in.

Where are the briefings held?

ABC contracts with two housing providers for the homeless housing programs, they are:

Biltmore Properties Inc.
2330 W. Mission Lane
Phoenix, AZ 85021
602-997-0013

HOM Inc.
3829 N. 3rd St
Phoenix, AZ 85012
602-265-4640

Triple R, Behavioral Health
40 E. Mitchell Dr.
Phoenix, AZ 85012
602-257-6463

***Please do not have Consumer contact housing provider unless they are scheduled for a briefing.**

Common Briefing Mistakes

Briefings are never held at the ABC office. The location and time of the briefing will be on the *Briefing Notice* sent to the case manager by ABC. Applicants will not be briefed if they are late to the briefing or do not have a case manager or someone from their clinical team with them.

What if the applicant misses a briefing?

The case manager must contact ABC immediately after the missed briefing to reschedule another briefing date. If you are aware prior to the briefing that your applicant can not make the scheduled briefing please contact ABC's Housing Specialist and the Housing Provider immediately. If the applicant misses two scheduled briefings, the applicant will be removed from the waitlist and their Homeless Housing application will be terminated. *ABC will only make exceptions if it is a medical emergency.*

Important tips to know!!

- ABC does not have a Non-Homeless Waitlist. ABC can not house people who are not homeless according to HUD's homeless definition*.
- If the applicant's housing situation or criteria changes, please notify ABC immediately by submitting a *Termination Form*.
- The case manager must notify the housing provider if the case manager has knowledge of a housing participant vacating or abandoning an apartment unit while in ABC's Homeless Housing Program or is closed out of the RBHA.
- If the applicant has previously been in an ABC housing program, the applicant may be required to complete a staffing and/or individual housing plan (IHP), depending on the circumstances in which program participation was previously terminated.

How much would a housing participant be required to pay toward rent?

Housing participants will pay approximately 30 % of his/her income.