

# APPROVED: Permanent Housing Support Services Standards

**Effective July 1, 2016**, The Joint Commission **Behavioral Health Care** Accreditation Program will include permanent housing support services standards related to a “housing first” program model. The new standards, which are designed to assist individuals with serious mental illness, substance use disorders, or other behavioral health care issues, will appear in the “Care, Treatment, and Services” (CTS) and “Human Resources Management” (HRM) chapters in the *Comprehensive Accreditation Manual for Behavioral Health Care Organizations (CAMBHC)*.


These standards are applicable only to Joint Commission–accredited behavioral health care organizations providing case management services related to a housing first program model; that is, these standards are **not** a mandate for all accredited behavioral health care organizations to offer such services. For organizations that **do** provide these case management services, the standards are designed to help “raise the bar” and ensure a uniform provision of services from one organization to the next. The standards also help lay out a program for those organizations that are considering such services.

The distinguishing feature of a housing first program model is that individuals served are placed into private permanent housing without any requirement to participate in behavioral or physical health care, treatment, or services of any kind—except to meet with the organization’s case management staff on a regular basis. Case management staff can

then work with the individuals to help them understand how other available care, treatment, or services could assist them in reaching their goals.

The Joint Commission undertook this project because of the potential not only to address the housing and behavioral health needs of individuals with serious mental illness, substance use disorders, or other behavioral health care issues but also to address their physical health issues. Research has shown that when an individual’s housing needs are met and are secure, improvements can often be made in other areas of the individual’s life. This would indicate a potentially strong connection between secure housing and improved health. An anticipated ancillary benefit of this approach is a reduction in health care and public services costs associated with assisting the homeless.

The permanent housing support services standards will be displayed on The Joint Commission website at [http://www.jointcommission.org/standards\\_information/prepublication\\_standards.aspx](http://www.jointcommission.org/standards_information/prepublication_standards.aspx), posted in the spring E-dition®, and published in the *2016 Update 1* to the *CAMBHC*. The box beginning on page 10 displays all the new requirements.

For more information, please contact Lynn Berry, project director, Department of Standards and Survey Methods, The Joint Commission, at [lberry@jointcommission.org](mailto:lberry@jointcommission.org) or 630-792-5894. 

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# New Requirements for Permanent Housing Support Services

APPLICABLE TO BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CARE

Effective July 1, 2016

## Care, Treatment, and Services (CTS)

Standard CTS.06.01.09

### For organizations providing case management of permanent housing support services to homeless individuals:

The organization places individuals served into housing that is affordable and readily available.

#### Elements of Performance for CTS.06.01.09

A 1. **For organizations providing case management of permanent housing support services to homeless individuals:** The organization makes its permanent housing support services known to the community.

**Note:** This can be done by various means, such as visiting the community and speaking with homeless individuals who may benefit from the services, or building relationships with other organizations in the community that routinely interact with homeless individuals such as hospitals, police departments, shelters, and homeless outreach services.

C 2. **For organizations providing case management of permanent housing support services to homeless individuals:** The organization gathers information on the individual's preferences regarding choices in housing related to location, size, and other features and provides support in meeting those preferences when possible. **M**

A 3. **For organizations providing case management of permanent housing support services to homeless individuals:** The organization places no time limits on housing tenure.

C 4. **For organizations providing case management of permanent housing support services to homeless individuals:** The organization places individuals served into affordable housing options. **3** **M**

A 5. **For organizations providing case management of permanent housing support services to homeless individuals:** The organization places individuals served into housing that provides private living areas that are not shared with other tenants. **3**

**Note:** A private living area could be an entire apartment or house, a private bedroom or suite with access to a

communal living area, or another living arrangement that offers the individual some private living area. What is offered to the individual will be dependent on what options are available in the community and the needs of the individual served.

A 6. **For organizations providing case management of permanent housing support services to homeless individuals:** There is at least one staff member who is skilled in locating properties and negotiating with landlords.

A 7. **For organizations providing case management of permanent housing support services to homeless individuals:** The organization's staff establish open communication with property management staff regarding any issues that might arise for individuals served so that organization staff can assist those individuals as needed. Such issues could include serving as an intermediary between property management staff and the individual served or assisting with transportation needs.

A 8. **For organizations providing case management of permanent housing support services to homeless individuals:** Before an individual is placed into housing, the organization makes certain that the housing meets all applicable safety regulations, in accordance with law and regulation and organization policy. **3**

Standard CTS.06.01.11

**For organizations providing case management of permanent housing support services to homeless individuals:** The organization places a minimum of contingencies on individuals served.

#### Elements of Performance for CTS.06.01.11

C 1. **For organizations providing case management of permanent housing support services to homeless individuals:** The organization works with individuals served to establish regular face-to-face meeting between the individual and staff, as determined by the individual's needs and preferences. These efforts are documented. **M**

A 2. **For organizations providing case management of permanent housing support services to homeless individuals:** The organization offers individuals served access to housing without any requirements to participate in social, behavioral, or physical health care, treatment, or services.

A 3. **For organizations providing case management of**

# New Requirements for Permanent Housing Support Services (continued)

**permanent housing support services to homeless individuals:** The organization respects the right of the individual served to choose, modify, or refuse care, treatment, or services at any time.  $\triangle_3$

- A 4. **For organizations providing case management of permanent housing support services to homeless individuals:** The organization evaluates the need for and uses a variety of assertive engagement strategies when working with individuals served.
- C 5. **For organizations providing case management of permanent housing support services to homeless individuals:** The organization can demonstrate that, although it cannot require the individual to do so, it encourages the individual on an ongoing basis, through the application of a motivational interviewing approach, to participate in social, behavioral, or physical health care, treatment, or services.  $\mathbb{M}$
- A 6. **For organizations providing case management of permanent housing support services to homeless individuals:** The organization helps individuals served to understand and adhere to their lease or sublease.
- C 7.  $\textcircled{D}$  **For organizations providing case management of permanent housing support services to homeless individuals:** The organization demonstrates good faith efforts to rapidly rehouse individuals served who have lost their housing due to eviction, when indicated. These efforts are documented.  $\triangle_3$   $\mathbb{M}$
- Note:** *Decisions to rehouse are made on a case-by-case basis.*
- C 8. **For organizations providing case management of permanent housing support services to homeless individuals:** The organization continues to offer individuals served access to social, behavioral, or physical health care, treatment, or services even if they lose their housing due to eviction or short-term inpatient treatment, to the extent consistent with staff's and other individuals' safety.  $\triangle_3$   $\mathbb{M}$

## Standard CTS.06.01.13

**For organizations providing case management of permanent housing support services to homeless individuals:** The organization offers an array of services to individuals who are receiving permanent housing support services.

### Elements of Performance for CTS.06.01.13

- A 1. **For organizations providing case management of permanent housing support services to homeless individuals:** The organization provides assistance with move-in and securing the essential furniture and

appliances, as needed.  $\triangle_3$

**Note:** *Assistance can be provided through referral or an agreement with another organization that provides such services.*

- A 2. **For organizations providing case management of permanent housing support services to homeless individuals:** As needed, the organization facilitates individuals' access to behavioral health care, treatment, or services. Examples of such care, treatment, or services include the following:  $\triangle_3$
- Assess individuals' symptoms and responses to medication
  - Monitor individuals' psychiatric medical conditions and psychiatric medications
  - If individuals are hospitalized, communicate directly with each individual's inpatient psychiatric prescriber
  - Provide medication education
  - Make referrals as needed
- A 3. **For organizations providing case management of permanent housing support services to homeless individuals:** As needed, the organization facilitates individuals' access to physical health care, treatment, or services. Examples of such care, treatment, or services include the following:  $\triangle_3$
- Manage individuals' medications
  - Administer and document medication treatment
  - Screen individuals for medical problems and side effects
  - Communicate and coordinate services with other medical providers
  - Engage in health promotion, prevention, and education activities
  - Make referrals as needed
  - Locate a health home for the individual
- C 4. **For organizations providing case management of permanent housing support services to homeless individuals:** At a minimum, the organization performs screenings, brief interventions, and referrals for substance use care, treatment, or services.  $\triangle_3$   $\mathbb{M}$
- Note:** *These services may be provided either by the organization or through referral.*
- A 5. **For organizations providing case management of permanent housing support services to homeless individuals:** The organization facilitates inpatient physical and behavioral health care, treatment, or services as follows:  $\triangle_3$

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## New Requirements for Permanent Housing Support Services (continued)

- Initiates admission as necessary
  - Consults with inpatient staff regarding need for admission
  - Consults with inpatient staff regarding an individual's care, treatment, or services
  - Consults with inpatient staff regarding discharge planning
  - Receives notification of an individual's discharge from inpatient care, treatment, or services
- A 6. **For organizations providing case management of permanent housing support services to homeless individuals:** The organization offers individuals opportunities to provide input to the permanent housing support services program, including serving on committees and governing bodies, and serving as peer advocates.
- A 7. **For organizations providing case management of permanent housing support services to homeless individuals:** The organization has provisions in place for after-hours emergency care. <sup>3</sup>
- A 8. **For organizations providing case management of permanent housing support services to homeless individuals:** The organization educates the individual served about its policies and procedures regarding housing opportunities; the array of care, treatment, or services provided by the organization; and how to access after-hours emergency care. <sup>3</sup>

Standard CTS.06.01.15

**For organizations directly providing both permanent housing support services and behavioral or physical health care, treatment, or services to homeless individuals:** A multidisciplinary care, treatment, or services team coordinates the provision of care, treatment, or services.

### Elements of Performance for CTS.06.01.15

- A 1. **For organizations directly providing both permanent housing support services and behavioral or physical health care, treatment, or services to homeless individuals:** The organization has a multidisciplinary care, treatment, or services team that is comprised of practitioners who meet the needs of the individual served and consists of at least the following: <sup>3</sup>
- Physician or advanced practice nurse or physician assistant
  - Social worker or case manager
- A 2. **For organizations directly providing both permanent housing support services and behavioral or physical health care, treatment, or services to homeless individuals:** If there is a peer specialist on

the staff, he or she has full professional status on the multidisciplinary care, treatment, or services team.

- A 3. **For organizations directly providing both permanent housing support services and behavioral or physical health care, treatment, or services to homeless individuals:** The multidisciplinary care, treatment, or services team meets on a regular basis, as determined by the organization and according to the needs of the individual served.
- A 4. **For organizations directly providing both permanent housing support services and behavioral or physical health care, treatment, or services to homeless individuals:** At each meeting the multidisciplinary care, treatment, or services team does the following:
- Conducts a brief, clinically relevant review of individuals served and any contacts with them on an ongoing basis
  - Documents the status of the individuals reviewed
  - Develops a staff schedule based on individuals' schedules and emerging needs, and the need for proactive contact to avert future problems

### Human Resources Management (HRM)

Standard HRM.01.06.011

**For organizations providing case management of permanent housing support services to homeless individuals:** Staff who provide care, treatment, or services to individuals in permanent housing support services programs have specific competencies.

Elements of Performance for HRM.01.06.11

- A 1. **For organizations providing case management of permanent housing support services to homeless individuals:** Staff are trained in and use evidence-based or accepted case management practices.
- A 2. **For organizations providing case management of permanent housing support services to homeless individuals:** Staff are trained in communication and advocacy skills.
- A 3. **For organizations providing case management of permanent housing support services to homeless individuals:** Staff are knowledgeable about Fair Housing rules and regulations.