



St. Paul/Ramsey County Continuum of Care (CoC) (MN-501) Emergency Transfer Policy for Victims of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault or Stalking

Background

The St. Paul/Ramsey County Continuum of Care (CoC) is concerned about the safety of its participants, and such concern extends to participants who are victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. In accordance with the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), the CoC's transitional housing, rapid rehousing and permanent supportive housing programs allow tenants who are victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking to request an emergency transfer from the tenant's current unit to another unit.

The ability to request a transfer is available regardless of sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation. The ability of the CoC to honor such request for participants currently receiving assistance, however, may depend upon a preliminary determination that the participant is or has been a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, and on whether the CoC is able to facilitate a participant's chosen transfer to another dwelling unit that is available and safe to offer the participant for occupancy.

Required Notice

All participants must be given notice of their rights under this section, substantially similar to HUD form 5380.

Eligibility for Emergency Transfer

A participant who is a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, as provided in HUD's regulations at 24 CFR part 5, subpart L, is eligible for an emergency transfer if the participant reasonably believes that there is a threat of imminent harm from further violence, including but not limited to physical, sexual, emotional, or financial violence, if the participant remains within the same unit. If the participant is a victim of sexual assault, the participant may also be eligible to transfer if the sexual assault occurred on the premises within the 90-calendar-day period preceding a request for an emergency transfer.

If a participant informs a program that they are entitled to protections under VAWA, that program may request verification in accordance with the policies described in this section. Participants may request an emergency transfer if they meet the eligibility requirements in this section.

Requesting an Emergency Transfer

Prior to submitting an emergency transfer request through the CoC Coordinator and/or Priority List Manager(s), the provider in which the participant is currently enrolled is required to attempt to find a transfer within their own program. This includes searching for vacancies in any buildings owned and/or leased by the provider agency and working with the agency's landlord partners to find appropriate vacancies within their portfolio. To support these efforts, the

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manager of all housing programs participating in Coordinated Entry must be familiar with applicable local, state, and federal regulations, including but not limited to Minnesota Statute 504B.206 Rights of Victims of Violence to Terminate Lease.

If the housing program is not able to find an appropriate transfer for the participant, the program may submit an emergency transfer request to the Continuum of Care TRACE process by using this form. The housing program will provide reasonable accommodations to this policy for individuals with disabilities. The participant's request for an emergency transfer should include either:

1. A statement expressing that the participant reasonably believes there is a threat of imminent harm from further violence, including but not limited to physical, sexual, emotional or financial violence, if the participant were to remain in the same dwelling unit assisted under the housing program, OR
2. A statement that the participant was a sexual assault victim and that the sexual assault occurred on the premises during the 90-calendar-day period preceding the participant's request for an emergency transfer.

Confidentiality

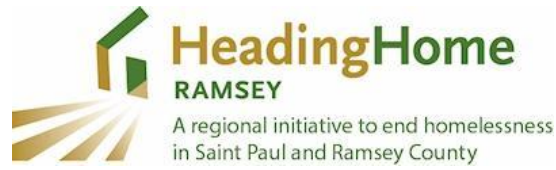
HHR's Housing Programs will keep confidential any information that the participant submits in requesting an emergency transfer, and information about the emergency transfer, unless the participant gives the housing program written permission to release the information on a time-limited basis, or disclosure of the information is required by law or required for use in an eviction proceeding against the abusive party or hearing regarding termination of abusive party's assistance from the covered program. Information contained in transfer policy requests will never be used to evict the victimized party or terminate the victimized party's assistance from the covered program.

This confidentiality clause includes keeping confidential the new location of the dwelling unit of the participant, if one is provided, from the person or persons that committed an act of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking against the participant. See the Notice of Occupancy Rights under the Violence against Women Act for All Tenants for more information about the Housing Provider's responsibility to maintain the confidentiality of information related to incidents of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

Emergency Transfer Timing and Availability

Housing Providers cannot guarantee that a transfer request will be approved or how long it will take to process a transfer request. The CoC's Priority List Manger(s) will, however, act as quickly as possible to refer a participant who is a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking to another project, subject to availability and safety of a project. If a participant reasonably believes a proposed transfer would not be safe, the participant may request

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a transfer to a different project. If a referral is available, the transferred participant must agree to abide by the terms and conditions that govern occupancy in the new project to which the participant has been transferred. The CoC Priority List Manager(s) may be unable to transfer a participant to a particular unit if the participant has not or cannot establish eligibility for that unit.

If the CoC Priority List Manager(s) cannot identify a referral for which the participant who needs an emergency transfer is eligible, the CoC will assist the participant in identifying other housing providers who may have safe and available units to which the participant could move. At the participant's request, the CoC will also assist by providing contact information for local organizations aiding victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

Safety and Security of Participants

Pending processing of the transfer and the actual transfer, if it is approved and occurs, the participant is urged to take all reasonable precautions to be safe.

- Participants who are or have been victims of domestic violence are encouraged to contact the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-7233, or a local domestic violence shelter, for assistance in creating a safety plan.
- For persons with hearing impairments, that hotline can be accessed by calling 1-800-787-3224 (TTY).
- Participants who have been victims of sexual assault may call the Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network's National Sexual Assault Hotline at 1-800-656-HOPE, or visit the online hotline at <https://ohl.rainn.org/online/>
- Participants who are or have been victims of stalking seeking help may visit the National Center for Victims of Crime's Stalking Resource Center at <https://www.victimsofcrime.org/our-programs/stalking-resource-center>.
- Participants who fear for their safety and need assistance keeping their home address confidential from their abusers may contact the Safe at Home program administered by the Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State. More information about the Safe at Home program can be found at <http://www.sos.state.mn.us/safe-at-home/about-safe-at-home/>
- Local organizations assisting victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault or stalking, include:
 - [The St. Paul & Ramsey County Intervention Project](#) (24-hour crisis line) at 651-645-2824
 - [Tubman Family Alliance](#) for families experiencing violence in suburban Ramsey Crisis Line: 612-825-0000
 - [SOS Sexual Violence Services](#) 24-hour crisis line: 651-266-1000
 - [Bridges to Safety](#) 651-266-9901
 - Minnesota Domestic Violence Crisis Line at 1-866-223-1111
 - Southern Minnesota Regional Legal Services at 651-222-4731 for free legal services

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