



Social Services
Housing Support Program

Provider Manual

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Housing Support Contacts

Clay County Social Services Contacts

Name	Title	Contact Information	Housing Support Role
Karen Amundson	Financial Assistance Supervisor	P: 218-299-7159 karen.amundson@claycountymn.gov	Primary Provider Contact/Program Oversight
Kirstin LePard	Supervisor of Behavioral Health & Adult Protection	P: 218-299-7072 kirstin.lepard@claycountymn.gov	HS Program Inspection Supervisor
Cheryl Thorson	Case Aide	P: 218-299-7023 cheryl.thorson@claycountymn.gov	HS Program Inspection Coordinator
Kevin Merfeld	Office Support Specialist	P: 218-299-7692 kevin.merfeld@claycountymn.gov	Housing Support Agreements
Barb Achilles	Lead Eligibility Worker	P: 218-299-7078 barb.achilles@claycountymn.gov	Program Oversight Vendor Profiles/Numbers
Roxie Schumacher	Eligibility Worker	P: 218-299-7051 roxanne.schumacher@claycountymn.gov	Client Eligibility Determination/Questions Vendor Payments
Mackenzie Klein	Eligibility Worker	P: 218-299-7135 mackenzie.klein@claycountymn.gov	Client Eligibility Determination/Questions Vendor Payments
Quinn Jaeger	Social Services Director	P: 218-299-7114 quinn.jaeger@claycountymn.gov	HS Program Terminations
Mary Koskiniemi	Licensing & Disability Services Supervisor	P: 218-299-7057 mary.koskiniemi@claycountymn.gov	Licensing Supervisor
Fran Davenport	Licensor	P: 218-299-7320 Frances.davenport@claycountymn.gov	Licensor

Additional Helpful Contacts

Name	Contact Information
Legal Services of Northwest MN	Legal Assistance/Tenant Rights P: 218-233-8585 1015 7 th Ave N. Moorhead, MN
Community Action Partners Lakes and Prairies	Housing Resources P: 218-512-1500 891 Belsly Blvd Moorhead, MN
Clay County Housing and Redevelopment Authority	Housing Resources P: 218-233-8883 Claycohra@claycohra.com
MN Healthcare Provider Enrollment	P: 651-431-2700 or 800-366-5411 https://mn.gov/dhs/partnersand-providers/contactus/minnesota-health-careprograms/providers/

Definitions

Client - a person served by or utilizing the services of a social agency.

Corrective order - may be issued for first-time or minor violations of Clay County Housing Support expectations or Housing Support Agreement

Direct contact - providing face-to-face care, training, supervision, counseling, consultation, or medication assistance with individuals, or who have unsupervised access to individuals, their personal property, or their private data

File audit - an event wherein a representative of Clay County Social Services (CCSS) reviews documentation to ensure compliance with provider documentation requirements

Program improvement plan - issued and implemented when a service provider is found to have accrued more than one corrective order within six months' time or is found to have egregiously violated Housing Support policy or procedure

Provider - an entity that receives the Housing Support payment and is responsible for collecting the participants' obligation toward the Housing Support amount when applicable and making sure the Housing Support funding is paid toward its intended purposes (i.e. rent, utilities, and services). Provider is also the entity that provides supplemental services, if applicable.

Site visit - an event wherein a representative of CCSS completes an inspection of the physical premises, and may interview individuals residing at the premises, to ensure compliance with provider requirements

Additional relevant definitions may be found in the Minnesota Housing Support [Statute 256I.03](#)

Introduction

Housing Support is a state-funded program that provides a monthly income supplement to pay for room and board for seniors and adults with disabilities who have low income. The program aims to prevent or reduce homelessness and institutionalization. The amount of a Housing Support payment is based on a federal and state standard of what an individual would need, at a minimum, to live in the community. In some cases, Housing Support may pay a supplemental amount to the basic rate. Licensed or registered settings that can qualify for a Housing Support Agreement can include adult foster care homes, boarding and lodging, supervised living settings, non-certified boarding care homes, housing with additional services establishments and other assisted living, and supportive housing and long-term homeless supportive housing.

County Human Service Departments are responsible for the evaluation of all Housing Support Agreements. Providers will also work with the financial assistance department, to facilitate the payments for eligible Housing Support participants. Depending on the type of setting, providers will need to secure all needed State of Minnesota (Department of Human Services and Department of Health) licensing/registrations prior to the approval of a Housing Support Agreement. The providers will also need to secure all needed licensing, variances and inspection certifications required by the local city/township where the facility is located.

This guide is for existing Housing Support providers and providers who are interested in pursuing Housing Support funding. Within the guide you will find the steps necessary to obtain a Housing Support agreement and expectations that come along with the Housing Support agreement.

Before the funds may be used, the participant, the living situation, & provider must meet statutory eligibility requirements.

- Provider eligibility for Housing Support funding is determined by the county.
- Participant eligibility is determined by county financial assistance department and is based on income, assets and disability.

For more information visit the [Housing Support section](#) of the DHS website and the Minnesota

Revisor website for [Housing Support State Statute](#).

Housing Support Rates

The following provides information on Housing Support rates. Housing Support is a payment directly to the provider of housing on behalf of the eligible person.

Room and Board Rate

The Housing Support Rate is based on a federal and state standard of what an individual would need, at a minimum, to live in the community. It is automatically adjusted each year based on changes made in the Federal Benefit Rate (FBR) of the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program and changes in the value of food support for an individual.

Housing Support room and board payments are made directly to the provider of housing on behalf of the eligible person. Providers in many different types of housing may enter into a Housing Support agreement with their county, including adult foster care (family and corporate), board and lodging establishments, non-certified boarding care homes, and registered housing with services establishments.

Supplemental Service Rate

The supplemental service rate can only be paid in specific types of settings:

- Board and lodge with special services
- Supervised living facilities
- Boarding care homes that are not certified for Medicaid
- Registered housing with services establishments
- Long-term homeless supportive housing
- Tribe-certified housing

Effective July 1, 2025, the supplemental service rate is \$494.91. Counties negotiate the supplemental service rate with providers and cannot exceed the maximum unless the county agrees to pay the amount over the maximum with county funds, or the Legislature has specifically authorized a higher rate for a facility. These providers typically serve clients who have mental illness or substance use disorder and are not eligible for home and community-based waiver services.

Difficulty of Care

The maximum payment for the Difficulty of Care (DOC) for individuals in adult foster care equals the maximum standard for the Housing Support Supplemental Service Rate (\$494.91). Eligibility criteria is determined by the county. Individuals are not eligible for difficulty of care payments if services are eligible under home and community-based waiver programs.

Updated information for providers about Housing Support rates is available on the MN DHS [Housing Support Payment Rates page](#).

Program Requirements

The “Housing Support Rate” or the “Housing Rate” is to be used for shelter, fuel, food, utilities, household supplies, and other costs necessary to provide room and board. Examples of these expenses may include: toilet paper, bed linens, shampoo, toothpaste, garbage bags, etc.

A portion of the “Housing Rate” must be spent each month on food for each participant. The amount required to be spent on food may or may not change each year on July 1. This amount is based on determinations of the Federal Food Support Programs (SNAP). The provider must inform individuals they are eligible for SNAP upon discharge from the Housing Support facility and/or program. Providers may be required to provide documentation to prove food purchase that meet SNAP requirements.

Provider must maintain all necessary licenses through the appropriate licensing authority.

Provide a list of residency requirements that include violations that could result in eviction.

Background checks are required for all employees/volunteers who have direct contact (face-to-face care, training, supervision, counseling, or medication assistance) with recipients, or who have unsupervised access to recipients, their personal property, or their private data.

All staff members who have direct contact with recipients must have skills and knowledge acquired through one or more of the following:

- A course of study in a health or human services-related field leading to a bachelor of arts, bachelor of science, or associate’s degree;
- One year experience with the target population served (can include being a member of the target population served);
- Experience as a Minnesota Department of Human Services certified peer specialist.
- Meets requirements of unlicensed personnel under Minnesota Statutes section [144A](#).

- Provider and staff are required to complete training on vulnerable adults mandated reporting and child maltreatment mandated reporting, where applicable, and to complete housing support orientation training by MN DHS.
- Staff are required to have valid driver's license if transporting participants.
- The agreement can be terminated in writing by DHS, Clay County, or the provider, with or without cause, with two calendar months prior notice.
- Minnesota Department of Human Services has the right to suspend or terminate the Housing Support agreement immediately when it is determined the health or welfare of the housing or service recipients is endangered, or when there is reasonable cause to believe that the provider has breached a material term of the agreement.

Individual Eligibility

Determined by the County Financial Assistance Department the participant resides in.

- Must be 18 and older and disabled or elderly.
- Must meet a basis of eligibility for General Assistance (GA) or Social Security Insurance (SSI).
- Countable income: must be less than maximum benefit.
- Countable assets: must be within the asset limit for the program.
- Individual may have to complete a Combined Application Form (CAF) to apply for the program.

Housing Support Settings

Adult Foster Care (Family and Community Residential Setting):

Adult Foster Care (AFC) is a type of housing for people with disabilities and seniors who need some daily care. Some caregivers own and live in the homes they provide care in, which is referred to as Family Adult Foster Care. While others are employees paid to work in the home, which is referred to as a Community Residential Setting (CRS).

AFC/CRS homes house one to five adults with disabilities and seniors who live together, typically each with their own bedroom. The living room, bathrooms, kitchen, and any other rooms are often shared. Housing Support may pay up to the full cost of room, board, and services, depending on the participant's income, eligibility for a AFC-Difficulty of Care rating or eligibility for MA-Waiver programs. Services provided to individuals may also include the delivery of personal care, household and living skills assistance or training, medication assistance and assistance safeguarding cash resources.

Housing with Services Establishments:

Housing with services establishments provide sleeping accommodations to one or more adult residents, and offer one or more regularly scheduled health-related services, or two or more regularly scheduled supportive services. Supportive services can be offered or provided directly by the establishment or by another entity arranged for by the establishment. Housing with Services Establishments can function as assisted living, customized living settings, or support participants to live independently in the community.

Board and Lodge:

Board and Lodging establishments are licensed, congregate settings that offer a room (often shared) and three meals a day to eligible adults and, occasionally, families. Board and Lodges can vary in size, with five or more people living together. Some settings are short-term, time-limited; others may be supportive housing with no specific time limit. Board and Lodges can require participation in skills training or other programming; others have no service requirements. Each Board and Lodge setting can look very different.

Supportive Housing:

Supportive Housing includes independent apartment units or shared housing where residents have their own rental leases, have the option to prepare their own food, and get supportive services, like getting a unit set up with furniture and household supplies, employment services, or health-related services, like help to prepare and administer medications. Supportive Housing could have several units in one location or could be scattered throughout the community in individual units. Most Supportive Housing programs are for people who have experienced long-term homelessness.

New Providers and Programs

Proposal Requirements

Entities interested in providing new or expanded Housing Support services in Clay County must submit an application to Clay County Social Services (CCSS). Applications must include:

- A description of the program's scope and how it fills service gaps in Clay County.
- Business model and proposed facility/services.
- Proposed location(s) with required licenses and interior/exterior photos.
- Target population and expected number served.
- Provider qualifications and experience with similar populations.
- Use of Evidence-Based Practices (e.g., Person-Centered, Housing First, Harm Reduction, Trauma-Informed Care).
- A sustainability plan for periods of low occupancy.

*Providers with a current Housing Support Agreement, wanting to develop a new HS location are not guaranteed a new vendor number.

Proposal Review

The Clay County Housing Support Committee will review provider applications to determine if proposed programs meet requirements and address identified needs to serve Clay County residents who have disabling conditions, are low income, and/or are experiencing homelessness.

A Housing Support provider enrollment window will open annually from **September 1 to October 31**, during which new providers may submit applications and required documentation. Applications submitted outside of this window will be deferred for consideration during the next open enrollment period.

The Housing Support Committee reserves the discretion to review applications outside of the enrollment window on a case-by-case basis, based on urgent community needs or other relevant considerations.

Providers whose proposals are supported must complete the following steps prior to approval:

- Participate in a presentation to the Clay County Housing Support Committee. This presentation should include an overview of the proposed program, leadership and staff qualifications/experience, and the type of care and services to be provided. Providers are encouraged to bring key staff or business partners to the presentation.
- Facilitate a site visit to the proposed program location(s) by a Housing Support Committee member(s).
- Submit a copy of the applicable license(s).
- Complete background checks for all staff with direct client contact, as required by DHS licensing standards.

Final approval of proposals is contingent upon successful completion of the steps above. Once approved, the Housing Support Committee will forward the proposal to the appropriate personnel to coordinate the collection of all required documentation for execution of a Housing Support Agreement.

Housing Support Agreement Application

If Clay County and the potential provider agree to move forward, the Housing Support Agreement Application must be completed to start the contracting process. Providers must:

1. Obtain appropriate insurance;
 - Ensure sufficient Liability and Workers Compensation Insurance is in place meeting the levels indicated in the Clay County Insurance Policy.
 - Documentation proving Workers' Compensation Insurance coverage is required if the provider employs staff to assist in the provision of services.
2. Contact the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) and/or Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) to obtain proper licensing, as required for each type of Housing Support provided.
3. Complete required online trainings through DHS: Housing Support Orientation and Vulnerable Adult Mandated Reporting.
 - Providers must attach certificates of completion/email certifying attendance for both trainings.
4. Complete background checks on all providers, staff, volunteers, or anyone who has direct or unsupervised contact with Housing Support recipients and/or as defined in the Housing Support Agreement.
 - Receipts indicating submission of background check requests must be included with the Housing Support Agreement Application.
 - Clearance notices are required prior to approval of a Housing Support Program.
5. Submit completed Housing Support Agreement Application document with required documents to Clay County.
 - Clay County ensures all required documents are completed accurately and completely.
6. Upon approval from Clay County, sign Housing Support Agreement and Insurance/Indemnity Agreement.

Housing and Referrals

Once all agreements are signed, the provider must be set up in the applicable payment systems including Provider Enrollment for Supplemental Service Rate payments, before advertising openings and accepting referrals. Once approved, and set up in applicable payment systems, providers may start accepting new referrals for housing and services. Providers must:

1. Locate housing which matches the services/population to be served as noted in the approved proposal;
2. If Rate 2 is authorized, contact MN DHS Provider Enrollment to become an Enrolled Provider. This needs to be in place in order to receive Housing Support Supplemental Services payments (SSR). Note that you will need to have a generic Housing Support Agreement in place in order to obtain a National Provider Identifier (NPI) with DHS' Provider Enrollment.
 - As of July 1, 2016, all SSR service providers are required to enroll with Minnesota Health Care Programs (MHCP). Enrollment is required so MHCP can issue providers a MN-ITS account so providers can bill for supplemental services.
 - MHCP provides a Billing Lab for Housing Support supplemental service providers. We encourage these providers to attend a billing lab to learn:
 - How to navigate through the information on the website; o Who and where to call if there are questions;
 - The resources available to providers if they need assistance; o
 - To understand and use all features of the MN-ITS account including:
 - a. Receiving authorization letters;
 - b. Receiving notifications and communications;
 - c. Submitting claims; and
 - d. Receiving a remittance advice
 - To understand and read the claim numbers and remittance advice

*If you have any questions about your enrollment application or need assistance registering for a Billing Lab, please contact the Provider Call Center at 651-431- 2700 or 800-366-5411.

3. Submit the proposed house/facility rules/residency restrictions that may result in eviction which will be used and submit those to Clay County.
4. Complete the Residential Informational forms and submit to Clay County.
5. Upon approval from Clay County, a Vendor Profile Form is completed by Clay County and the provider set up in applicable Housing Support payment systems.

Providing safe, dignified, person-centered, quality services to program participants is of the utmost importance to Clay County. With this in mind, if during the course of service provision, a Housing Support recipient experiences an adverse event (involving serious injury, death, or an overdose), this must be reported to Clay County within 24 hours by phone or e-mail in addition to completing an Adult Protection report. Additionally, if an agency receives a substantiated finding of maltreatment from an oversight agency, such as the Office of Facility Health Complaints, the agency must notify Clay County within 24 hours by phone or e-mail. ***If a client is hospitalized, goes to treatment, is incarcerated, or out of the home for multiple days, these absences must be communicated with our office.***

Provider Monitoring

Clay County Social Services (CCSS) will complete systematic provider reviews to ensure minimum standards for quality assurance are satisfied or exceeded.

Procedure:

1. Following initial Housing Support Agreement, providers must:
 - a. Complete all required Housing Support Program training;
 - b. Comply with all site visits and/or file audits as required by CCSS which consistently demonstrate:
 - i. Complete provider documentation;
 - ii. Complete participant documentation;
 - iii. Safe, clean, and healthy housing units;
 - iv. Following state and county standards, policies, and procedures as set forth in the Provider Manual;
 - v. Timely response to documentation requests from CCSS, which is considered, at a maximum, 10 business days.
2. CCSS will complete annual reviews of all providers of Housing Support agreements. This process applies to all Housing Support providers in Clay County, including those licensed by the Minnesota Department of Human Services. As part of annual reviews, providers are required to verify or certify the following minimum requirements in the agreement:
 - a. Current license or registration, including authorization if managing or monitoring medications.
 - b. All staff who have direct contact with recipients meet the staff qualifications outlined in the Minnesota Housing Support Statute 256I;
 - c. The provision of housing support and supplementary services (if applicable);
 - d. Reports of adverse events, including recipient death or serious injury. Providers must submit documentation to CCSS attesting to any incidents or complaints since their last Housing Support agreement was approved, including any remedies or changes as a response to incidents or complaints;
 - e. Submission of residency requirements that could result in recipient eviction; and
 - f. Confirmation that the provider will not limit or restrict the number of hours an applicant or recipient chooses to be employed.
 - g. Providers must notify CCSS of any planned changes to the physical premises or management structure that may impact Housing Support eligibility or recipient safety.
3. CCSS Housing Support Committee may review recertification documentation and compliance with required action items to determine if providers are eligible for recertification.
 - a. Providers must make all relevant documentation and client records related to Housing Support available to CCSS upon request, including financial records relevant to Housing Support payments.
4. If CCSS identifies that a provider did not submit all necessary documentation and/or does not meet requirements for recertification, written communication of the necessary items will be sent to the provider with an identified due date.
 - a. If corrections are not made and/or requested documentation is not provided by the identified deadline, CCSS may choose not to renew Housing Support agreements and/or terminate existing agreements.
5. New House Support locations may not be approved if the House Support provider is not in good financial standing with CCSS. This may extend to not only expansion of new locations but also to potentially not renewing existing Housing Support Agreements as well. Factors considered in this determination will include, but are not limited to: amount of overpayments owed, creation of a repayment plan, and/or progress on repayment plan.

6. CCSS will send all Housing Support Agreements that meet the requirements for recertification to the CCSS Director for approval and signature.

Termination of Housing Support Agreements

Clay County Social Services (CCSS) or providers may elect to terminate Housing Support Agreements by providing the other party with two calendar months written notice, with or without cause.

Procedure

1. Providers seeking to terminate the Housing Support Agreement must provide written notification to CCSS at least two calendar months' prior to ending services. Alternatively, if CCSS elects to terminate a Housing Support Agreement, CCSS must provide written notification to the provider at least two calendar months in advance. CCSS may determine that immediate termination of a Housing Support Agreement is necessary to prevent imminent danger to human life. CCSS will coordinate with DHS and appropriate legal parties if immediate termination is deemed necessary.
2. In the event a Housing Support Agreement is terminated, CCSS and the provider will collaborate to ensure that current recipients transition to alternative housing and services.
3. Providers are responsible for ensuring people currently residing in their programs receive at a minimum (unless otherwise requested by the recipient):
 - a. Referral(s) to other housing and services that align with the needs/choices of the recipient.
This may include referrals to other Housing Support programs or Coordinated Entry.
 - b. An updated housing plan for the recipient to take with them upon discharge, including information about SNAP eligibility, agencies to assist with basic needs or housing crises, and other maintenance benefits requirements and case management.
4. Upon termination of a Housing Support Agreement, the provider must submit all outstanding documentation, including final recipient rosters, final invoices, and incident summaries, within 30 days of the termination date.
5. CCSS may terminate a Housing Support Agreement with two calendar months' written notice if the provider has not served any Housing Support participants for a period of twelve months, treating prolonged inactivity as grounds for non-performance.
6. While the default transition period is two months, CCSS may shorten or extend the period depending on the urgency of the termination, provider history, or recipient safety concerns.

Housing Support Inspections

Housing Support inspections (“inspections”) are used to ensure Housing Support programs provide safe and quality housing. Initial inspections will be completed using the MN Department of Human Services (DHS) minimum habitability standards, as outlined on the DHS [“Habitability Inspection”](#) form.

Providers are required to complete inspections of all program locations annually or as determined necessary by CCSS. CCSS will coordinate with the contracted entity to schedule inspections with providers. Cheryl Thorson, or another approved CCSS staff will be the primary contact for monitoring questions. Quinn Jaeger or another approved CCSS staff will be the primary contact for all housing support termination questions.

- a. CCSS may conduct unannounced site visits if deemed necessary to address urgent concerns related to safety, housing quality, or compliance.
- b. If any unit poses imminent health or safety risks, CCSS may require immediate remediation, and may immediately suspend placements to the unit or site until the issue is resolved.**

CCSS will utilize the sampling guidelines below to determine the number of units to be inspected for each Housing Support program site. The units inspected will be chosen at random. If the minimum number of units based on the program site size pass inspection, then no additional units need to be inspected. If one or more of the minimum number of units does not pass inspection, CCSS reserves the right to inspect 100% of the Housing Support units at the program site.

Total Number of Units	Minimum Number of Units to Inspect
1-5	1
6-10	2
11-15	3
16-20	4
21-39	5
40-50	10
51-60	11
60+	12

Program site units will be considered for inspection if they could be used Housing Support at any given time. For program sites with designated Housing Support units, only those designated units will be considered for inspection. For example, if a program site has 50 units and 10 specific units are designated for Housing Support participants, then the total number of units considered for inspection would be 10. If a program site has 50 units and any of those units could be utilized by a Housing Support participant, then the total number units considered for inspection would be 50.