

## Housing First Core Concepts

Housing First is an approach to quickly and successfully connect individuals and families experiencing homelessness to permanent housing without preconditions and barriers to entry, such as sobriety, treatment or service participation requirements. Supportive services are offered to maximize housing stability and prevent returns to homelessness as opposed to addressing predetermined treatment goals prior to permanent housing entry.

### Housing First: Key Principles

- Service participants are not expected to “graduate” through a continuum before accessing permanent housing
- Safe and affordable housing with few to no programmatic prerequisites
- Low barrier admission policies
- Rapid and streamlined entry into housing
- Support services may look different, but all people can achieve housing stability in permanent housing;
- Everyone is “housing ready”
- Improved quality of life, health, mental health, and employment can be achieved through housing
- Right to determination, dignity and respect
- Configuration of housing and services based on participants needs and preferences

### Housing First: Critical Elements

- Focus on helping individuals and families access and sustain rental housing as quickly as possible and housing is not time-limited;
- A variety of services are delivered primarily *following* a housing placement to promote housing stability and individual well-being;
- Services are time-limited or long-term depending upon individual need;
- Housing is not contingent on compliance with services;
- Participants must comply with a standard lease agreement and are provided with the services and supports that are necessary to help them be successful.

### Housing First: Key Service Components

- Assessment-based targeting of Housing First services
- Assistance locating rental housing, relationship development with private market landlords, and lease negotiation
- Financial assistance – ranging from security deposit and one month’s rent to provision of a long-term housing subsidy
- Placement that is not time-limited  
Case management to coordinate services (time-limited or long- term) following housing placement

Housing First is an approach that can be used for both homeless families and individuals who are chronically homeless. Program models vary depending on the client population, availability of affordable rental housing and/or housing subsidies and services available.