



Chester County Partnership to End Homelessness

Pregnant Persons and Households with Infants Experiencing Homelessness

Policy

December 20, 2019 - Policy #3

People that are currently experiencing **literal homelessness (Category 1 of HUD's Definition of Homelessness – see HUD's Homeless Definition Criteria Sheet)** that has been confirmed by the **Street Outreach Team** and report a documented pregnancy or households who have an infant or young child (24 months old or under) will automatically be given top priority on the Emergency Family Shelter List, regardless of their VI-SPDAT score. The following is the process that should take place for this population:

- Anyone needing to gain access to the Emergency Shelter system must contact 2-1-1 to be assessed and referred to the Street Outreach Team.
 - A person without children who reports being pregnant when calling 2-1-1 will be assessed, and referred to the Street Outreach Team to have their homeless status confirmed. If the person is sleeping outside or in a place not meant for human habitation, they will be placed on the Emergency Shelter List. **Street Outreach staff will make a direct referral via telephone or e-mail to Safe Harbor of Chester County, Inc.** if beds are available. Safe Harbor staff will prioritize this person for emergency shelter placement and offer them an available bed. If an emergency shelter bed is not available at Safe Harbor, Inc., **Street Outreach staff has the discretion to administer a hotel/motel voucher, on a case by case basis in order to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the consumer.**
 - **Note: When emergency shelter becomes available, the individual must leave the hotel and accept the shelter referral. Failure to accept emergency shelter will lead to loss of the hotel voucher.**
 - It is expected that Safe Harbor of Chester County, Inc. and the Emergency Family Shelter providers (Friends Association and the CYWA) will collaborate in order to ensure the transition of a person who is close to giving birth to a family shelter as soon as possible.
 - A person who is pregnant and has other children or a household with infant or young child (24 months old or under) will call 2-1-1 to be assessed and referred to the Street Outreach Team to have their homeless status confirmed. If the individual or household meets the literal homeless criteria listed above, **the Street Outreach Team will make a direct referral via telephone or e-mail to one of the Emergency Family Shelters (Friends Association or the CYWA)** if beds are available. If an Emergency Family Shelter unit is not available; **Street Outreach staff has the discretion to administer a hotel/motel voucher, on a case by case basis in order to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the family.**
 - **Note: When emergency shelter becomes available, the family must leave the hotel and accept the shelter referral. Failure to accept emergency shelter will lead to loss of the hotel voucher.**
- If a pregnant person is placed in a hotel and gives birth prior to receiving placement into formal Emergency Shelter, Transitional Housing, or Permanent Housing; they will return to the hotel until such time as they can be placed into

more stable housing. Any agency providing hotel vouchers to this population will make the necessary referrals to ensure the best care possible for the mother and child (Social Security, Medicaid, Maternal and Child Health Consortium, Chester County Health Department Home Visiting Program, etc.)

* Rapid Re-Housing, Continuum of Care funding, and Section 8 Vouchers, will play a vital role in assisting these people and households in getting into Permanent Housing. It is imperative that the Emergency Shelters and all agencies that provide hotel vouchers for this population complete a SDPAT as soon as possible.

Please contact the Chester County Department of Community Development at 610-344-6900 or by e-mail at ccdcd@chesco.org if you have any questions.