



Michigan Balance of State Continuum of Care (MIBOSCOC) Housing Based Case Management Best Practice Guide

Purpose of the Guide

The following best practice guide was adapted from experts across the field of ending homelessness. The guide will help housing based case managers understand how to provide client centered care to help people maintain their housing. Much of this curriculum and the attached worksheets/toolkits have been developed by Org Code Consulting, under their Excellence in Housing Based Case Management training curriculum.

What is Housing Based Case Management?

Housing Based Case Management (HBCM) is a supportive service model designed to help people who are experiencing homelessness as they move into housing. This approach combines housing assistance with ongoing case management and support services to address the complex needs of vulnerable populations and help them secure and maintain stable housing---typically used in PSH and RRH programs. Effective Housing Based Case Management (HBCM) can help people maintain their housing while also achieving stability and wellness in their lives.

Housing-Based Case Management is a client-centered approach that recognizes the diverse and often complex needs of individuals and families experiencing homelessness. By addressing both housing and underlying issues contributing to homelessness, this model aims to break the cycle of homelessness and help clients achieve stability in housing.

Housing-Based Case Management aligns with the Housing First philosophy, which prioritizes providing stable housing as the first step toward addressing other life challenges that may have contributed to homelessness.

What is a Housing Based Case Manager?

A Housing Based Case Manager is an organized and trained professional that acts as a positive change agent in holistically assisting individuals/families in achieving and maintaining housing. At the same time, the HBCM works to promote awareness and teaches strategies that can reduce the likelihood of a return to homelessness in the future.

Housing Based Case Managers provide supportive services and case management IN the client's home. Home visits are a critical component of the work of a HBCM as they allow for the tenant and the HBCM to skillfully build on strategies that will reduce the likelihood of a return to homelessness IN the home environment.

The goal of housing-based case management is to help stabilize people once housed, by connecting them to services and supports needed to successfully maintain their housing. This service should focus

on helping people navigate barriers that may stand in the way of securing and maintaining housing, and should also strive to build a support system by connecting them with people and programs in the community.

The work to end homelessness starts with the Housing First Philosophy.

Housing First is an evidence-based approach to addressing homelessness that prioritizes providing stable and permanent housing to individuals experiencing homelessness, without preconditions or requirements, such as sobriety or participation in treatment programs. The central principle of Housing First is that housing is a basic human right and a fundamental necessity for people to rebuild their lives and address other issues they may be facing, such as mental health challenges or substance use disorders.

Training and Training Site #	Description
104 Core Learning Path: Foundations of Housing First	Learn about the foundations of housing first in both philosophy and practice. Hear how and why the philosophy was created, and how it stands as the core approach for ending homelessness.

Who is appropriate to receive Housing Based Case Management Services?

Housing Based Case Management is most appropriate for people exiting homelessness and moving into housing who have complex needs. The people with the most severe service needs often require a high level of housing support services once they move into housing. Most often, people with severe service needs are being served in Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) programs or Rapid Rehousing (RRH) programs.

Best Practices for Housing Based Case Management

The Michigan Balance of State Continuum of Care (MIBOSCOC) has adapted the following best practices from Org Code Consulting and the Excellence in Housing Based Case Management training curriculum developed by Org Code.

As a prerequisite to reading this document, providers throughout the MIBOSCOC are required to take all online trainings through the [MIBOSCOC training site](#). The training table at the end of this document lists required trainings per program type.

The training site also includes a quiz after each session to ensure mastery of the major concepts of each category of the work.

In addition to the quizzes, a discussion guide accompanies each training session. The discussion guide offers discussion questions to be reviewed with teams working toward mastery of housing based case management.

- [Discussion Guide](#)

The Core Components of Housing Based Case Management

The following tools and strategies for providing exceptional housing-based case management are all rooted in the following core components:

- Trained and professional staff are providing HBCM training
- All staff are trained in Trauma Informed Care and all interventions are trauma informed
- All interventions are housing focused
- Staff adhere to and practice professional boundaries
- HBCM is documented, planned and sequential

Training and Training Site #	Description
615 RRH Series #2: Core Components of Housing Based Case Management	Learn about the core components that make up the work of Housing Based Case Management.

How to Maintain Safety for Clients and Staff in Housing Based Case Management

As HBCM happens in the client's home, it is important to adhere to safety protocols that can enhance the HBCM experience and maintain safety for both the case managers and the clients. Case managers should be trained on how to assess and manage risk and should have a plan in place with their internal teams for responding to incidents of violence or mental health crises.

- [Safety Practices for Housing Based Case Managers](#)

Moving In

The process of moving into a unit is an important aspect of providing excellent housing based case management. Housing provides people with a safe and secure environment that can result in increased health and well-being, stability and routine, social connections and increased dignity and self-esteem—all pillars of long-term housing stability.

The housing based case manager is responsible for the following in terms of providing a successful moving in experience for their client:

- Following best practices and program requirements for housing to be considered (lease terms, fair market rent, voucher utilization, housing inspections etc.)
- Define the role of the housing based case manager with the client and the landlord
- Use best practices for moving in and the day of move in
- Be present for and support the lease signing process

Training and Training Site #	Description
620 RRH Series #3: Moving into Housing	Learn about the best practices for moving in and how the housing based case manager can support this process in a way that leads to long term housing stability.

Productive Home Visits

Setting the tone for productive home visits is a priority when providing excellent housing based case management. Productive home visits set the stage for the housing based case manager and the client to build trust and rapport as meeting clients where they are both mentally and physically is an critical component of providing trauma informed care.

Home visits offer the opportunity for immediate and real time identification of barriers that might prevent long-term housing stability. Home visits also allow for the housing based case manager and the client to routinely assess living conditions and tailor the support services where needed in real time.

Case planning is a critical component of productive home visits and should be reviewed during each visit.

Training and Training Site #	Description
630 RRH Series #5: Productive Home Visits	Learn about the best practices for establishing productive home visits and how to promote an intentional space for working on housing stability with your clients.

Crisis Plan

The crisis plan in housing is a tool to help proactively prepare people for possible crises in their lives, and ensuring they have an active voice in the care that ensues. Crisis planning is an important part of the housing based case management process in that it allows the client to name what might be a trigger for needing more support in order to maintain their housing.

Crisis plans help clients identify the signs they are about go into crisis, the signs they are in crisis, and how they might deal with the crisis in the most effective way. As housing based case managers are not crisis workers, the crisis planning tool can help identify other supports the client can rely on to help them through a crisis.

- [Crisis Planning Tool \(Org Code\)](#)

The crisis planning tool is a guide for housing based case managers and clients to work through this conversation and provide a plan for when and if a crisis occurs.

Training and Training Site #	Description
635 RRH Series #6: Crisis Plan	Learn about the most effective ways to establish a crisis plan with your client. Gain a better understanding of what might trigger your client to require additional supports to maintain their housing.

Honest Monthly Budget

The honest monthly budget is a tool for helping clients think about money management in a pragmatic, non-judgmental manner. This budget helps clients identify all the ways they earn income, both formal and informal. Working through the honest monthly budget sets the stage for honest and openness between the client and the housing based case manager.

- [Honest Monthly Budget](#)

Training and Training Site #	Description
640 RRH Series #7: Honest Monthly Budget	Learn how to create an honest monthly budget with your client that promotes transparency and long-term housing stability.

Guest Policy

The personal guest policy should be introduced during the housing search, discussed during the move-in process, and completed during the first few home visits. This tool is intended to help the client define who can visit their home, when, and who is responsible for the actions of guests.

Both roleplay and education around effective refusal skills can help support making the guest policy actionable.

- [Personal Guest Policy](#)

Training and Training Site #	Description
645 RRH Series #8: Personal Guest Policy	Learn how to create a personal guest policy with clients that can help them maintain their housing while also setting appropriate boundaries with people in their circle.

Meaningful Daily Activities

Supporting clients in identifying meaningful daily activities helps promote long-term housing stability. Meaningful daily activities help clients focus not just on those appointments related to the case plan, but also activities that they can engage with to reduce social isolation, increase community integration, and build or rebuild social networks.

This tool can help housing based case managers explore and promote activities their clients find meaningful.

- [A Week of Meaningful Activities](#)

Training and Training Site #	Description
625 RRH Series #5: Meaningful Daily Activities	Learn about the importance of meaningful daily activities as a way to increase the likelihood of long-term housing stability. Understand how the housing based case manager can help promote meaningful daily activities with their clients.

Exit Planning

Although more frequent in Rapid Rehousing programs, people can and do move on from PSH. This is a tool for helping prepare individuals and families that have been part of support programs in decreasing and then ceasing their involvement with the supports, while promoting ongoing housing stability.

- [Exit Planning Tool](#)

Training and Training Site #	Description
650 RRH Series #9: Exit Planning	Use this exit planning tool to help clients prepare once support services are decreasing and are coming to an end.

The trainings listed above are all available on the MIBOSCOC training site. The training site also tracks training participation and scores on available quizzes. Supervisors and case managers can track their progress on the training site.

Conclusion

This document is meant to serve as a supplemental guide for the trainings on the MIBOSCOC training site. Housing based case management involves the best practices on how to serve clients in a person centered way in order to help them maintain their housing long-term. Administration of the state and federal grants that fund Permanent Supportive Housing involves specific guidelines and procedures. Here are some key resources and steps to help you navigate this process:

1. **HUD Exchange:** The HUD Exchange website is a valuable resource for information on HUD grants and programs. Specifically, you can find resources related to permanent supportive housing (PSH) and the CoC Program.
 1. [HUD Exchange Virtual Binders \(Use CoC\)](#)
2. **CPD Notices and Guidance:** HUD publishes Notices and Guidance related to the Continuum of Care (CoC) program, which often includes information specific to permanent supportive housing. These documents outline program requirements, funding allocations, and reporting guidelines. Sign up for these notices and find more information using the links below.
 1. [Archive CPD Notices](#)
 2. [Sign up for HUD news](#)
3. **NOFA and Grant Agreement:** Review the most recent Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for the Continuum of Care program, which provides details about the application process, eligible activities, and funding priorities. Additionally, familiarize yourself with the terms of your specific grant agreement.
 1. [HUD CoC Program Competition page](#)
4. **HUD Handbooks and Manuals:** HUD publishes handbooks and manuals that provide detailed guidance on program implementation, compliance, and reporting. Look for resources like the "CoC Program Interim Rule" and the "CoC Program Homeless Assistance Programs: Defining "Chronically Homeless" Final Rule" for comprehensive information.
 1. [Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing \(HEARTH\): Defining Homeless Final Rule](#)
5. **Training and Webinars:** HUD often conducts webinars and training sessions on administering grants and complying with program requirements. Check the HUD Exchange website for upcoming events or access archived webinars.
 1. [HUD Exchange Training site](#)
6. **Local HUD Field Office:** Reach out to your local HUD field office for assistance and guidance specific to your region. HUD staff can provide clarification on grant requirements and offer technical assistance.
7. **Peer Networks and Collaborations:** Connect with other organizations and case managers involved in similar projects. Sharing experiences and best practices can be invaluable in navigating the complexities of administering a HUD grant.

By leveraging these resources and seeking guidance from HUD and other knowledgeable sources, you can effectively administer your HUD grant for permanent supportive housing and ensure compliance with program requirements.