**ACCEPT HOUSING OR SERVICE REFERRALS**

The Access Point will coordinate the assessment, prioritization, and referral of households seeking homelessness assistance. Housing providers who are receiving federal funding administered by IHFA will no longer maintain their own waiting lists. Housing providers who do not receive this funding are able to maintain their own waiting lists and are encouraged to also receive referrals from the Access Point.

**COMMUNICATE HOUSING AVAILABILITY**

Housing providers should inform their regional Access Point when housing units are available or will become available in the near future. They may notify the Access Point via phone or email. The Access Point will then contact the next eligible individual or family and refer them to the available “best fit” housing provider. Check with the Access Point in your region to determine the appropriate referral communication protocol.

**ADOPT HOUSING FIRST PRACTICES**

Housing providers play a critical role ensuring clients end their homelessness, in part by adopting a Housing First approach. Housing providers are encouraged to favorably consider referrals for tenancy even when clients have: limited income, active or a history of substance use, domestic violence history, resistance to receiving services, history of evictions or poor credit, or criminal records. Adopting these Housing First practices to lower the barriers to housing is a key principle of Homeless Connect.

**PUBLISH SELECTION AND SCREENING CRITERIA**

Housing and homelessness prevention service providers should ensure all criteria used to make enrollment determinations for their programs are documented and consistently applied. This assists Access Points in matching prospective clients with the “best fit” housing intervention. It is understandable that denials may occur; however, they should be rare and the reason for denial must be identified and documented.

**PARTicipate in case conferencing**

Case conferencing and communication between the Access Point and providers within the region to coordinate and integrate services is important in achieving successful client outcomes. Housing and service providers should participate in regional case conferencing sessions with the Access Point and other resource agencies to review the prioritization list and discuss the status of available housing units or other support options.

**COMPLYING WITH NON-DISCRIMINATION REQUIREMENTS**

Housing providers must comply with applicable civil rights and fair housing laws. These non-discrimination and equal opportunity provisions of federal civil rights laws prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, religion, sex, national origin, disability, familial status, sexual orientation, gender identity or marital status.

**QUESTIONS?**

Contact your regional Access Point for information specific to your area. For general information and to view a complete list of Access Points, visit www.idahohousing.com/ihcc

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P.O. Box 7899  
(505 W. Myrtle, 83702)  
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* Programs are subject to change at any time.  
* Funds are limited, and certain restrictions apply.
Local housing and homeless service providers and Idaho Housing and Finance Association have partnered to create a comprehensive, statewide homelessness response system to help standardize the process for persons experiencing a housing crisis and help families or individuals gain access to the supportive services they need. Known as Homeless Connect, this process ensures clients experience consistency when accessing housing resources by documenting the clients’ needs and coordinating housing and service referrals. Local housing and homeless providers within the homelessness response system share guiding principles and a set of common operational policies and seek to efficiently allocate scarce resources while helping to evaluate the overall effectiveness of the homelessness response system in their communities.

**KEY ELEMENTS**

**ACCESS**
To ensure anyone experiencing a housing crisis has fair and equal access to housing and services, an individual or family at risk of, or experiencing, homelessness begins the process of accessing these services at a centralized location serving as an Access Point.

**ASSESS**
Access Point representatives conduct an assessment using standardized tools to understand a household’s current housing situation and service needs. The assessment helps identify the type of housing intervention that meets the household’s needs. Individuals or families are then placed on a centralized waiting list to ensure that people with the greatest needs are prioritized for housing and assistance.

**ASSIGN**
After completing the assessment process, Access Point representatives assist households by matching them with the most appropriate housing support based on their needs and preferences. Providers may have eligibility requirements that affect the referral options available to a potential participant; however, every effort is made to sort, match and refer the housing assistance that is the best fit.

**ACCOUNTABILITY**
Coordination between local housing and homeless service providers is key in facilitating the homelessness response system and helps create support for common goals and a shared framework. Active participation and feedback between providers is vital in helping assess the effectiveness of the community’s homelessness response system in each region.

**HOMELESSNESS RESPONSE SYSTEM**

- **Homeless and Unsheltered or in Temporary Shelter**
- **At-Risk of Homelessness**
- **Housing Intervention Assessment**
  - Prioritization for “best fit” housing intervention based on greatest need
  - Able to retain housing or gain new housing
- **Homelessness Prevention Assessment**
  - Prioritization for “best fit” housing intervention based on greatest need
  - Able to retain housing or gain new housing
- **Access Point Screening**

**HOUSING AND SERVICE PROVIDER PARTICIPATION**
There are several ways for housing and service providers to participate in the homelessness response system. Prioritizing and coordinating assistance will help ensure those with the greatest needs receive the housing support and services they need in an efficient manner. While housing providers who receive federal HUD funding are required to participate, other housing and service providers are strongly encouraged to adopt the following practices:

**DIRECT CLIENTS TO THE ACCESS POINT**
Housing and service providers should ensure clients are directed to the designated Access Point in the region for a standard, objective assessment.