

2021-2022 New York State Rental Supplement Program Plan

District: ONONDAGA COUNTY

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RSP Implementation Date: upon OTDA approval

Q. Indicate whether the program will be administered using district mechanisms (e.g., direct administration or transfer of funds to county agencies) or by another public agency, contractor or non-profit organization. Administration of the RSP may be delegated in full or in part. Also indicate whether districts will coordinate with the local HUD-funded Continuum of Care, if applicable.

A. Onondaga County Department of Social Services-Economic Security (DSS-ES) will administer this program directly. We will not transfer funds to outside agencies to administer. Should we have funds leftover from the target population, or we find we are unable to spend the funds in a timely manner, Onondaga county will coordinate with our local Continuum of Care and utilize HMIS to assist vulnerable homeless individuals.

Q. Indicate the anticipated RSP supplement amount and the number of households expected to be served in the initial 12-month period. RSP supplement amounts are set at 85% of the local Fair Market Rent (FMR) values with a district option to pay up to 100% of FMR using local funds.

A. RSP Supplement Amount: Between \$821 & \$1,182 per month.

Referring to the chart below, the RSP was calculated by utilizing 85% of the 2022 Fair Market Rate for Onondaga County.

TANF Household Type	2022 Fair Market Rate for Onondaga County	85% of 2022 FMR	Number of Bedrooms
H1 child/adult HOH, 2 children/2 adults HOH, Partner/Cohabitant/1child HOH, Partner/Cohabitant/2children	\$966	\$821	2
HOH, 3 children/adults HOH, 4 children/adults HOH, Partner/Cohabitant, 3 children HOH, Partner/Cohabitant, 4 children	\$1198	\$1018	3
HOH, 5 children/adults HOH, 6 children/adults HOH, Partner/Cohabitant, 5 children HOH, Partner/Cohabitant, 6 children	\$1390	\$1182	4

Anticipated Number of Households to be Served: 250 households (We are starting with 125 households, but this is expected to increase as our TANF caseload increases).

Q. Describe the outreach mechanisms that will be used. Receipt of TA is not a requirement for determining eligibility for the RSP, but at least 50% of the supplements shall be allocated for households who are currently in shelter or experiencing homelessness (unless sufficient demand does not exist for such households within a district):

A. The parents that are in the 2Gen Onondaga (FYI: this is the full project name) pilot program will be directly contacted by their new case manager regarding the RSP. The clients that need to relocate or that are experiencing homelessness, will be contacted directly by the case manager that is assigned to them. Collaboration between the case manager and the Income Maintenance (IM) eligibility worker will occur in order to educate the client about RSP and assist with the application process.

Please see attached description of the 2Gen Onondaga pilot program.

Q. Describe the application and determination process, including the length of time within which applications will be approved or denied. OTDA encourages districts/contractors to make decisions regarding applications within 30 days of the application date.

A. The TA intake eligibility worker will make a referral to the dedicated 2Gen worker when an applicant presents with need. The 2Gen dedicated worker will process the RSP application and make payment if eligible. The 2Gen worker will be responsible to send decision letter to the applicant. LDSS will process RSP requests within 30 days of application date.

Q. Describe the forms and/or notices that will be used to facilitate the application and determination process. When households requesting a supplement do not meet the criteria established by the district, the denial/discontinuance letter must support the decision by explaining the criteria and the district's decision that the household does not meet such criteria. When a supplement is approved, an award letter must be provided to both the tenant and landlord and must detail the amount approved to be paid on a monthly basis and the months/term included.

A. Once the need of RSP is identified by the TANF recipient, a RSP informational form/application will be completed. See attached for Draft application for RSP. The case manager and IM worker will work with the applicant and review the application to determine eligibility.

Q. Indicate the anticipated target population, including prioritization of certain households (e.g., those with children under the age of six, single individuals, veterans, individuals and families experiencing domestic violence (DV) and non-DV victims of violence). Eligible participants include individuals and/or families, regardless of immigration status, who are experiencing homelessness or facing an imminent loss of housing, including individuals and families with or without children:

A. Young parents at or under the age of 25 participating in our 2Gen Onondaga poverty reduction pilot.

Q. Indicate how the following eligibility standards will be met:

- **Households must earn no more than 50% of area median income (AMI) at the time of application (using current monthly income for the household and excluding earned income of a minor child; adoption/foster care payments; one-time loans, gifts, lump sum payments or other non-recurring income; and childcare subsidy payments) based on location and household size, with initial priority given to households who earn no more than 30% of AMI.**
- **A household's financial contribution will be limited to 30% of their households 'total earned and/or unearned income; and**
- **Supplements are to be provided until the household's income reaches 30% or more of their monthly rent, at which point the housing will be considered affordable for the individual/family and the supplement will end.**

A. The 2Gen eligibility worker will review paystubs, other household income and rental amount. Manual budgeting will be completed using a spreadsheet based upon program requirements to ensure HH's financial contribution will not exceed 30% of

household's gross income. Eligibility for RSP will be determined on a case-by-case basis of our 2Gen pilot.

Q. List any other established eligibility criteria and indicate how each criterion will be determined and documented. Include the following:

- **Will leases be required of all tenants?** Leases will not be required but leases are encouraged to promote housing stability.
- **How will the district/contractor ensure that the rental costs are legitimate and the responsibility of the recipient if a lease is not required?** Collateral contact will be made with landlord to verify rental amount. Verification (such as rental receipts) will be requested if questionable.
- **Will there be any health and safety standards regarding the housing that must be met prior to paying the supplement at a specific location?** Yes. Housing unit must be in good standing with Syracuse codes office and not have lead or other hazards onsite.
- **How will the district handle modifications (e.g., moves, rent increases, changes in household composition, etc.)?** The shelter supplement will be modified up to the allowable amount in cases of rent increases. Households that relocate will need to be reevaluated for supplement eligibility.
- **What standards will be followed in determining whether supplementation will continue following a move?** Standards for continued shelter supplement will be determined based on affordability, housing codes compliance, and clients' participation in required 2-Gen Onondaga program activities, such as employment, training and financial empowerment requirements. 2-Gen participants are also required to meet with their case manager on a regular basis to conduct goal progress reports.
- **Will the district/contractor require the recipient household to report changes related to the supplement within a set timeframe as a condition of continued eligibility for the supplement?** All household changes will be reviewed monthly via case conference with the eligibility worker and the case manager. Income changes will be verified via paystubs or other income verification such as the Work Number or collateral contact with the employer. The IM worker will monitor household income and rental costs to ensure recipient is receiving the correct RSP.
- **How will contributions towards rental costs from individuals outside the household be verified and what standards will be applied in determining whether such contributions can be sustained in the future?** Rent contribution from a 3rd party will be verified by written or verbal statements or other collateral contact by the agency representative. The LDSS agency

representatives are well trained in determining how to budget 3rd party contributions.

Q. Indicate the length of time the supplement will be offered to households (e.g., three months, six months, indefinitely, etc.) and whether there is a recertification process for the supplement.

A. There will be no recertification process, instead we will monitor income, rental amount and household size on a monthly basis.

RSP receipt will continue until the recipient secures a livable wage and the household's rent is 30% or less of their total monthly income. RSP will cease immediately in the following situations:

Verified PA fraud

Move out of district

Noncompliance with 2 Gen project (The case manager will continue to attempt to engage the client for 30 days to encourage and assist with program compliance)

Q. Indicate the payment mechanism (e.g., check, transfer of funds, etc.) and whether the supplement will be paid to the tenant or the landlord.

A. Payments will be made to the landlord via direct voucher monthly as eligible. The direct voucher generates a check to the landlord.

Q. Indicate how fraudulent and/or cases determined to otherwise be ineligible will be handled, including the procedure for recouping funds, if necessary.

A. Suspected fraudulent cases will be referred to the LDSS investigations unit for review. Households determined to be ineligible due to fraud after payment is made will be reviewed by the 2-Gen worker. Cases will be referred for repayment if needed via referral to our recovery unit and send to an outsourced collection agency for recoupment of funds.

Q. Describe how the district/contractor will ensure that households do not receive duplicate benefits from other sources that may assist with paying supplements.

A. There will be a very small number of LDSS staff issuing RSP which will limit the potential for duplicate benefits. Temporary Assistance administers the majority of rental payments in Onondaga County and a Ventek case narration will be made on each case to alert other staff that payment was made. The case manager will be responsible to reach out to community partners that administer rental funds to ensure no duplication occurs.

Q. Indicate how client records will be maintained (e.g., paper file cabinets, electronic records, or a combination of both) and whether any specific software

or system will be used. Notifications regarding eligibility determinations (e.g., approvals, denials and discontinuances) must be maintained in the case record for a minimum of six years following submission of the final expenditure report.

A. Files will be maintained electronically in IEDR, the ventek case management system and HMIS.

Q. Indicate how the progress of those served in the RSP will be monitored. Reports that describe the progress of RSP activities and those served will be required on at least a quarterly basis. A report template will be provided. Minimally, reports must include the amount of rental supplement payments provided, the number of households served and certain demographic information including receipt of TA and household composition.

A. Fiscal operations will generate checks to be issued by our Comptroller's office. We will track payments via an independent spreadsheet created and maintained by the 2Gen staff. Additionally, Fiscal Operations retains listing of checks issued through the Comptroller's office.

Q. To the fullest extent possible, RSP funding should not be used to supplement existing Shelter Supplement Programs. Districts who currently have an approved Shelter Supplement Plan must indicate the following:

- **How the RSP will be different from their current approved Shelter Supplement Plan**
- **The process established to ensure funds are not duplicated**
- **How participating households will be distinguished**

N/A