

2021-2022 New York State Rental Supplement Program Plan

District: Clinton

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RSP Implementation Date: TBD

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.

Clinton County Department of Social Services will administer the RSP utilizing district staff and will work in coordination with the local Continuum of Care as dictated by case needs.

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.

RSP Supplement Amount: 85% FMR*

Anticipated Number of Households to be Served: 24

- HUD FMR FY 2022
- | 0BR | 1BR | 2BR | 3BR | 4BR | |
|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------|
| 1-2 persons | 1-3 persons | 3-5 persons | 4-6 persons | 5-8 persons | |
| \$682.00 | \$686.00 | \$884.00 | \$1134.00 | \$1219.00 | 100% |
| \$579.70 | \$583.10 | \$751.40 | \$963.90 | \$1036.15 | 85% |

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).

Working with Coordinated Entry (CE) committee partners referrals for the RSP will be reviewed and prioritized based on immediacy of need. When determined by the CE to be appropriate for the RSP program individuals/families will be referred to DSS to complete the application process and for determination of eligibility and enrollment into the program.

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.

Referrals for the RSP will be processed through the CE committee. Any agency or individual who feels that a person who is homeless or at risk of being homeless meets the eligibility requirements for the program can complete an application which will be reviewed by the CE committee. Individuals who complete applications for the RSP program will be notified by DSS within 30 days of receipt of the application from the CE committee.

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.

Clinton County will utilize an application which will include the individual(s) Name, DOB, proof of identity, earned income and unearned income that is received on a regular basis by all household members 18, and older and any other source of rental subsidy. A budgeting worksheet will be used to determine the individual's ability to afford their rent portion (if any) ongoing. Clinton County DSS has developed an acceptance/change form to notify individuals of acceptance into the program and any portion of rent that they will be required to contribute. A notice of denial/discontinuance has been developed to notify individuals when they are ineligible as well as explanation for ineligibility.

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.

Preference will be given to individuals and families who are homeless or in jeopardy of becoming homeless who earn no more than 50% of AMI at the time of application and who are paying more than 30% of household income towards rent.

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.

Households will be required to provide proof of income, and other monetary contributions that occur monthly but are not from an excluded source, for all individuals residing in the household who are over the age of 18. Households will be determined ineligible if the household income is greater than 50% of AMI and /or they have resources in excess of \$2500 at the time of application. Individuals will be required to report any income that would cause their household income to reach a point where month rent is at or below 30% of their total income. When a household reports that their rent is at or below 30% of their total income the housing will be determined to be affordable, and the supplement would end.

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?
- How will the district/contractor ensure that the rental costs are legitimate and the responsibility of the recipient if a lease is not required?
- Will there be any health and safety standards regarding the housing that must be met prior to paying the supplement at a specific location?
- How will the district handle modifications (e.g., moves, rent increases, changes in household composition, etc.)?
- What standards will be followed in determining whether supplementation will continue following a move?
- 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?
- 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?

All households and landlords will be required to enter into a lease agreement. The LDSS will not be inspecting living spaces as part of the eligibility process, however if a security deposit is required then the tenant will be required to complete an inspection of the property prior to moving in and return a completed inspection report signed by both the tenant and landlord detailing the existing conditions of the apartment. In the event that changes in the lease occur, such as rent increases or modifications to household composition the households RSP application will be modified and reviewed for ongoing eligibility and appropriate notices provided and any changes impacting rental supplement will also result in a notice to the landlord. All changes to income and

household composition must be reported within 10 days of the change, at which time a new budget worksheet will be completed to determine continued program eligibility. In the event that a party outside of the household will be contributing to rental expenses a letter from the source of the income must be provided indicating that they are the source of the assistance and the duration that the assistance is expected to continue. In the event that an individual who is moving wishes to continue the RSP they would need to complete a budget worksheet to ensure affordability and to recalculate the applicant's portion of the rent. Clinton County RSP will be available only to households residing in Clinton County.

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.

Authorization for the RSP will be for a period of 12 months with the opportunity for renewal. Renewal is contingent on continued availability of funding and continued program eligibility. Supplements will end when the rent is 30% or less of the household's total monthly income, at which point it is considered affordable.

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

Clinton County DSS will issue payment by check directly to the landlord on a monthly basis.

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

Allegations of Fraud will be referred to the LDSS fraud unit for investigation. In the event that fraud is determined to have occurred the household will be notified of disqualification from the program. Discontinuation from the program will be effective for a period of 12 months for a first offense and 24 months for any occurrence thereafter. Fraud referrals can also be made to the District Attorney's office for prosecution at the discretion of the agency. In the event of a successful prosecution, the Agency will request a judgement to recoup the funds. Absent a court ordered judgement the department will attempt to enter into a repayment agreement with the individual.

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

Applicants will be required to complete and attest to any additional ongoing rental assistance they are in receipt of and provide the source of the assistance and amount. Clinton County will require a ROI from individuals to confirm benefits received from other agencies. Applications will be reviewed at Coordinated Entry meetings to ensure that no duplicated benefits are being provided, since no database currently exists in Clinton County that would provide such information. Failure to notify LDSS of any rental assistance will negate eligibility for the RSP.

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.

Records will be maintained and stored using existing document imaging and storage. Records will be maintained for a period of six years.

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.

Enrollees of the RSP funding will have their progress monitored via the HMIS system.

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**

The RSP will expand eligibility to non-safety net individuals not in receipt of TA and EAA eligible individuals. To ensure that there is no duplication of Rental Assistance, all cases will be reviewed by the Coordinated Entry Committee. Individuals and households who are in receipt of rental subsidies from such programs as Section 8, Clinton Counties Safety Net Supplement or any other public or private rental subsidy will not be considered for RSP assistance. Whereas, the shelter supplement plan requires recipients to be in receipt of Temporary Assistance, the RSP serves individuals and families who are homeless or in jeopardy of becoming homeless who earn no more than 50% of AMI at the time of application and are paying more than 30% of household income towards rent will be ineligible for RSP.