

2021-2022 New York State Rental Supplement Program Plan

District: Sullivan County, NY

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RSP Implementation Date: XX?XX/XXXX

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.

The program will be administered by the local district. We will coordinate need with the local Continuum of Care, which will assist us in avoiding a duplication of benefits with other supplemental programs that exist in our County. Since we administer a rental supplement program for the Safety Net population and a rental supplement for families under our FFFS plan, it fits our plan to administer this program as well.

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: Amounts will be set at 85% FMR according to unit size as listed below:

HOUSEHOLD SIZE	ALLOWABLE NUMBER OF BEDROOMS	100%FY2022 HUD FMR	85%FY2022 HUD FMR STATE REIMBURSED	MAX SUPPLEMENT AMOUNT	DISTRICT FUNDED AMOUNT
1	STUDIO	\$656.00	\$558	\$558	0
1	1	\$791	\$672	\$672	0
2	1	\$791	\$672	\$672	0
3	2	\$987	\$839	\$839	0
4	2	\$987	\$839	\$839	0
5	3	\$1,246	\$1,059	\$1,059	0
6	3	\$1,246	\$1,059	\$1,059	0
7	4	\$1,444	\$1,227	\$1,227	0
8	4	\$1,444	\$1,227	\$1,227	0

No local share funds will be committed at this point.

Anticipated Number of Households to be Served:

We anticipate serving 25 households for a 12-month period. Our focus is going to be on large homeless families that require 2, 3, and 4- bedroom units. However, if we can utilize our family supplement program under FFFS for these households, we would be able to serve a larger number of households, up to 50, including those individuals and families that need studios and 1-bedroom units

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).

Sullivan County intends to use our allocation to transition households who are in temporary emergency housing into permanent housing. The referrals to the program will come from our spreadsheet of homeless cases, as well as HMIS reporting. Sullivan County will work closely with our local Continuum of Care (CoC) members and discuss referrals through the monthly Coordinated Entry meetings. 90 % of our allocation will be used to serve households who are currently in temporary emergency housing. Currently, we are housing 162 individuals in temporary emergency housing. This total is comprised of 79 individuals and 24 families.

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.

Sullivan County will discuss cases with the CoC during monthly Coordinated Entry meetings and determine who the best candidates are for the program based on need and availability of other resources. Referrals will be accepted from the CoC members. An intake form will be completed with the client to establish their eligibility.

We will make the decision within 30 days, as long as all documentation is in the agency. We will also use a local district form, "Shelter Supplement Checklist" that we currently use for our Safety Net Assistance supplement program, with some changes to reflect this program.

We intend to use a determination letter currently designed and being utilized by the Rapid Rehousing program.

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.

Sullivan County will use the Rental Supplement Payment Determination form to advise the client of the decision on their application and/or termination in the program. We will also send a landlord rent letter to the landlord with the outline of the terms.

If a household's income increases to a level where their monthly rent is at or below 30 % of their total income, the housing will be considered affordable for the individual/family, the supplement will end. We will send an updated letter to the landlord stating the end date.

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.

The anticipated target population will be any household currently in temporary emergency housing with a focus on families. Other households to be served would include recipients of social security benefits, chronically homeless, and victims of domestic violence. The shelter supplement will be available until funds are exhausted.

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.**

Sullivan County will use the HUD user portal to get the 2022 HUD AMI guidelines. We will require proof of income of all household members and household composition. If a household's income increases to a level where their monthly rent is 30 % or more of their total income, the housing will be considered affordable for the individual/family, the supplement will end. We will send an updated letter to the landlord stating the end date. The agency will have the clients pay the 30% cost directly to the landlord.

This information will be reviewed via periodic reporting every 6 months with a yearly recertification at the end of a 12-month period.

Once the client can afford the apartment on their own, the Rental Supplement Payment Determination form will be sent to the client and then the landlord will in turn get a new landlord letter letting them know the date the client will need to pay the whole cost of the rent.

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?**

We will require a lease or lease agreement. If the household is unable to obtain one, we will accept the Shelter form included in the packet.

- **How will the district/contractor ensure that the rental costs are legitimate and the responsibility of the recipient if a lease is not required?**

See above.

- **Will there be any health and safety standards regarding the housing that must be met prior to paying the supplement at a specific location?**

We will coordinate with local code enforcement to ensure that there are no code violations or health and safety concerns and where applicable obtain rental permits for the rental location.

- **How will the district handle modifications (e.g., moves, rent increases, changes in household composition, etc.)?**

If a case becomes ineligible for the rental supplement under this program due to a change in household composition, income, rent increase, or other significant change, we will meet with them to evaluate their situation and the shelter supplement may be discontinued.

- The shelter supplement will be discontinued if a client moves out of the local district.
- If a third-party contributor reduces or increases their contribution to the household, the circumstances will be examined, and the shelter supplement will be reevaluated.
- If the recipient moves to a new apartment, the local district must approve the relocation. The need for the supplement will be reevaluated at such time.
- The recipient must agree to inspection by the local code enforcement officer if circumstances necessitate such inspection.

- **What standards will be followed in determining whether supplementation will continue following a move?**

The shelter supplement will be discontinued if a client moves out of the local district. If the recipient moves to a new apartment within the district, the local district must approve the relocation. The need for the supplement will be reevaluated at such time.

- **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?**

We will require periodic reporting to report changes every 6 months.

- **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?**

The relationship of household members and "third party" contributors will be verified by the review of any prior case history, current documentation and if needed, referral to Special Investigations Unit for research.

The income of all household members and "third party" contributors will be verified in order to ensure that the household will be able to maintain their shelter payment responsibility.

Based on historical experience within the SNA population, we do not anticipate there will be many third-party contributions toward rent from individuals outside the household.

Other eligibility criteria include the following:

- Eligible participants are individuals and/or families, both with and without children, who are experiencing homelessness or facing an imminent loss of housing, regardless of immigration status;
- Households must earn no more than 50% of area median income (AMI) at the time of application based on location and household size, with initial priority given to households who earn no more than 30% of AMI;
- Rental supplement amounts shall be set at 85% of local Fair Market Rent (FMR) values with a district option to pay up to 100% of FMR using local funds;
- At least 50% of the supplements shall be allocated for households who are currently in a shelter or experiencing homelessness, unless sufficient demand does not exist for such households within the district;
- A household's financial contribution will be limited to 30% of their household's total earned and/or unearned income;
- 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; and,

Receipt of TA is not a requirement for determining eligibility for the RSP.

- The household must have resided in Sullivan County for six months prior to application for the shelter supplement.
- Minimum age of applicant/ tenant of record will be 21 years.
- Applicant/tenant of record must agree to the terms of the program and communicate any changes to the district.
- Must demonstrate a history of compliance with other programs. A history of non-compliance may disqualify an applicant for the shelter supplement. The circumstances will be evaluated to determine eligibility.
- The household will not be eligible for the shelter supplement if the rental expenses are fully covered by Section 8, public housing or any other type of government funded subsidy. Rental assistance costs cannot be duplicated.
- The household applicant must be the tenant of record. This will be verified by a lease, tenancy agreement or shelter form included in the packet. The apartment must meet all local code standards.
- If applicable, the household applicant must apply for SSI/RSDI. Failure to comply may result in discontinuance of the shelter supplement. The district will provide a referral to the SOAR program with a Community partner.
- Must be willing to obtain employment if there are no barriers to doing so. The district will provide resources and assistance with job leads through Community partners and local district employment liaisons. .

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.

If a household's income increases to a level where their monthly rent is at or below 30 % of their total household income, the housing will be considered affordable for the individual/family, the supplement will end. We will send an updated letter to the landlord stating the end date.

We will require periodic reporting of any changes to income or household composition every 6 months with recertification every year.

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

Payments will be made directly to the landlord via check.

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

We will make a referral to our Special Investigations Unit for further investigation. If there is a need to recoup funds, we will work with our SIU and Accounting department to set up a claims account to pursue repayment.

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.

Our coordination with the CoC and local community-based organization partners will ensure that households do not receive duplicate benefits from other sources. We will also incorporate this into our forms and periodic reporting. We will confirm if neighboring districts will be allowing supplements to continue for individuals that have moved out of their districts as well. We will develop a spreadsheet to track applicants and payments, which we would cross reference with spreadsheets that have our single shelter supplement recipients and FFFS family shelter supplement recipients.

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.

The agency will use paper files while the case is open. Once the case closes for any reason, we will hold the case for 30 days and then the case will be scanned into our IEDR if they have an open TA case. Where it will be maintained. We will store the cases that aren't TA in a filing cabinet in the housing department. Our internal spreadsheet of cases will be used for reporting purposes.

We will ensure that we maintain relevant records for the required time per OTDA and the County's document destruction guidelines.

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.

Once we receive the report template, we will work on developing a spreadsheet to collect the

required data. We also anticipate setting up an RSP project in HMIS for reporting purposes. We will develop any forms needed to capture the relevant data once we know what will be required.

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**

This program will primarily serve our homeless families, social security recipients, victims of domestic violence, and others housed in temporary emergency housing, not eligible for any other rental supplement program. Our other supplement program recipients have to be TA eligible unlike this plan. The eligibility criteria for this supplement vs. the single supplement under TA or the family supplement under FFFS is different.

The agency will cross reference the district spreadsheets for the single supplement and the family supplement under FFFS to determine who is receiving a rental supplement from another plan to ensure that those clients are not enrolled into this plan if the rental costs are covered with one plan

If a household could be eligible for multiple supplement programs, we will determine which one would be most beneficial for the client depending on eligibility criteria and enroll them in that one. They could be enrolled in multiple programs based on eligibility as long as rental costs are not duplicated.

Participating households will be distinguished through the use of separate spreadsheets at the local district. The district maintains spreadsheets for our single supplement plan and our FFFS family supplement plan. We would develop a spreadsheet for this program also.