

## **Housing First at the Program/Project Level Checklist**

Based on the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness

The Housing First Checklist: A Practical Tool for Assessing Housing First in Practice

- Admission/tenant screening and selection practices promote the acceptance of applicants regardless of their sobriety or use of substances, completion of treatment and participation in services.
- Applicants are not rejected based on poor credit or financial history, poor or lack of rental history, minor criminal convictions or behaviors that indicate lack of “housing readiness.”
- Supportive services emphasize engagement and problem-solving over therapeutic goals. Service plans are highly tenant-driven without predetermined goals. Participation in services of program compliance is not a condition of permanent supportive housing tenancy. Rapid re-housing programs may require case management as condition of receiving rental assistance.
- Tenants in permanent supportive housing are given reasonable flexibility in paying their tenant share of rent (after subsidy) on time and offered special payment arrangements (e.g. a payment plan) for rent arrears and/or rent assistance with financial management (including representative payee arrangements).
- Case managers are trained in and actively employ evidence-based practices for client/tenant engagement, such as motivation interviewing and client centered support.
- Services are informed by harm reduction philosophy that recognized that drug and alcohol use and addiction are a part of tenants’ lives, where tenants are engaged in non-judgmental communication regarding drug and alcohol use, and where tenants are offered education regarding how to avoid risky behaviors and engage in safer practices.
- Outreach staff (those part of a crisis response system) believe that all people experiencing homelessness are housing ready.
- Every effort is made to transfer a tenant from one housing situation to another, if a tenancy is in jeopardy. Whenever possible eviction back into homelessness is avoided.