



Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing

Family Shelter Length-of-Stay Policy

The purpose of this policy is to outline the length of stay and associated extension criteria for HSH funded family temporary shelter and urgent accommodation voucher programs in the San Francisco Homelessness Response System (HRS).

FAMILY SHELTER LENGTH-OF-STAY

Prior to the COVID-19 Pandemic, family temporary shelter programs had a defined length of stay for participants. Subsequently, in 2020, the pandemic required that HSH freeze the length of stay for safety reasons which resulted in longer lengths of stay than intended and a lack of transition from shelter into permanent housing for families. This policy seeks to reinstate length of stays across the family temporary shelter system and outline the extension criteria.

Length-of-Stay Policy

The HSH Temporary Shelter System is intended to serve as a short term, emergency response that provides safe, temporary shelter to San Francisco homeless families¹. Due to the temporary nature of this intervention, shelter stays are time limited. A household's length of stay is defined as one continuous length of stay from the first date of enrollment in an HSH funded shelter program through the exit date of the shelter system. This includes the total number of days a household is enrolled in the shelter system continuously, including any transfers between shelter programs.

Shelter Stay Types

The Family Temporary Shelter System has two length-of-stay types:

A. 14-Day Emergency Placements

14-Day Emergency Placements are provided through the Urgent Accommodation Voucher (UAV) Program. These hotel voucher placements are designed to provide immediate intervention for families in emergency situations who have housing or other shelter accommodation plans and have a small gap of time unsheltered until their housing or shelter plan can be achieved. Families may stay at the Families and Pregnant Persons UAV program² for up to 14 calendar days.

B. 90-Day Temporary Shelter Placements

¹ San Francisco Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing Definitions of Homelessness:

https://hsh.sfgov.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/HSH-Definitions_FinalDraft.pdf

² Families and Pregnant Persons UAV program provides emergency 14-day hotel stays to families experiencing homelessness. More information about this program is located here: <https://hsh.sfgov.org/services/how-to-get-services/accessing-temporary-shelter/family-temporary-shelter/>

90-Day Temporary Shelter Placements are provided through temporary shelter programs and the Urgent Accommodation Voucher (UAV) Program. These placements are designed to provide temporary shelter or accommodation vouchers for families for up to 90 calendar days while working on other housing plans. Families can contact a Family Access Point for assessment and referral. Families may stay in this placement type for up to 90 calendar days.

Extension Policy

The Family Shelter System Length-of-Stay Policy allows families placed in any of HSH’s Family Temporary Shelter or Urgent Accommodation Voucher (UAV) Programs the opportunity to receive a placement extension beyond the designated length of stay to address barriers to housing for households actively engaged in a housing resolution and meeting their family success plan milestones.

Three Extensions. Families may be eligible for up to three extensions of their 14-day or 90-day stay if they meet the specified criteria outlined in this policy.

Active Program Engagement. Households must demonstrate active engagement in case management, participate in any programs and/or services that address barriers to housing, maintain compliance with shelter rules and regulations, provide documentation of efforts made to secure housing, applications submitted, and attend housing appointments.

Family Success Plan: Family success plans are to be completed by families in collaboration with shelter case managers and signed by program directors within one week of initial shelter stay for 14-day stays and within three weeks of initial shelter stay for 90-day stays. Households must continue to engage with shelter case management on working toward a housing resolution throughout all lengths of stay.

HSH Review Beyond Three Extensions. HSH recognizes that there may be cases in which families need longer than the three allotted extensions. In these cases, extensions that exceed the maximum allotted number must be reviewed by HSH.

Ineligibility for Extended Shelter Stays. Any household who lost their most recent housing referral status due to declining HSH housing units without extenuating circumstances per CE standards, as documented in ONE, is not eligible for an extension of stay. Any household in a 14-Day Emergency Placement who has been removed from the Family Shelter Waitlist due to declining shelter placement without extenuating circumstances per the Family Shelter Waitlist standards³, is not eligible for an extension of stay, unless they have a documented housing move-in date that will be completed within the 14-day extension.

Extension Criteria

A. 14-Day Emergency Placement Type Extension Criteria

³ Add link to Family Shelter Prioritization Policy



Shelter Program leadership may approve up to three 14-day extensions of stay under one of the following circumstances:

1. Medical

Household has written documentation from a medical practitioner acknowledging a current medical or mental health course of treatment, intervention, or assessment that will be resolved or completed during the extension.

2. Temporary Shelter or Transitional Housing Placement Pending

Household is on the Family Shelter Waitlist; is approved for a Victim Service Provider (VSP) or Domestic Violence (DV) shelter placement; is approved for a transitional housing program; or for an approved transfer to an Adult or TAY shelter program.

3. Housing Pending

Household has written documentation of a housing opportunity through a landlord or problem-solving resolution that will be achieved during the extension; household is active on the Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) or Rapid Rehousing queue; or household is enrolled in a Rapid Rehousing or other housing program and is in active housing search.

Documentation: Eligibility for every 14-Day Emergency Placement Type extension requires documentation in the ONE System of the household’s engagement with an Access Point and UAV program case management, including regular attendance of weekly case management meetings.

B. 90-Day Temporary Shelter Placement Type Extension Criteria

Shelter Program leadership may approve up to three 30-day extensions of stay under the following circumstances:

1. Medical

Household has written documentation from a medical practitioner acknowledging a current medical or mental health course of treatment, intervention, or assessment that will be resolved or completed during the extension.

2. Transitional Housing Placement Pending

Household has written documentation of approval for a transitional housing program.

3. Housing Pending

Household has written documentation of a housing opportunity through a landlord or problem-solving resolution plan that will be achieved during the extension; household is active on the PSH or Rapid Rehousing queue; or household is enrolled in a Rapid Rehousing or other housing program and is in active housing search.

Documentation: Eligibility for every 90-Day Temporary Shelter Placement Type extension requires documentation in the ONE System of the household’s engagement with an Access Point, progress in



their Family Success Plan and engagement with shelter program case management, including regular attendance of weekly case management meetings.

Stays Beyond Three Extensions

All length of stay extension requests beyond the three extensions approved by shelter or UAV program leadership require further HSH review in monthly meetings with HSH.

A. Meeting extension criteria for first three extensions

Families shall meet the extension criteria outlined above in the policy based on their associated length-of-stay type.

B. Housing barriers outside of their direct and immediate control

Documentation is required in the ONE System of the household's continual and consistent efforts to obtain a housing resolution they have not been able to achieve due to barriers outside of their direct and immediate control.

C. Active on the Family Shelter Waitlist OR Documented Housing Move-In Date (14-Day Emergency Placements ONLY)

For families in 14-Day Emergency Placements only, they shall be working toward a family shelter placement, as demonstrated by remaining active on the Family Shelter Waitlist. Alternatively, for families not active on the Family Shelter Waitlist, they shall have a documented housing move-in date that will be achieved within the extension period.

Procedure

A. Extension Review Meeting

Shelter Program Case Managers will meet with each family at least *seven (7) days* prior to the end of their 14-Day Emergency Placement Type stay or *thirty (30) days* prior to the end of their 90-Day Temporary Shelter Placement Type stay to review their exit plan. If the family does not have an exit plan in place, the case manager should determine if the family meets criteria for an extension as outlined below:

Table 1 – 14-Day Emergency Placement Type Extension Criteria



14-Day Emergency Placement Type						
Access Point Engagement	Weekly Case Management Engagement	* Only One Document Needed*				Extensions beyond 56 days
		Medical	Temporary Shelter Placement Pending	Transitional Housing Pending	Housing Pending	
Required for all extensions	Required for all extensions	Documentation from a medical practitioner acknowledging a current medical or mental health course of treatment, intervention, or assessment that will be resolved or completed during the extension	Confirmation of being active on the Family Shelter Waitlist Queue OR Documentation of a DV shelter placement OR Documentation of approved transfer to an adult or TAY shelter program	Documentation of approval for a transitional housing program	Copy of a lease or rental agreement OR Documentation from a landlord, property management company, or leaseholder specifying a move-in date OR Confirmation of being active on the PSH or Rapid Rehousing Queue OR Confirmation of current enrollment in a Rapid Rehousing or other housing program and is in active housing search	Confirmation of being active on the Family Shelter Waitlist Queue or a documented housing move-in date that will be completed within the 14-day extension AND Documentation of household's continual and consistent efforts to obtain a housing or shelter resolution they have not been able to achieve due to barriers outside of their direct and immediate control AND Review of Extension Approval with HSH Program manager at monthly HSH meetings
Confirmation of Eligibility Criteria must be documented/uploaded to HoH's ONE Profile						

Table 2 – 90-Day Temporary Placement Type Extension Criteria

90-Day Temporary Placement Type						
Access Point Engagement	Weekly Case Management Engagement	Family Success Plan Progress	* Only One Document Needed*			Extensions Beyond 180 days
			Medical	Transitional Housing Pending	Housing Pending	
Required for all extensions	Required for all extensions	Required for all extensions	Documentation from a medical practitioner acknowledging a current medical or mental health course of treatment, intervention, or assessment that will be resolved or completed during the extension	Documentation of approval for a transitional housing program	Copy of a lease or rental agreement OR Documentation from a landlord, property management company, or leaseholder specifying a move-in date OR Confirmation of being active on the PSH or Rapid Rehousing Queue OR Confirmation of current enrollment in a Rapid Rehousing or other housing program and is in active housing search	Must continue to meet the criteria outlined for all previous extensions AND Documentation of household's continual and consistent efforts to obtain a housing resolution they have not been able to achieve due to barriers outside of their direct and immediate control AND Review of Extension Approval with HSH Program manager at monthly HSH meetings
Confirmation of Eligibility Criteria must be documented/uploaded to HoH's ONE Profile						

B. Extension Approval

If the family meets the criteria above, the shelter or UAV program case manager shall document this in an extension request case management service in ONE and notify the case manager supervisor or other shelter or UAV program leadership for approval. Once the extension request is reviewed, the program leadership shall document the extension approval or denial in an extension approval or extension denial ONE system case management service. The case manager shall then update the exit date in ONE pending the decision.



C. Extension of Stay Notification

The Shelter Program Case Manager shall notify the family of extension approval or denial verbally and in writing via an extension notification letter to be signed by the family and staff authorizing the extension approval. A copy of the extension notification letter shall be uploaded into ONE. Notification should be provided to the family within the following timelines after the extension review meeting:

- a. **14-Day Emergency Placement:** 2 days
- b. **90-Day Temporary Shelter Placement:** 7 days

D. HSH Review

For extension requests beyond three extensions, the shelter program shall document the extension request and approval/denial of the extension in ONE as outlined in steps A. to C. above. In addition, the shelter program leadership shall review these extensions with their HSH Program Manager during regular monthly meetings. The shelter program leadership or case manager shall document the outcome of the HSH review in a case management service in ONE. The outcome of the HSH review shall either be an approval of the additional extension or a recommendation to decline any further extensions.

Shelter and UAV Program and HSH Responsibilities

Case Managers are responsible for the following as well as documenting these efforts in the ONE system:

- Meet weekly with each family to complete the Family Success Plan and work on problem solving services and housing goals.
- If the family is unknown to Coordinated Entry (CE), refer them to an Access Point for housing assessment and eligibility.
- Verify active status on the Family Shelter Waitlist queue (for programs where participants are eligible for referral to the queue⁴).
- Verify active status on PSH queue.
- Verify active status on Rapid Rehousing queue or enrollment in a Rapid Rehousing Program, during the housing search process.
- Upload any documentation related to extension criteria to HoH's ONE profile.
- Document an extension request case management service in ONE and notify program leadership for review.
- Communicate the decision with the family **verbally and in writing via an extension notification letter within required timelines.**
- Update exit dates in ONE system and upload a copy of the extension notification letter.

Case Manager Supervisor or Program Leadership are responsible for the following and documenting these efforts in the ONE system:

⁴ Add link to Family Shelter Eligibility Policy



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- Review extension request to determine if extension criteria are met.
- Document the extension approval or denial in an extension approval or extension denial case management service and justification in ONE.
- For stays beyond three extensions, review the extension with HSH during the next monthly HSH meeting.
- For stays beyond three extensions, document the HSH review and outcome in an HSH Review case management service in ONE.

HSH Program Managers are responsible for the following:

- Review all stays beyond three extensions monthly to ensure the family meets all extension criteria, the family has barriers outside of their direct and immediate control, and extensions are properly documented in ONE.

Table 3 - Maximum Length-of-Stay

Total Maximum Lengths of Stay			
Placement Length of Stay Types	Length of Stay	Provider Approved Extensions	Maximum Length of Stay
14-Day Emergency Placement Type	14 calendar days	Up to three 14-day extensions for an additional 42 calendar days	56 calendar days
90-Day Temporary Placement Type	90 calendar days	Up to three 30-day extensions for an additional 90 calendar days	180 calendar days
Extension requests beyond this require HSH review based on documented barriers outlined in this policy.			



Approvals

Policy: Family Shelter System Length-of-Stay Policy

Division: Outreach and Temporary Shelter

Last Updated:	
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