



Housing Options and Resources: Opening the Door to Recovery

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and Recovery Supports**

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Overview

Behavioral Health Administration (BHA): Formally the Mental Hygiene Administration and the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Administration.

Core Service Agencies (CSA) Local Addiction Authorities (LAA) and Local Behavioral Health Authorities (LBHA): Located in local Health Departments or free standing agencies, they are local mental health and addiction authorities.

Administrative Service Organization (ASO): Beacon Health Options (managed behavioral health care — service authorization, claims, payments).

Current Housing Resources

- Continuum of Care (CoC) — formerly Shelter Plus Care
- Residential Rehabilitation Program
- Permanent Housing

Continuum of Care

- Grand Total CoC: **304** units approved by U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Excluded are: Montgomery, Garret, and Howard Counties as well as Baltimore City
- Grant funded program through HUD
- Provides rental assistance for permanent housing to individuals and families with an adult member who has a mental illness or co-occurring disorder and is homeless
- For more information on eligibility and how to apply, contact the CSA/LBHA of origin for the applicant

Permanent Supportive Housing

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH): Housing for individuals served by the Public Behavioral Health System (PBHS) where the person is the lease holder. Housing units are subsidized or affordable. Services are available but not required, and can include offsite Psychiatric Rehabilitation Program, Mental Health Case Management, or Assertive Community Treatment/Mobile Treatment.

Residential Rehabilitation

Residential Rehabilitation Programs (RRP) — 50 program sites statewide

- Total number of RRP beds: 2,496
- General Level beds: 863 | Intensive Level beds: 1,633
- RRP:
 - Provides a home-like, supportive residential environment
 - Promotes the individual's ability to engage and participate in appropriate community activities
 - Enables the individual to develop the daily living skills needed for independent functioning

Residential Rehabilitation

RRP has two levels of care: General and Intensive

General Level of Care: Minimum of 13 face-to-face services in the residence monthly.

Intensive Level of Care: Minimum of 19 face-to-face services in the residence monthly, with staff on site seven days per week, for a minimum of 40 hours per week.

Both levels of care have 24 hour/day on call staff availability.

Residential Rehabilitation

- RRP is accessed by submitting an application to the CSA or LBHA of the county of residency
- Eligibility is determined by the CSA/LBHA using the BHA priority population definition and medical necessity criteria applied by the ASO
- The CSA/LBHA reviews applications, tracks vacancies, maintains waiting lists if necessary, and refers applications when beds become available
- The RRP application is on the BHA website:
<http://bha.dhmh.maryland.gov/Pages/Forms.aspx>

Specialty RRP Housing

Transition Age Youth (TAY)	Baltimore City, Baltimore, Calvert, Carroll, Charles, Frederick, Howard, Montgomery, Prince George's, St Mary's, and Wicomico Counties
Developmental Disability/Mental Health (DD/MH)	Anne Arundel, Carroll, Frederick, and St. Mary's Counties
Integrated Treatment for Co-Occurring Disorders (ITCOD)	Frederick and Montgomery Counties
Deaf and/or Hard of Hearing	Baltimore City, Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Frederick, and Prince George's Counties
Geriatric	Baltimore City, Anne Arundel, Frederick, Prince George's, and Wicomico Counties

PSH

Public behavioral health systems are required by federal law to provide services in integrated community settings (U.S. Supreme Court, *Olmstead vs. LC*). PSH is an evidence-based practice (EBP) for assisting persons with severe mental illness find and maintain housing in integrated settings in the community of their choice.

EBP toolkit for PSH on the SAMHSA website:

<http://store.samhsa.gov/product/Permanent-Supportive-Housing-Evidence-Based-Practices-EBP-KIT/SMA10-4510>

PSH Key Elements

- Tenants having a lease in their own name and the full rights of tenancy under landlord-tenant law
- Leases do not have any special provisions that would be found in the leases of someone without a mental health disability
- Support services are available and accessible, but are voluntary, and not required, so a person cannot be evicted for refusing services
- Rules within the housing are the same as for persons without mental health disability, and do not restrict who may visit or interfere with the person's life within the community

PSH Key Elements

- The housing is not time-limited and the lease is renewable at the tenant's or owner's option
- Prior to moving into PSH, tenants are asked about housing preferences, and are offered the same range of choices available to others at their income level in the same housing market
- Housing is affordable with tenants paying no more than 30 percent of their household income toward rent and basic utilities (gas, electric, water)
- Housing is integrated, best achieved in scattered-site locations throughout the community, in order to live in communities or buildings where a majority of persons do not have a mental health disability

PSH Key Elements

- Tenants have choice about the support services they receive, being offered a range of services, most frequently including Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) or intensive case management. And all such services are focused on a person-centered approach
- As the tenants' needs change over time, they can receive more or less intensive services without losing their housing
- Support services are designed to promote recovery and help tenants to choose, acquire, and keep housing
- And finally, the provision of housing and support services are distinct, being provided by separate property management and support services; or if by staff from the same agency, those persons and roles do not overlap

Approach Methods

Approaches to helping PSH tenants find affordable housing include:

- **Project-based rental assistance:** Housing subsidies tied to a particular unit and tenants who chose to live in those units pay a reduced rent
- **Sponsor-based rental assistance:** A non-profit agency receives support to buy or lease housing that is then leased to qualified tenants
- **Tenant-based rental assistance:** A tenant receives a voucher, entitling the tenant to a reduced rent, which can be used to rent a unit of the tenant's choice from a landlord who agrees to accept the voucher

Approach Methods

The three approaches can be used to provide services to tenants in two types of settings:

- **Single-site housing** is housing in which tenants who receive support services live together in a single building or complex of buildings, with or without on-site support services
- **Scattered-site housing** is housing in which tenants who receive support services live throughout the community in housing that can be agency-owned or privately-owned

Person-Centered Assessment

- Person-centered, face-to-face interview
- Identify: Strengths, assets, preferences, needs, challenges
- Educate about housing options to ensure informed choice
- Develop strategies for accessing programs

Common Challenges

Common challenges and barriers to accessing housing for people with disabilities include:

- Lack of affordable housing in Maryland
- Social Security Income (SSI) maximum benefit amount below Federal Poverty Level (FPL) (\$771/month)
- Criminal background checks
- Credit checks and rental histories
- Utility arrearages
- Lack of needed documentation: (Social Security card, Social Security Administration (SSA) award letter, Photo ID, Birth Certificate, income verification, etc.)
- Housing waiting lists

Documentation

Housing Documentation Checklist (work on this sooner, rather than later):

- Birth certificate (all household members) <https://health.maryland.gov/vsa/Pages/birth.aspx>
- Valid government-issued photo ID (passport or state ID) for all household members over 18
 - Real ID (see MVA website for requirements)
- Social Security card (all household members)
- Proof of citizenship/legal status (if applicable)
- Child custody — Court documentation showing custody or guardianship (if applicable)
- Divorce decree or separation agreement (if applicable)

Identifying Challenges

Identify any challenges to accessing housing programs as soon as a person expresses interest in applying:

- **Credit**
- **Criminal**
- **Personal Rental History**



Overcoming Credit Issues

Credit is one of the primary factors that property managers consider when determining whether or not to accept an applicant. **We help:**

1. Obtain a free copy of his/her credit report/understand this information
2. Access legal services if needed (e.g., local Legal Aid office)
3. Identify community resources to assist with paying outstanding debt (e.g., faith-based organizations)

Overcoming Credit Issues

(continued)

4. Contact a previous landlord or creditor to request a waiver or reduction in payment of debt
5. Determine if a disability or medical issue impacted a person's ability to maintain good credit
6. Write a letter requesting a reasonable accommodation from the landlord regarding disability-related credit issues

Overcoming Criminal Background

Case managers should be familiar with how to assist a person to review a criminal record, expunge a criminal record, and submit a reasonable accommodation request.

Action steps include:

Step 1: Develop a trusting relationship

Step 2: Explore the person's past in order to potentially obtain housing

Step 3: Check Maryland Judiciary Case Search system and verify accuracy

Step 4: Remove open warrants and seek legal counsel if necessary

Overcoming Criminal Background

(continued)

- Step 5: Help the person understand rules/policies regarding criminal activity and housing
- Step 6: Determine if a change in health/medical situation influenced the behavior
- Step 7: Support commitment to acceptance of rehabilitation or other supports/services
- Step 8: Assist with connecting to community resources

Overcoming Rental History

Case managers should be familiar with how to review rental history and present extenuating circumstances. **Action steps include:**

Step 1: Identify past challenges to rental history

- Eviction record?
- Trouble paying rent on time?
- Difficulty getting along with neighbors?
- Ability to maintain a safe living environment?
- Ability to understand tenant obligations?

Overcoming Rental History

(continued)

Step 2: Determine if a person's health, medical, or disability situation impacted tenancy

Step 3: Help the person to write an explanation of circumstances

Step 4: Reach out to previous landlord to obtain a positive reference

Step 5: Assist with connecting to community's supports/services to overcome current/future challenges to rental history

Reasonable Accommodation



Reasonable Accommodation

Reasonable Accommodation is a change, exception, or adjustment to a rule, policy, practice, or service that may be necessary for a person with a disability to have an equal opportunity to use and enjoy a dwelling.

Reasonable Accommodations require a housing provider to do more: They must make changes in rules, procedures, policies, practices, or services if necessary to afford a person with a disability equal opportunity to use and enjoy a dwelling.



Reasonable Accommodation



Applying for housing



Screening: Credit, criminal background, rental history



Household members: Live-in aide, Service or Emotional Support Animals



Searching for housing: Search time, high rents, number of bedrooms, acceptable housing types

Reasonable Accommodation

If you need a reasonable accommodation, you must ask for it.

- Put your request in writing to the property owner and keep a copy
- Request must share the fact that you have a disability (you need not share details about your disability)
- Describe what you want changed and why you need to have the change

Reasonable Accommodation

- In most cases, a property owner has the right to ask for proof that you need the reasonable accommodation. Your medical provider or case manager can write a letter on your behalf
- Use *My Sample Letter for Requesting a Reasonable Accommodation* to plan such a letter. Keep a copy of your letter, and be sure it has the date

Moving Prep

Plan, plan, plan ...

- Identify key individuals
- Connect with everyone who will be involved
- Plan a meeting to identify roles and responsibilities of everyone involved in the transition/move
- Identify items needed for the transition

Moving Prep

At the meeting, the following questions should have been answered:

- What is the date and time of the transition/move?
- How will the participant get to their new residence?
- Who will help them pack and move their belongings?
- Do they have a local pharmacy and will their medication be ordered prior to the move?
- Have medical appointments been scheduled with primary care and mental health providers in the community?
- Do they have a checking/savings account set up?
- Do they have their security deposit?

Good Tenancy

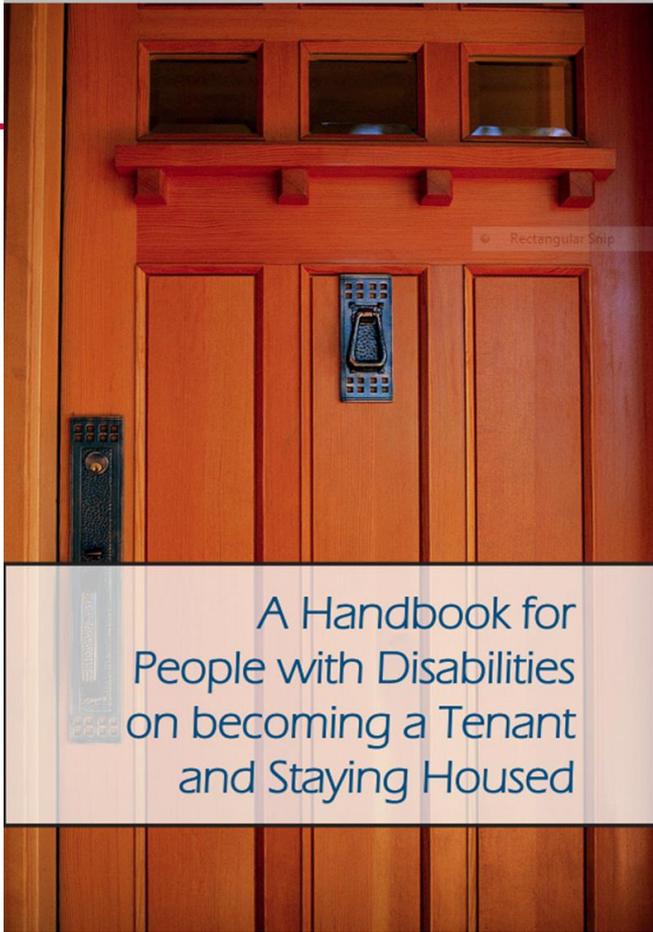
- Paying rent on time
- Maintaining the unit
- Engaging in friendly neighbor relationships
- Complying with the terms of the lease
- Communicating with the property manager
- Understanding tenant responsibilities

Good Tenancy

(continued)

- Knowing who to call and when to call these individuals
- **My Own Front Door: A handbook for people with disabilities on becoming a tenant and staying housed**

<http://mdod.maryland.gov/housing/Documents/My%20Own%20Front%20Door%20finalPWP.pdf>



My Own Front Door

A Handbook for
People with Disabilities
on becoming a Tenant
and Staying Housed



Maryland Housing Initiatives

- Weinberg Initiative
- Housing First Pilot Project
- Section 811 Project Rental Assistance (PRA)

Weinberg Initiative

- The Affordable Rental Housing Opportunities Initiative for Persons with Disabilities
- Partnership between The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation and the state
- Provide affordable rental housing options for persons with disabilities
- Seeks to increase accessible, affordable, and independent housing opportunities

Weinberg Initiative

(continued)

FUNDING

- House non-elderly, disabled persons at 15-30 percent of Area Gross Median Income (AGMI)
- Eligibility criteria includes the ability of a tenant to pay up to 30 percent of their income in rent

Housing First Pilot

BHA and Behavioral Health System Baltimore, in collaboration with the Montgomery County and Prince George's County LBHAs:

- Developed and implemented the Housing First Project
- Serve individuals in Baltimore City, Montgomery County, and Prince George's County
- This project provides assistance to 72 individuals to locate, secure, and maintain permanent housing

Housing First Pilot

Services include:

- Housing advocates that assist individuals in securing housing and communicating with landlords, and provide supported housing services to help individuals maintain housing
- Housing inspections to ensure housing quality
- Representative payee services for individuals who are required to have a payee by the SSA
- Housing subsidies to assist in making housing affordable for those in the program

Housing First Pilot

Eligible individuals: Those with mental illness or a mental illness and a co-occurring substance use disorder who are:

- Homeless or at risk for homelessness and served by the Supplemental Security Income/Social Security Disability Insurance (SSI/SSDI) Outreach Access and Recovery (SOAR) Program
- To be discharged from a state psychiatric hospital to live in any of the three jurisdictions
- Transitioning from a RRP in any of the three jurisdictions to permanent housing

Additionally, all individuals served through this project must have incomes at least 50 percent below the area median income (AMI).

Section 811 PRA



Section 811 PRA



Affordable Housing Partners

The Maryland Partnership for Affordable Housing (MPAH):

- Began in 2011 with grant funding from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and HUD
- Collaborative partners included the Maryland Department of Health's BHA and Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA), Money Follows Person, Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), Maryland Department Of Disabilities (MDOD), Centers for Independent Living (CILS), consumer organizations, and housing developers
- Implementation and maintenance of an internet-based affordable housing registry through DHCD and MDOD at www.mdhousingsearch.org and www.socialserve.com

Affordable Housing Partners

(continued)

- Applied to HUD for Section 811 PRA Demonstration Project was awarded \$20.7 million between two awards to develop 300 units of HUD 811 Project-based rental assistance
- DHCD is currently working with MPAH housing developers to create or rehab existing housing and are training case managers to assist individuals. The Social Serve registry is used to determine eligibility and place individuals on waiting lists
- 811 housing first became available in 2016 and 2017 and will continue through 2019

811 PRA Overview

Goal: 300 permanent supported housing units

Program Type:

- Project Based Rental Assistance
- Located in multi-family housing developed with affordable housing development funds
- Integrated — no more than 25 percent of units designated for people with disabilities

811 PRA Overview

Eligible Applicants:

- Age 18 to under age 62 at time of leasing
- Disabled as defined by HUD
- Medicaid recipients
- Income at or below 30 percent AMI — includes SSI level income

Tenant Rent Contribution:

- 30 percent of income for rent and utilities combined

811 PRA Population

- 1. Institutionalized:** Nursing facility, Intermediate Care Facilities for Individuals with Intellectual Disability, state psychiatric hospital or hospital where assistance is available under Medicaid
- 2. At risk of institutionalization due to current housing situation:** Homebound or deplorable housing conditions
- 3. Moving to independent renting:** DDA Community Pathways waiver Group Home and Assisted Living Unit, Brain Injury Waiver ALU, BHA Residential Rehabilitation Program

811 PRA Population

(continued)

4. Homeless (as defined by HEARTH Act) in this order:

- Actually homeless
- Imminent risk of homelessness
- Homeless under other Federal statutes (i.e., unaccompanied youth/families with youth)
- Fleeing domestic violence

Resources

Agency or Online Tool	Website
Social Security Administration	www.ssa.gov
US Department of Housing and Urban Development	http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD
Consumer Credit Counseling Services of Maryland and Delaware	www.cccs-inc.org or 1.800.642.2227
Annual Credit Report	www.annualcreditreport.com or 1.877.322.8228
Guide to Expungement of Nuisance Crimes	http://www.courts.state.md.us/district/forms/criminal/dccr072a.pdf
Maryland Judiciary Case Search	http://casesearch.courts.state.md.us/casesearch/
Disability Rights Maryland (MDLC)	https://disabilityrightsmd.org/
Public Housing Authority Locator	https://www.hud.gov/states/maryland/renting/hawebsites

Resources

Agency or Online Tool	Website
Housing Choice Voucher Guidebook	https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/public_indian_housing/programs/hcv/guidebook
Craigslist (Furniture, Apartment, Roommates)	www.craigslist.com
Weinberg Initiative	http://mdod.maryland.gov/housing/Pages/MPAH.aspx
HUD Section 811 PRA Demo.	https://dhcd.maryland.gov/HousingDevelopment/Pages/section811/Section811.aspx
Baltimore Free Store	http://akellerdesigns.com/baltimorefreestore/
SNAP Program/Food Stamps	http://dhs.maryland.gov/food-supplement-program/snap-outreach-program/
Go Section 8	www.gosection8.com

Resources

Agency or Online Tool	Website
MD Housing Search	www.mdhousingsearch.org
Social Serve	www.socialserve.com
Fair Housing Act	https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/fair_housing_equal_opp
Reasonable Accommodations	https://search.usa.gov/search?affiliate=housingandurbandevelopment&affiliate=housingandurbandevelopment&query=reasonable+accommodations
MD Motor Vehicle Administration	410.768.7442 or www.mva.maryland.gov
Area Median Income	https://dhcd.maryland.gov/HousingDevelopment/Documents/prhp/2019_MD_Income_Limits.pdf
MARYLAND CENTERS FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING (CIL)	http://www.msilc.org/map.html

Contact

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