



Section 3.26

Housing for Individuals Determined to Have a Serious Mental Illness (SMI)

- 3.26.1 Introduction**
- 3.26.2 Terms**
- 3.26.3 Procedures**
- 3.26.4 References**
- 3.26.5 PM Forms**
- 3.26.6 PM Attachments**

3.26.1 Introduction

- a. Northern Arizona Regional Behavioral Health Authority (NARBHA) has worked to ensure a variety of housing options and support services are available to assist persons determined to have a Serious Mental Illness (SMI) live as independently as possible. Recovery often starts with safe, decent and affordable housing so that individuals are able to live, work, learn and participate fully in their communities. Safe, stable, and familiar living arrangements are critical to a person's ability to benefit from treatment and support services.
- b. For persons determined to have SMI who are able to live independently, NARBHA has a number of programs to support independent living, such as rent subsidy programs, supported housing programs, bridge subsidy housing assistance while obtaining federal funding, and provider owned or leased homes and apartment complexes that combine housing services with other covered behavioral health services. Similarly, NARBHA housing programs include rent subsidy programs, owner occupied home repairs, move-in assistance and eviction prevention programs coupled with needed supported housing services to maintain independent living.
- c. Medicaid (TXIX/XXI) does not cover supported housing services. However, NARBHA has limited funding allocated specifically for the provision of supported housing for Medicaid-eligible (Title XIX/XXI) individuals determined to have a SMI and for Non-Title XIX persons determined to have a SMI.
- d. In August 2000, ADHS/DBHS developed a permanent housing property acquisition program that allowed the NARBHA and their non-profit partners to purchase property for the first time in the history of Arizona, specifically for persons determined to have SMI. NARBHA used these funds to purchase homes and apartments through non-profit organizations that serve as contracted housing administrators/owners.
- e. NARBHA believes in permanent supportive housing and has adopted the SAMHSA model for permanent supportive housing programs. The 12 Key Elements of the SAMHSA Permanent Supportive Housing Program are:
 - i. Tenants have a lease in their name, and, therefore, they have full rights of tenancy under landlord-tenant law, including control over living space and protection against eviction.
 - ii. Leases do not have any provisions that would not be found in leases held by someone who does not have a psychiatric disability.



- iii. Participation in services is voluntary and tenants cannot be evicted for rejecting services.
- iv. House rules, if any, are similar to those found in housing for people who do not have psychiatric disabilities and do not restrict visitors or otherwise interfere with a life in the community.
- v. Housing is not time-limited, and the lease is renewable at tenants' and owners' option.
- vi. Before moving into Permanent Supportive Housing, tenants are asked about their housing preferences and are offered the same range of choices as are available to others at their income level in the same housing market.
- vii. Housing is affordable, with tenants paying no more than 30 percent of their income toward rent and utilities, with the balance available for discretionary spending.
- viii. Housing is integrated. Tenants have the opportunity to interact with neighbors who do not have psychiatric disabilities.
- ix. Tenants have choices in the support services that they receive. They are asked about their choices and can choose from a range of services, and different tenants receive different types of services based on their needs and preferences.
- x. As needs change over time, tenants can receive more intensive or less intensive support services without losing their homes.
- xi. Support services promote recovery and are designed to help tenants choose, get, and keep housing.
- xii. The provision of housing and the provision of support services are distinct.

3.26.2 Terms

Definitions for terms are located online at <http://www.azdhs.gov/bhs/definitions/index.php> or <http://www.narbha.org/for-providers/provider-resources/provider-policy-manual/definitions>. The following terms are referenced in this section:

[Arizona Department of Housing \(ADOH\)](#)

[Homeless](#)

[Housing](#)

[Housing Administrator](#)

[Housing Referral](#)

[HB 2003 Permanent Housing Programs](#)

[Independent Community Housing](#)

[Permanent housing](#)

[Public Housing Authority \(PHA\)](#)

[Section 8](#)

[Serious Mental Illness](#)



[Shelter Plus Care](#)

[Sponsor-based Rental Assistance](#)

[Supported Housing Services](#)

[Supportive Housing](#)

[Tenant-Based Housing](#)

[Transitional Housing](#)

[U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development \(HUD\)](#)

3.26.3 Procedures

a. ADHS/DBHS Housing Requirements

i. State Funded Supported Housing Programs

1. NARBHA sub-contractors must comply with the following requirements to effectively manage limited housing funds in providing supported housing services to eligible individuals (see the [ADHS/DBHS Covered Behavioral Health Services Guide](#) for additional information on Supported Housing):
2. Subcontracted Providers must use supported housing allocations for individuals with a SMI and according to any restrictions pertaining to the funding source. For example, a particular allocation may require it be used for TXIX/XXI persons, while another allocation may require it be used for Non-TXIX persons.
3. Housing must be safe, stable, and consistent with the member's recovery goals and be the least restrictive environment necessary to support the member. Shelters, hotels, and similar temporary living arrangements do not meet this expectation.
4. Subcontracted providers must not actively refer or place individuals determined to have SMI in a Homeless shelter, licensed Supervisory Care Homes, unlicensed board and care homes, or other similar facilities.¹
5. Sucontracted providers may charge up to, but not greater than, 30% of a tenant's income towards rent. If a rent payment is increased in state funded housing programs, the subcontracted provider must provide the tenant with a 30 day notice at the time of the tenant's annual recertification.
6. Subcontracted providers must not use supported housing allocations for room and board charges in residential treatment facilities (Level II and Level III facilities). However, subcontracted providers residential treatment facilities may establish policies which require that persons earning income contribute to the cost of room and board.

▪ ¹When a behavioral health recipient chooses to reside in an unlicensed board and care home, behavioral health providers must report any observations of unsafe conditions or provision of services that require licensure to the local housing authority and the ADHS Bureau of Residential Facilities Licensing at (602) 364-2639.



PROVIDER MANUAL

7. Responsible Agencies (RA's) provide move-in assistance and eviction prevention funds for those members in permanent housing. When move-in assistance is provided, RA's must prioritize assistance with deposits and payment for utilities over other methods of assistance, such as move-in kits or furnishings, consisting of pots and pans, dishes, sheets, etc. Subcontracted providers are encouraged to seek donations for necessary move-in/home furnishing items whenever possible. Subcontracted providers must not use supported housing allocations or other funding received from ADHS/DBHS (including block grant funds) to purchase furniture.
 8. For appeals related to supported housing services, NARBHA and subcontracted providers must follow requirements in [Section 5.5, Notice and Appeal Requirements \(SMI and Non-SMI/Non-Title XIX/XXI\)](#).
 9. Housing related grievances and requests for investigation for persons determined to have SMI must be addressed in accordance with [Section 5.3, Grievance and Requests for Investigations for Persons Determined to have a Serious Mental Illness](#).
- ii. Other ADHS/DBHS Housing Requirements
1. Subcontracted providers who receive or have received housing funds from NARBHA shall cooperate with NARBHA in submitting periodic reports on their housing programs.

NARBHA Housing Manager
(928) 774-7128

3.26.4 References

The following citations can serve as additional resources for this content area:

[24 CFR Part 582](#)

[24 CFR 582.1](#)

[24 CFR Part 583](#)

[9 A.A.C. 20](#)

[9 A.A.C. 21](#)

[ADHS/RBHA Contracts](#)

[ADHS/TRBHA IGAs](#)

[Section 5.3, Grievance and Requests for Investigations for Persons Determined to have a Serious Mental Illness](#)

[Section 5.5, Notice and Appeal Requirements \(SMI and Non-SMI/Non-Title XIX/XXI\)](#)

[ADHS/DBHS Covered Behavioral Health Services Guide](#)

[SAMHSA Permanent Supportive Housing Toolkit](#)

3.26.5 PM Forms

None

3.26.6 PM Attachments

None



PROVIDER MANUAL

Signature on file	05/15/15
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Mary Jo Gregory President and Chief Executive Officer	Date

Signature on file	05/15/15
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Teresa Bertsch, MD Chief Medical Officer	Date

Reference [ADHS/DBHS Policy 112](#)