State of Connecticut Department of Housing

CT811 Program Selection Plan

2016



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I. Background

The Department of Housing (DOH) is responsible for the administration of programs involving affordable housing development and financing, individual and group housing, rent subsidies, eviction and foreclosure prevention, shelter and transitional living for the State of Connecticut. In April 2015, as authorized under the Frank Melville Supportive Housing Investment Act of 2010, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) granted DOH 150 Section 811 Project Rental Assistance (PRA) unit subsidies through a Cooperative Agreement to provide project-based rental assistance for extremely low income persons and households with disabilities. DOH has designed the Connecticut Section 811 PRA program, hereinafter referred to as CT811, to assist the State in fulfilling its obligations to the Olmstead Settlement Agreement.

As the lead Applicant and grantee, DOH, through an Interagency Partnership Agreement, will collaborate with the following state agencies to administer CT811: the Department of Social Services (DSS), the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) and the Department of Developmental Services (DDS), the Office of Policy and Management (OPM), and the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (CHFA). DSS, DMHAS, DDS and OPM are such state agencies that are charged with administering State Health and Human Services programs and policies, and the State's Medicaid programs. CHFA is the quasi-state agency charged with administering the federal Low Income Housing Tax Credits. The Interagency Partnership Agreement, as part of the Cooperative Agreement between DOH and HUD, leverages the existing Interagency Committee on Supportive Housing tasked with the development of long-term solutions to the housing and service needs of individuals and families with disabilities who are homeless or facing homelessness in the State of Connecticut.

A. Purpose of Grantee Plan

This Program Selection Plan will outline and describe the process and procedures used by DOH, in collaboration with its Interagency partners, to identify eligibility requirements, target populations, provide outreach and referral, maintain the waiting list, and tenant selection for CT811. This plan is in accordance with the requirements of the Cooperative Agreement executed by HUD and DOH, and is supplemented by applicable Federal Laws, HUD Regulations and HUD Handbooks.

B. Relationship to Owner/Agent Plans

The procedures described in this plan do not supplant the Owner/Agent (O/A) tenant selection and occupancy policies. All Owner/Agents participating in CT811 will follow the referral process and other procedures described in this plan to verify the eligibility status of individuals referred by DOH and its Interagency partners, but will screen each application according to the criteria established in their own Tenant Selection Plan that they are required to have on site. Eligibility for CT811 under this Program Selection Plan does not guarantee eligibility for admission to a property.



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II. Roles and Responsibilities

A. Applicant/Tenant

- Provide personal certification and verification documents to Case Manager,
 DOH Housing Coordinator, and/or Owner/Agent for eligibility determination.
- 2. Comply with CT811 regulations and lease terms, where applicable, to ensure successful participation and continued occupancy.

B. Department of Housing

- 1. Administer the Cooperative Agreement with HUD.
- 2. Administer the Rental Assistance Contracts (RAC) with Owner/Agents.
- 3. Track unit inventory and utilization.
- 4. Monitor Owner/Agent program compliance.
- 5. Provide technical assistance to Owner/Agent during contract negotiation, waiting list maintenance and lease-up phases.

C. DOH Housing Coordinator

- 1. Negotiate with Owner/Agents to produce RACs.
- 2. Receive Applicant referrals from Referral Coordinators and help them provide all necessary information and forms to Owner/Agents.
- 3. Pre-screen Applicant referrals for eligibility for CT811 subsidies and notify Case Manager and Applicant of the status.
- 4. Assist Case Manager and Owner/Agent with obtaining necessary documentation and income verifications.
- 5. Maintain the waiting list for CT811 units.
- 6. Track unit inventory and utilization.
- 7. Refer Applicants to available units.
- 8. Work with owners to help solve leasing, screening, and utilization issues.



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9. Review Applicant rejections.

D. Interagency Partners

- 1. Expedite the review and commitment of designated funds for CT811 development, services and operation.
- 2. Facilitate interagency coordination and collaborative efforts and set administrative policies and guidelines.
- 3. Ensure CT811 stays on track and on schedule, and meets its intended goals.

E. Owner/Agent

- 1. Give priority to CT811 Applicants referred by the DOH Housing Coordinator until all CT811 units under RAC are leased.
- 2. Work with the DOH Housing Coordinator, Case Manager, and Applicant to complete application and verification process.
- 3. If a referral is accepted, notify the Applicant, Case Manager and the DOH Housing Coordinator and provide an anticipated lease date.
- 4. Provide written reason and appeals process for denials of any CT811 referrals, including a process for Reasonable Accommodations.

F. Referral Coordinator

- 1. Act as agency liaison between DOH and State Health and Human Services agency (DSS, DMHAS, DDS)
- 2. Primary point of contact for DOH Housing Coordinator to forward unit information, such as unit type, unit location and anticipated availability date.
- 3. Forward unit information to appropriate Case Managers and request client referrals be sent to DOH Housing Coordinator.

G. Case Manager

- 1. Fulfill the role of Referral Coordinator, if one is not available.
- 2. Assist Applicant with completing the CT811 pre-application and will work with DOH Housing Coordinator to complete all needed information.

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- Identify long-term service(s) that will help Applicant maintain housing in the community and assist Applicant to access services on a voluntary basis.
 Collaborate with Service Provider, if that person has been identified
- 4. Assist participant to complete the full housing application and verification process with the Owner/Agent when a referral to a housing unit has been made.
- 5. Assist participant to arrange transportation to tour the site.
- 6. Assist participant to understand the terms of the lease and arrange resources about how to be a good renter, if needed.
- 7. Identify the long-term Service Provider if different from the Case Manager. With the use of a signed disclosure form, the Case Manager will notify the Owner/Agent and DOH Housing Coordinator of the designated Service Provider, if applicable.

H. Service provider, if different from the Case Manager

- 1. Ensure that a person-centered plan is developed for the Applicant.
- 2. Collaborate with the Case Manager to identify and assist with accessing long-term service(s) that will help Applicants maintain housing in the community, should they wish to participate in a service plan.
- 3. Maintain regular contact with CT811 participants and be available to mitigate issues with Owner/Agent if they arise. Keep the DOH Housing Coordinator informed if person is at risk of losing their lease.
- III. Fair Housing and Nondiscrimination: It is DOH policy to fully comply with all Federal and State fair housing and civil rights requirements, including but not limited to:
 - A. The Fair Housing Act: Prohibits discrimination in the sale, rental, financing and advertising of housing on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, or national origin, and any related rules and regulations. To comply with the Fair Housing Act, DOH will not
 - 1. Deny to any Applicant the opportunity to apply for CT811, nor deny to any eligible Applicant the opportunity to lease housing suitable to their needs.
 - 2. Provide CT811 or housing which is different from that provided to others.



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- 3. Subject a person to segregation or disparate treatment.
- 4. Restrict a person's access to any benefit enjoyed by others in connection with CT811.
- 5. Treat a person differently in determining eligibility or other requirements for CT811 Assistance.
- 6. Deny a person access to the same level of services as others.
- 7. Deny a person the opportunity to participate in a planning or advisory group that is an integral part of CT811.
- 8. Utilize advertising materials for CT811 Assistance that contain any exclusionary language.
- 9. Discriminate based on relation to another person.
- 10. Retaliate or intimidate in any manner if someone exercises their right under the Fair Housing Act.
- 11. Require services as a condition of tenancy or participation in the CT811 program.
- B. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Executive Order 11063: No person shall, on the grounds of race, color, creed, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, or be denied the benefits of, the Rental Assistance Payments Program, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination.
- C. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973: No qualified handicapped person shall, on the basis of handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity which receives or benefits from Federal financial assistance.
- D. Connecticut Fair Housing: Connecticut law prohibits housing discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, ancestry, religion, children or familial status, disability, marital status, age, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, and legal source of income.
- E. Affirmative Fair Housing Marketing Plan (AFHMP): DOH will utilize its AFHMP designed as an outreach tool to market to prospective Applicants that DOH has determined to be the least likely to apply.



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F. Reasonable Accommodation Policy: DOH will consider reasonable accommodations from Applicants with disabilities, in order that they may gain equal access and full use of the CT811 program. The request may be for a change in a policy, practice, or procedure and/or a change in the way DOH communicates with the Applicant.

The Applicant must be able to show that the requested accommodation is necessary, and that there is a strong, identifiable relationship between the requested accommodation and the individual's disability. DOH will review the request and provide the accommodation unless doing so would result in a fundamental alteration in the nature of the program, or an undue financial and administrative burden to the agency.

Requests for a Reasonable Accommodation pertaining to the Applicant's equal access to a specific housing property or unit, or Reasonable Modifications related to a physical change to a property or unit must be submitted directly to a property's Owner/Agent and shall be reviewed based on the Owner/Agent's policies.

- G. Violence Against Women Act (VAWA): DOH will not deny assistance to an Applicant due to criminal activity directly relating to domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking, engaged in by a member of the Applicant's household or any guest or other person under the Applicant's control if the Applicant or an immediate member of the Applicant's household is the victim or the threatened victim of that abuse.
- IV. Program Eligibility Requirements: A household eligible for CT811 is a single individual or family with at least one qualifying family member.
 - A. Qualifying Criteria and Requirements for CT811:
 - Disability: An adult at least 18 years of age but less than 62 at time of admission
 to the property, defined by HUD as a person who has a physical or mental
 impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities; has a
 record of such impairment; or is regarded as having such an impairment.
 Applicant must be a Medicaid recipient eligible for community-based, long-term
 care services as provided through Medicaid waivers, state Medicaid plan
 options, comparable state funded services or other appropriate services.
 - 2. Income Limit: Extremely Low-Income household with income that is not greater than 30% of the Area Median Income as established annually by HUD. Income limits are based on household size and the annual income the household receives. Applicants are subject to HUD's requirement of an annual recertification of household income.



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- 3. Social Security Number Requirement: The complete and accurate Social Security Number (SSN) for each Applicant and members of the Applicant's household must be submitted with supporting documentation. The SSN requirement does not apply to persons not claiming eligible immigration status or applicants age 62 or older as of January 31, 2011, whose initial determination of eligibility for assistance was begun before January 31, 2011. Assistance is denied or terminated for failure to provide appropriate SSN documentation within acceptable timeframes set for by HUD guidelines.
- 4. Citizenship Requirements: Applicants must provide a signed declaration and furnish proof of citizenship or eligible immigration status. Applicants not contending eligible immigration status do not qualify for CT811 subsidies.

B. Disqualifying Criteria

- Students: Persons defined as individuals enrolled either part-time or full-time at an institution of higher education for the purpose of obtaining a degree, certificate, or other program leading to a recognized educational credential, are NOT eligible for CT811 Assistance UNLESS the Student is over the age of 24 AND:
 - i. is married:
 - ii. is a veteran of the United States Military; or
 - iii. has a dependent child; or
 - iv. is a person with disabilities, and was receiving CT811 as of November 30, 2005); or
 - v. is living with his or her parents who are receiving CT811; or is individually eligible to receive CT811.
- 2. Any household containing a member(s) who was evicted in the last three years from federally assisted housing for drug-related criminal activity. The following exceptions apply:
 - i. The evicted household member has successfully completed an approved, supervised drug rehabilitation program; or
 - ii. The circumstances leading to the eviction no longer exist (e.g., the household member no longer resides with the applicant household).
- 3. A household in which any member is currently engaged in illegal use of drugs or for which the owner has reasonable cause to believe that a member's illegal use or pattern of illegal use of a drug may interfere with the health, safety, and right to peaceful enjoyment of the property by other residents.



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- 4. Any household member who is subject to a State sex offender lifetime registration requirement.
- 5. Any household member if there is reasonable cause to believe that the member's behavior, from abuse or pattern of abuse of alcohol, may interfere with the health, safety, and right to peaceful enjoyment by other residents.
- C. Target Populations: There are three target populations as outlined in the Cooperative Agreement and Interagency Partnership Agreement between DOH and its three referral agencies.
 - DSS shall target persons eligible for the State's Money Follows the Person
 Demonstration and are currently institutionalized, seeking transition to home
 and community-based supports and services. This includes people between the
 ages of 22 and 62 who are eligible for services under the State's 1915(c) waivers
 for persons with developmental disabilities.
 - 2. DMHAS shall target persons who are experiencing homelessness or chronic homelessness through the State's Coordinated Access Networks.
 - 3. DDS shall target persons eligible for services under an approved 1915c waiver for persons with Autism Spectrum Disorder and who are risk for institutionalization or homelessness.

V. Outreach and Marketing Procedures

- A. Outreach to Owner/Agents: As prescribed in the Cooperative Agreement, DOH and CHFA will implement three outreach initiatives to generate program participation from Owner/Agents.
 - 1. Negotiated Placement: Target new construction of developments already under DOH/CHFA financing programs and negotiate set-aside units for CT811.
 - 2. Scattered Site Placement within Existing Housing Projects: Placement of CT811 into existing properties through the use of Request for Proposals (RFP).
 - 3. New Housing Production: Using RFPs, leverage capital development through DOH/CHFA with CT811 subsidies included in underwriting process.



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- B. Outreach to Consumers: DOH and its Interagency Partners will use its existing outreach infrastructure through the Interagency Committee on Supportive Housing to identify eligible individuals for CT811.
 - 1. DSS Outreach Procedure: Outreach and marketing for Money Follows the Person program includes education of the eligibility requirements and services provided under the program, which includes placement in community-based and affordable housing programs such as CT811, as well as education on the person centered philosophy. Focus of the outreach is to residents of institutions, family member's, social workers, providers, municipal agents, senior centers, AARP, nursing facility administrators, advocacy organization, and other such environments surrounding the Long-Term Support and Services (LTSS) arena. Some of the methodology for said outreach includes, but is not limited to; development of brochures distributed to the above entities and other areas, newspaper press releases, web-based communication through the state's website, broadcast coverage through radio and public affairs programing, and outreach meeting and presentations across the state. To date the outreach continues in key areas specific to the LTSS needs of the state. Since the inception of the program there has been a steady growth of referrals to the program.
 - 2. DMHAS Outreach Procedure: For homeless individuals with disabilities, referrals will come from Connecticut's Coordinated Access Networks (CANs). The goals of the CANs are to determine the barriers to housing of all homeless individuals that present to the network and to determine the best intervention for these individuals based on vulnerability. Those individuals determined to need affordable and permanent supportive housing will be referred to available CT811 units. The CANs have existed in Connecticut for approximately 18 months and manage all homeless placements in the State. When creating the CAN system, the State outreached to numerous agencies, including state agencies, homeless service providers, and mental health providers to educate them about the new 211 system designed to connect those in need with contact specialists who can refer them to a CAN in their geographic region. Data shows that there is a reduction in gaps in the CAN system and any individual that presents as homeless and is interested in services is referred appropriately to the CAN system.
 - 3. DDS Outreach Procedure: DDS Case Managers will make contact with their respective individuals on the Adult Life Span Waiver regarding CT811. Case Managers shared all relevant information with the individual and his/her family regarding program details, and to explain that this type of housing will allow



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individuals on the Spectrum to move from a less independent, more restrictive 24-hour support setting to a more independent, less restrictive, non-24-hour support setting. A list will be compiled based on each individual's readiness to move and preferences. A time frame of readiness has also been identified: < 3 Months, 3-6 Months, 6-12 Months, 12-24 Months, Does Not Want to Move. DDS Case Managers have also identified two geographic town preferences, a need for a Live-in Caregiver and detailed information, if applicable, to any accessibility requirements. This list will be used for planning purposes and will be used as a baseline for the Autism Lifespan Waiver participants pertaining to their residential needs. This planning list will be shared periodically with DOH to align with the Interagency Committee on Supportive Housing which provides oversight to CT811 PRA. Upon identification of appropriate housing, a Transition plan will be developed identifying necessary supports and services needed based on the individual's Level of Need. The individual planning process will follow, which will guide all supports and services provided to the individual.

4. Affirmative Fair Housing Marketing Plan (AFHMP): Special outreach efforts will be developed and implemented by DOH, its Interagency Partners and their support service provider networks to target individuals least likely to apply for services and housing. These groups include individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities and those with limited English proficiency. Details of these special outreach efforts are included in the AFHMP, as approved by HUD.

VI. Referral to DOH and Pre-Application

- A. Referral Sources: Referrals must come from Referral Coordinators through DSS, DMHAS and DDS.
- B. Referral Process: Upon availability of a CT811 unit through an initial Rental Assistance Contract with an Owner/Agent or upon notification from an Owner/Agent to the DOH Housing Coordinator of a vacancy or anticipated vacancy through unit turnover, the Housing Coordinator will forward the notice to the Referral Coordinator from one of the Referral Sources. The Referral Coordinator will refer 4-6 households from the agency's pool of clients interested in CT811 to complete the program Pre-Application. Notice of unit availability will be forwarded to one Referral Source at a time, on a rotating cycle, with consideration for geographic preferences of target populations, occupancy standards and accessibility needs.



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- C. Pre-Application Procedures: Clients referred to CT811 will complete and certify a program Pre-Application and provide any necessary supporting documentation. The Pre-Application will be reviewed and processed by the Housing Coordinator to determine if basic eligibility criteria has been met. The Housing Coordinator will also pre-screen the applicant for criminal activity on the Dru Sjodin National Sex Offender Database and the Connecticut Judicial Branch Case Look-up Website. The Housing Coordinator will notify the Case Manager and Applicant about the Applicant's eligibility for the PRA program.
 - 1. Occupancy Standards: When reviewing Pre-Applications, the Housing Coordinator shall utilize the Occupancy Standards listed in the chart below as a guideline when determining a reasonable unit size or sizes for each household. The availability of certain unit sizes may affect this determination. In addition, should the household prefer a larger or smaller unit than what has been determined by the Housing Coordinator, the following factors shall be considered: the Owner/Agent's Occupancy Standards; the size of the bedrooms and of the overall unit; the age of the children, where applicable; the unit configuration; other physical limitations of the unit; State and local law; and other relevant factors.

Number of	Minimum	Maximum
Bedrooms	Occupancy	Occupancy
0	1	1
1	1	2
2	2	4
3	3	6
4	4	8

- 2. Location Preference: Applicants can list their desired location(s) for housing. The Housing Coordinator shall use this information to determine where Applicants will be referred to.
- 3. Accessibility Needs: Applicants can identify if any household member will require accessibility features in their housing unit. Accessible units will be reserved for those requiring the features, as stated in their Pre-Application.
- D. Appeals to Pre-Application: If an Applicant is determined to be ineligible for CT811, the Housing Coordinator will notify the Case Manager and Applicant in writing, including the reason for denial and an opportunity for appeal.

VII. Waiting List



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- A. Creating a Waiting List: The Housing Coordinator will develop electronic waiting lists, which will list the Applicant's name, housing status, disability type, size preference, location preference, need for an accessible unit, Referring Worker, and other data required by HUD for quarterly reporting purposes.
 - Three waiting lists will be maintained, one for each target population coming from the respective Referral Sources. Waiting lists will consist of referred clients with completed and processed Pre-Applications. Referrals will be placed on the Waiting List based on the time and date the Housing Coordinator receives a completed application.
- B. Opening and Closing the Waiting List: Each waiting list will be opened at the beginning of the quarter, closed at the end of the quarter and subsequently re-opened and re-closed in the following quarters of the calendar year.
- C. Documenting Changes to the Waiting List: Any changes to the waiting list will be documented electronically on the waiting list. Applicants are required to submit supporting documentation for any changes to their Pre-Application to the Housing Coordinator.
- D. Updating the Waiting List: The Housing Coordinator will update the waiting list annually, by contacting Referral Coordinators, verifying Applicant information, and interest in the program.
- E. Removing names from waiting list: Once housed in a CT811 unit, an Applicant's name will be removed from the waiting list. Applicants who wish to withdraw their name on the waiting list may request so in writing to the Housing Coordinator. Should a change to the Applicant's household information result in the household no longer qualifying for CT811, the Applicant's name will be removed from the waiting list and the Housing Coordinator will provide written notice to the Applicant and Case Manager stating the decision, reason for removal and an opportunity for appeal. Applicants who successfully appeal the decision are eligible for reinstatement onto the waiting list.

VIII. Referral to Owner/Agent

A. Referral to Owner/Agent: Among the 4-6 clients referred to the Housing Coordinator, Applicants pre-screened by the Housing Coordinator who are determined to be eligible for the CT811 will be referred to an Owner/Agent with an available unit, with consideration for Applicants' size and location preferences and accessibility needs. If desired by the Applicants, the Case Managers will arrange for the Applicants to tour the unit. Should the Applicants wish to pursue the housing unit, they will need to complete the Owner/Agent's application and be subject to their Tenant Selection Plan and screening criteria.



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- B. Owner/Agent Acceptance of Applicant: If multiple Applicants are interested in applying for the unit, provide completed applications and pass the screening procedures, the Owner/Agents are expected to house the Applicant in chronological order, based on the time and date of their application to the property. The Owner/Agent must notify the Housing Coordinator of their selection. Once housed, the Housing Coordinator will remove the Applicant's name from the waiting list.
- C. Owner/Agent Denial of Applicant: Should the Owner/Agent deny an Applicant, the Housing Coordinator, Applicant and Case Manager must be notified. The Applicant must have the option to request an appeal to the Owner/Agent. Applicants also have the option of remaining on the program waiting list.
- D. Applicant Refusal of Unit: Applicants who do not wish to pursue a unit that they were referred to can still be eligible for CT811, but they must contact their Case Manager to coordinate any subsequent referrals. Applicants who refuse a unit that they were referred to can remain on the waiting list, but will be placed at the bottom of the list to allow an opportunity for those next on the waiting list.

IX. Unit Transfers

- A. Transferring within a Property: The household may request a transfer within their property by contacting the Owner/Agent. Such requests are subject to the Owner/Agent's Transfer Policy. Requests for Transfers based on a Reasonable Accommodation shall follow the Reasonable Accommodation Policy as stated in this Plan.
- B. Transferring to a Different Property: CT811 subsidies cannot be transferred to a different property. Households in need of a transfer to a different property may submit a request for a Reasonable Accommodation and complete a new Pre-Application. If approved for a transfer, the household's name will be placed onto an Approved Transfer List. Transfers to a different property are subject to the availability of rental assistance funds and appropriate units.
- C. Overcrowded and Under-utilized Units: Should a household's family composition change, causing the leased unit to be overcrowded or under-utilized based on DOH's Occupancy Standards or the Owner/Agent's Occupancy Standards, the Owner/Agent is responsible for notifying DOH and the Housing Coordinator. DOH and/or the Owner/Agent may request that the household be transferred to an appropriate size unit.
- D. Availability of Rental Assistance: Requests for transfers, whether tenant-generated or management-generated, must be reviewed by DOH. DOH cannot guarantee a change or the continued availability of a CT811 subsidy as a result of a transfer.



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