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Alabama Ryan White Part B Service Standards

Emergency Financial Assistance

Effective Date: January 1, 2025

Purpose

This Service Standard was prepared by the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) Office of HIV Prevention and Care (OHPC) and the United Way of Central Alabama (UWCA) in consultation with Organizational Ideas (a technical assistance provider), with stakeholder input to guide the delivery of high-quality services for people with HIV (PWH). This document contains the minimum requirements Ryan White Part B (RWPB) providers are expected to meet when delivering HIV care and support services funded by RWPB. Providers may exceed these standards. These standards will also provide a basis to evaluate the RWPB services. Please note that all RWPB Service Standards expectations also apply to Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Ending the HIV Epidemic in the U.S. (EHE)-funded services unless exceptions are noted.

Definitions and Descriptions

The description under the “Standard” column outlines the required activities that must be provided to the client receiving the RWPB service. The “Documentation” column provides the documents that must be maintained by the provider delivering the service. The Service Standards contain the following major elements:

- **Agency & Personnel Requirements:** The minimum required education, certification, experience, and facility requirements that are needed to provide the RWPB service.
- **Eligibility & Intake:** Eligibility refers to the current statewide criteria for receiving

services through RWPB as outlined in the RWPB Universal Standard. The agency must determine or confirm RWPB eligibility for the client prior to provision of services. Eligibility may occur during intake or through a stand-alone process. Intake is the process of collecting information to determine the client's immediate service needs.

- **Assessment:** The Assessment is an evaluation of need conducted by qualified personnel to determine if there is a need for the RWPB service. The evaluation must render the determination for referral or provision of service. It must include the elements listed in the standard. The documentation of the evaluation of need is determined by the agency.
- **Provision of Services:** The provision of services are the activities or services that are provided to the client. Where appropriate, a Service Plan should address the client's assessed needs with a timeline to resolve the need(s).
- **Transition/Discharge:** Transition/Discharge refers to the release or cessation of the RWPB service. Transition or Discharge may occur in conjunction with the transition or discharge from the agency's program, when the client no longer needs or meets the criteria for the service, when the client is transitioned to another care provider, or when a client is deceased.
- **Case Closure:** When a client is discharged or transitioned to another care provider, the services will cease and the case is closed.

I. HRSA Service Category Definition

Emergency Financial Assistance provides limited one-time or short-term payments to assist an HRSA RWHAP client with an urgent need for essential items or services necessary to improve health outcomes, including: utilities, housing, food (including groceries and food vouchers), transportation, medication not covered by an AIDS Drug Assistance Program or AIDS Pharmaceutical Assistance, or another HRSA RWHAP-allowable cost needed to improve health outcomes.

II. Program Guidance

Emergency Financial Assistance funds used to pay for otherwise allowable HRSA RWHAP services must be accounted for under the Emergency Financial Assistance category. Direct cash payments to clients are not permitted.

Continuous provision of an allowable service to a client must not be funded through Emergency Financial Assistance.

III. Key Service Components and Activities

Allowable costs include:

- Utilities including electricity, natural gas, water, and sewer, trash services
- One-time housing bill
- Food including groceries or food vouchers
- Transportation
- Medication not covered by ADAP or AIDS Pharmaceutical Assistance
- Other RWHAP-allowable costs needed to improve health outcomes.

Not allowable:

- Direct cash payments or reimbursements to clients. Emergency Financial Assistance must occur as a direct payment to an agency or through a voucher program.
- Continuous provision of an allowable service to a client cannot be funded through EFA.

Refer to other service category definitions for allowable and unallowable costs.

For common components required for all RWPB services, please see the RWPB Universal Service Standard. Key service components and activities specific to this service are outlined below:

ADPH Service Standards:

Standard	Documentation
1. Agency & Personnel Requirements	
1.1) Staff providing Emergency Financial Assistance (EFA) services may have a wide range of education and lived experiences relevant to the services being provided. At minimum, staff should receive the following training and information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HIV 101 • Cultural Competency • HIV Counseling/Testing • General information of community resources 	1.1) Completed trainings in personnel file.
1.2) If the agency utilizes vouchers, a policy and procedure is required to account for and verify RWPB funds are used only for the purchase of allowable items.	1.2) Agency policy and procedure on allowable use of vouchers that includes verification.
2. Eligibility & Intake	
2.1) Subrecipient must conduct or confirm eligibility consistent with statewide eligibility requirements. All clients must have an active eligibility at the time of service.	2.1) Active eligibility for RWPB in client's record during the service delivery period.
2.2) Complete intake within 2 business days of referral.	2.2) Intake completed within 2 business days of referral.
3. Assessment	
3.1) Determine client's need for EFA services prior to providing services within 2 business days of intake.	3.1) Assessment of need for EFA services is reflected in clients' record signed and dated by agency staff.
4. Provision of Services	
4.1) Services will be provided based on needs identified within 2 business days of assessment.	4.1) Service provided within 2 business days noted in client's file or service log.
4.2) Follow-up with client within 30 days of service provision to ensure needs have been met and assess for other needs.	4.2) Follow-up noted in client's file indicating service was provided and additional needs assessed within 30 days.
5. Transition/Discharge	
5.1) See Universal Standard	

6. Case Closure	
6.1) See Universal Standard	

Resources

1. Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) HIV/AIDS Bureau (HAB) Policy Clarification Notice (PCN) #16-02: Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program Services: Eligible Individuals and Allowable Uses of Funds:
<https://ryanwhite.hrsa.gov/sites/default/files/ryanwhite/grants/service-category-pcn-16-02-final.pdf>

2. HIV/AIDS Bureau (HAB) Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program (RWHAP) Policy Clarification Notice 16-02: Eligible Individuals and Allowable Uses of Funds Housing Services Frequently Asked Questions
<https://ryanwhite.hrsa.gov/sites/default/files/ryanwhite/grants/housing-faqs-final.pdf>

3. Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program (RWHAP) National Monitoring Standards for RWHAP Part B Recipients:
<https://ryanwhite.hrsa.gov/sites/default/files/ryanwhite/grants/2023-rwhap-nms-part-b.pdf>