

DIRECT ACCESS TO HOUSING - ACCESS AND REFERRAL

Frequently Asked Questions

DAH Eligibility

- **My client lives in an apartment but is failing and can no longer afford rent. Is he eligible for DAH?** No. To be eligible for DAH, a client must be homeless, and have no home to return to. This means the client is living on the streets, in a shelter, or in a treatment program or institution and was homeless prior to treatment.
- **Are there any income restrictions for DAH housing?** In order to be eligible for DAH, clients must be “extremely low income”, or earning less than 30% of San Francisco County AMI (adjusted median income), as defined by annual HUD income limits. For 2013, the income and/or benefits limit is \$22,200 per year. For some units, the income limit may be as low as 20% or 25% of AMI.
- **I just started working with this client last week. Can I refer her to DAH?** Ideally, a case manager has worked with a client for a while, and thoroughly knows the client’s clinical needs and housing needs. However, there are cases where a client works with a new case manager, has a history of being served within the agency. Please note that when making a referral, the case manager commits to and assumes responsibility for sheparding the client through the DAH referral, application, and move-in process.
- **My client was evicted from a DAH building. Can she be re-referred to DAH?** Former DAH tenants who had been evicted may be considered for future housing opportunities if they are able to demonstrate that the behaviors that lead to the eviction have changed and are no longer a cause for concern.
- **What sort of identification does my client need?** A client needs a *current* government issued photo ID (i.e., Drivers License, state ID, passport, etc.) *at the time of the referral*. Note: clients with a non-U.S. ID can obtain a San Francisco ID at City Hall. At the time of the DAH application, the client needs to provide a copy of the social security card and it is strongly recommended that the case manager works to obtain a social security card prior to that time. If the client cannot provide this documentation with the DAH application, we will not be able to process the application. Please discuss clients with non-U.S. ID with the DAH Access and Referral Team.
- **My client is currently in school. Can she be referred to DAH?** Students can be referred to DAH, provided that they meet the rest of the eligibility criteria and receive a monthly income. Many of the newer sites, and some older ones, cannot accept full-time students because of funding regulations.
- **My client is a registered sex offender. Are they eligible for DAH?** Some DAH sites might be able to house clients with a history of sexual offense, but it depends on the individual circumstances of your client’s history. The more information you have, the better. At a minimum, it means that it may take longer to find an appropriate unit for this client.
- **My client is getting custody of her child. Can she still be referred to DAH?** DAH is for single adults; the program cannot house minors. Children of tenants are able to visit, but must adhere to the visitation policy of the site. Policies may vary across sites, but in general, sites allow daytime visitors, as well as overnight visitors up to 10-14 nights per month. The Human Services Agency has support services sites for families.

DAH Referrals & DAH Pool

- **Where can I get the DAH Clinical Referral Form and Placement Authorization Form?** The DAH Clinical Referral and the Placement Authorization Form is available on the DAH website: <http://www.sfdph.org/dph/comupg/oprograms/HUH/access.asp>.
- **What number is my client on the waitlist?** DAH operates using a pool, as opposed to a waitlist. DART works to ensure a good match between the clinical needs of the clients and the amenities and requirements of the different housing sites. Because of this, it can be difficult predict a client's DAH application will be referred to a housing site for the tenant application process.
- **I don't have email access. Can I fax the DAH Clinical Referral Form and Placement Authorization Form instead?** All DAH Clinical Referral Forms and Placement Authorization Forms must be completed electronically and emailed. Handwritten forms will not be accepted. Faxed forms will not be accepted. If you don't have access to a computer, you can access one at the San Francisco Library. Please note that all referring case managers must follow the DPH Confidentiality Policy when emailing the forms. This means that case managers, who are not within the DPH safety net (i.e., are not SFDPH or UC employees) must password protect the document. No identifying information should be in the email subject line or in the body of the email. Emails from personal email accounts (i.e., yahoo, gmail, etc.) will not be accepted. For more information on the SFDPH Privacy Policy refer to www.sfdph.org/dph/files/HIPAdocs/PrivacyPolicies/HIPAAPrivacy-AuthorizationPol02242010.pdf
- **Why do I have to resubmit the Placement Authorization Form and the DAH Clinical Referral Form every three months?** It is important that we have the most up-to-date client information possible. This includes housing status, medical and/or psychiatric condition, substance use and behaviors, and current case manager. Resubmitting the Placement Authorization Form and the DAH Clinical Referral Form every 90 days ensures that the information is current, that the client is still eligible and in need of housing, and is still actively engaged with case management.
- **What if my client was already in the DAH pool before January 2, 2014?** Clients in the DAH pool prior to January 2, 2014 will remain in the DAH pool. You do not need to submit a new referral. However, you must submit the Placement Authorization Form and the current DAH Clinical Referral Form in three months (i.e., by March 31, 2014) in order for the client to remain in the pool.

DAH Application Process

- **My client declined a DAH application offer. Is he still in the pool?** If a client declines one DAH application offer, he will remain in the DAH pool. The DART team may be able to evaluate the client for another site, depending on the reason for the decline; but, there is no guarantee when or where the client will be offered another unit. If a client declines a second DAH application offer, he will be removed from the DAH pool.
- **What if my client refuses to sign up with Third Party Rent Payment services?** Third Party Rent Payment services are a requirement of the DAH program and clients need to sign up prior to move-in. Otherwise, Property Management cannot allow the client to move into the unit. If the client signs up with Third Party Rent Payment services and then withdraws from the service, she will be out of compliance with the DAH program rules, which may lead to loss of the DAH subsidy. Without subsidy, the client is responsible for the full unit rent and may face eviction proceedings if unable to pay.

- **What do I do if my client is denied housing by Property Management?** A client may be denied at any point throughout the referral and application process for just cause. If the client is denied, the case manager is encouraged to assist with the appropriate appeal process, which varies among buildings. If the client is ultimately denied by Property Management, DART may be able to evaluate the client for a housing opportunity at another site. However, there are no guarantees as to when, where and if a client can be referred to another building
- **My client doesn't have any income. Does she still need to sign up with Third Party Rent Payment services?** All clients, regardless of income, will be referred to Third Party Rent Payment services. If the client has no income, Third Party Rent Payment services will provide documentation stating that the client is not able to be enrolled. If the client begins to earn income after being housed, they are required to enroll with Third Party Rent Payment services and are required to pay rent.
- **Is it possible to arrange a payment plan for the security deposit?** Case managers should work closely with clients once they begin the application process to ensure that they save money to cover move-in costs. Community resources, such as Season of Sharing or the AIDS and the Breast Cancer Emergency Funds may be available to help with first month's rent and/or security deposit. Specific requests for payment plans need to be coordinated with a building's Property Management before move-in.
- **What happens if I'm unable to locate my client when she receives a DAH application offer?** If you are unable to locate your client by the deadline, please notify the DART team right away. Once the case manager receives a DAH application offer for the client, they have 10 business days to submit the completed DAH application with all the necessary documentation. After the 10 business days, DART will withdraw the offer and move on to another applicant.

DAH Tenants

- **My client is in DAH housing, but wants to move to another building. Can she?** Transfers between buildings are not generally permitted, and are considered only for extreme circumstances. Case managers should discuss the tenant's circumstances with the onsite Support Services Director, who should provide the case manager with the DAH Transfer Policy. All transfer requests must be signed off by the Support Services Director, and the client must be in good standing with Property Management. Requests are reviewed by the DAH Review Board; if a transfer request is granted, the client will be added to the DAH pool and matched with another appropriate building. Clients cannot request a transfer to a particular building. As with new referrals, the client will need to follow the general DAH referral and application process: clinical referral form, DAH application, housing application and interview, background check, etc. The client must have a case manager, who can assist with the DAH application process and move-in to a new building once accepted; this could be an on-site case manager at the current DAH site, or a case manager from the community.
- **What do I do if my client needs a higher level of care than DAH can provide?** Case manager should discuss their client's needs with the onsite Support Services Director, who will work with the service team to arrange for an evaluation; possibly through DPH Placement. Depending on the outcomes of the evaluation, Placement will work with the client's services team to identify an appropriate placement for the client.
- **Can my client have a pet?** Most buildings do not allow pets. You should check with property management at the building where your client is interviewing. If pets are generally allowed, property

management will let you know what the process, rules, and requirements are. Either way, please make sure that your client is going to be in compliance with all house rules, including these ones.

- **What about service animals?** Every building has a Reasonable Accommodation Request protocol for companion animals. Please, check in with property management at the building where your client is interviewing. Be prepared that the process will require specific documentation, such as proof of vaccination. Property Management will ask the client to sign a lease addendum with additional terms and conditions that apply to companion animals.

Case Manager Responsibilities

- **I filled out the Placement Authorization Form and the DAH Clinical Referral Form. What else do I need to do?** Case managers are expected to assist their clients throughout the entire access and referral process. This includes resubmitting the Placement Authorization Form and the DAH Clinical Referral Form every three months; having client ID, social security card and income verification ready for the DAH application; working with the client to complete the housing application; attending interviews and orientations; securing any additional required documentation; helping the client prepare belongings and finances for move-in; and attending lease-signing and move-in. The case manager is always the point of contact for Placement, DART, and on-site Property Management and Support Services.
- **What do I do if there is a change in case manager?** Please, work with the new case manager to inform the DART team, Placement, and property management and on-site support services (if housing application is in process), so that we have the right contact information. Also, please make sure to inform the new case manager/agency of the client's DAH referral and/or application status to limit complications and/or delays.
- **Why do I have to go to the move-in with my client?** Case managers are expected to attend move in with their clients to ensure a successful transition into the building. Case managers may need to assist the client with lease signing and other paperwork. Additionally, case managers ensure that the client's belongings are ready for pest inspection, and that the client is prepared to have his belonging inspected. Case managers should also make sure that the client has food, basic supplies, medications, and any necessary medical equipment in place before leaving.
- **What happens with services after my client moves in?** Unless otherwise stated, the assumption is that the referring case manager will continue to work with the client as well as engage in case coordination with the on-site support services team. Any changes in service delivery should be discussed and planned with the client and the on-site team.