

Non-Discrimination Policy

Northeast Minnesota Continuum of Care (MN-504)

Adopted: 08/09/2018

Background

The Northeast Minnesota Continuum of Care (MN-504) is required to develop and operate a coordinated entry process that permits recipients of Federal and state funds to comply with applicable civil rights and fair housing laws and requirements. Recipients and subrecipients of CoC Program and ESG Program-funded projects must comply with the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions of Federal civil rights laws as specified at 24 C.F.R. 5.105(a), including, but not limited to the following:

- Fair Housing Act prohibits discriminatory housing practices based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, or familial status; The Minnesota Human Rights Act (Chapter 363A of the Minnesota Statutes) also prohibits discrimination based on marital status, public assistance status, and sexual orientation;
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance;
- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance; and
- Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act prohibits public entities, which includes state and local governments, and special purpose districts, from discriminating against individuals with disabilities in all their services, programs, and activities, which include housing, and housing-related services such as housing search and referral assistance. Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act prohibits private entities that own, lease, and operate places of public accommodation, which include shelters, social service establishments, and other public accommodations providing housing, from discriminating on the basis of disability.

In addition, HUD's Equal Access Rule at 24 CFR 5.105(a)(2) prohibits discriminatory eligibility determinations in HUD-assisted or HUD-insured housing programs based on actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status, including any projects funded by the CoC Program, ESG Program, and HOPWA Program. The CoC Program interim rule also contains a fair housing provision at 24 CFR 578.93. For ESG, see 24 CFR 576.407(a) and (b), and for HOPWA, see 24 CFR 574.603.

The CoC Program interim rule at 24 CFR 578.93(c) also requires recipients of CoC Program funds to affirmatively market their housing and supportive services to eligible persons regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, familial status, or disability who are least likely to apply in the absence of special outreach, and maintain records of those marketing activities. Housing assisted by HUD and made available through

the CoC must also be made available to individuals and families without regard to actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status in accordance with 24 CFR 5.105 (a)(2). Nondiscrimination and affirmative outreach requirements for the ESG program are located at 24 CFR § 576.407(a) and (b).

Policy

The policy of the Northeast Minnesota Continuum of Care (NE CoC) (MN 504) is to provide equal opportunity and equal consideration to all peoples without regard to race, religion, ancestry, national origin, color, creed, sex, gender identity, age, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, familial status or public assistance status

Delivery of Services

The NE CoC, its member agencies, its recipients of CoC, ESG, or HOPWA funds, and its Coordinated Entry System agents and partners shall not discriminate or treat unequally or unfairly in the delivery of services any person because of race, religion, ancestry, national origin, color, creed, sex, gender identity, age, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, familial status or public assistance status and will comply with all federal, state and local anti-discrimination laws.

Affirmative Marketing and Outreach

The NE CoC, its member agencies, its recipients of CoC, ESG, or HOPWA funds, and its Coordinated Entry System agents and partners shall affirmatively market access to Coordinated Entry (and as a result to the housing and services available through Coordinated Entry) to eligible persons regardless of race, religion, ancestry, national origin, color, creed, sex, gender identity, age, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, familial status or public assistance status who are least likely to apply in the absence of special outreach, and maintain records of those marketing activities.

Obligation to Inform

The NE CoC, its member agencies, its recipients of CoC, ESG, or HOPWA funds, and its Coordinated Entry System agents and partners shall inform in plain writing all persons seeking services of these policies and the process for filing a nondiscrimination complaint.

Reporting a Nondiscrimination Complaint

At any time during the coordinated entry process, applicants for housing or services have the right to file a complaint, should they feel that the non-discrimination principle has been violated. All Applicants, whether individuals or families, will be provided with the process for filing a complaint. All complaints will be addressed and resolved in a timely and fair manner.

The following three contacts will be provided to address discrimination or grievance related concerns:

- For nondiscrimination complaints, contact the
 - Department of Housing & Urban Development, Chicago Regional Office: (800) 765-9372 or https://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/fair_housing_equality_opp/onlinecomplaint
 - Minnesota Department of Human Rights: 651-539-1100 or Toll Free at 1-800-657-3704
- For complaints with Coordinated Entry policies or procedures in the NE CoC, contact any Access Site. Access sites are listed at <http://www.neminnnesotacontinuumofcare.org/coordinated-entry.html>
- For housing program related complaints, grievances will be directed to the appropriate housing provider for resolution.

Retaliation

The NE CoC policy is that the Continuum of Care, its member agencies and its Coordinated Entry System agents and partners shall not retaliate against a person who files a charge of discrimination, participates in a discrimination proceeding, or otherwise opposes an unlawful practice.