



Housing Retention Services Fact Sheet

What is Housing Retention Services?

The program has a number of things we can do to help PLWHA who are homeless, at risk of being homeless, or unstably housed. The goal is to help you have affordable housing, and prevent eviction and utility shut offs. When you don't have to worry about housing, you can focus positively on your health care and staying healthy.

What kinds of services are there?

There are three types, so that we can help with lots of angles. First of all, we help you to cover your payments like:

- ❖ Moving
- ❖ Security Deposit
- ❖ Emergency Utility
- ❖ Emergency Rent
- ❖ Rent
- ❖ Household Items (like kitchen and bathroom needs, bedding)
- ❖ Mattresses

Also, our Housing Retention Specialists work with you to be sure you gain the skills that you'll need to keep up the good work on paying for and staying housed. Together, you will work on budgeting and some other areas that might be a problem like dealing with your landlord and other tenants or filling out paperwork for Section 8 (for example).

And – because who doesn't like some extra support from someone who really knows what it is like – our Peers are there to help you figure things out or to go to appointments with you.

How do I know if I am eligible for Housing Retention Services?

You are likely eligible if:

- ❖ You have HIV and live in one of these counties: Albany, Clinton, Columbia, Delaware, Essex, Franklin, Fulton, Greene, Hamilton, Montgomery, Otsego, Rensselaer, Saratoga, Schenectady, Schoharie, Warren, or Washington county
AND



- ❖ *You are homeless, at high risk of becoming homeless, or unstably housed. We just need to ask you a few questions about this*

Some requirements depend on the type of assistance you need. We will figure this out with you once we get your information.

We will need proof of your HIV status and your most recent address. We will also need to ask about your income and your budget to see if you are eligible

Is that it?

Sorry, no. Depending on which of the services you might get, you may need to show proof of some things, like:

- ❖ *You already tried all other financial resources (like friends, family, church, community based organizations and/or DSS)*
- ❖ *Eviction or utility shut off notice (emergency assistance only)*
- ❖ *Lease or utility bill in your name – we can help you get this if you don't have one*

How do I apply?

If you have a case or care manager, they can help you with this. Or you can call our main office at (518) 434-4686 and ask for the Housing Program Manager. If you are applying for Financial Assistance, we can give the Financial Assistance Request form to you or your worker. It will also be on our website soon: www.allianceforpositivehealth.org.

Either way, our staff can help you with the paperwork that you need.

And then what?

We will get back to you within a few days to let you know if we need more information or paperwork. We also might need to:

- *Do an inspection of your apartment or house to make sure it meets HUD housing standards*
- *Check on the size of your apartment or house*
- *Get some tax information from your landlord – so you will need to sign a release of information for us to do this*

How do I know if I get in?



You will get a letter either saying you were approved or denied within two weeks of applying.

- *Approvals will explain what you can expect and what your role is*
- *Denials will explain why you were denied and what you might be able to do to qualify. Sometimes it is just a matter of getting more info to us.*

If it is an emergency – we will move things through fast so that you don't get evicted or get utilities shut off.

Besides help with the bills, what else is involved?

Our Housing Retention staff will contact you on a regular basis to:

- *Go over your situation and budget*
- *Work with you to plan ahead to make sure you can keep up with your housing needs*
- *Get paperwork we need to meet our program requirements – like proof of your part of rent payment*
- *Make sure that all the providers you work with are on the same page to help you be as healthy as you can*

And you have a big part in this too! You will need to:

- *Pay 30% of your adjusted gross income towards rent each month (we'll help figure this out)*
- *Pay your utility bill, or make some back payments*
- *Return payments made for security deposit when you move*
- *Give proof of payment to the Alliance for Positive Health*
- *Let us know if your income changes*
- *Be sure and ask us so that you get all of your questions answered*

Will all of my information be confidential?

Yes, maintaining client confidentiality is a core value of the Alliance for Positive Health. Because safe housing and good health care is a partnership, we will have to have some releases of information in order for you to be part of the program.

