



Housing Retention Services Fact Sheet

What are Housing Retention Services?

The Housing Retention Services program helps people living with HIV/AIDS who are homeless, at risk of being homeless, or unstably housed. The goal is to help these individuals obtain and/or remain in affordable housing and prevent eviction and utility shut offs. When you don't have to worry about housing, you can focus positively on health care and staying healthy.

What kind of services are there?

Housing Retention Services include help from many angles, such as assisting with payment coverage for:

- Moving
- Security Deposits
- Emergency Utilities
- Emergency Rent
- Rent
- Household items
- Mattresses

Specialists will also work with you to ensure you gain the skills needed to maintain housing and keeping payments uninterrupted. Together, we will work on budgeting and other problem areas such as communicating with your landlord and other tenants or filling out paperwork (ie. Section 8). We also provide peer support from staff who have similar lived experiences. These Client Support Specialists provide accompaniment to appointments and will be there to help figure things out.

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

You are likely eligible for this program if:

- You have HIV/AIDS 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

AND

- You are homeless, at high risk of becoming homeless, or unstably housed.

Some requirements depend on the type of assistance needed. We will figure out details once information is received. Proof of HIV status and most recent address is needed. You will also be asked about your income and budget to see if you are eligible.

What else do I need to know?

Depending on which services you qualify for, you may need to show a form of proof that/of:

- You have already tried all other financial resources (friends, family, community-based organizations, Department of Social Services, etc.)
- Eviction or utility shut off notice (emergency assistance only)
- Lease or utility bill in your name (we can help you obtain this if you do not have one)

How do I apply?

If you have a Case or Care Manager, they can help you with your application. You may also call our main office at 518.434.4686 and ask for the Housing Program Manager. If you are applying for Financial Assistance, we can provide you with a Financial Assistance Request form. Our staff is committed to assisting you with the paperwork you need.

What comes next?

You will be contacted within a few days after submitting your application. Information will be verified and the following may need to be completed:

- An inspection of your apartment or house to ensure it meets Housing and Urban Development standards
- Assessment of the size of your apartment or house
- Obtaining tax information from your landlord. You will need to sign a release of information for this to be completed.

How will I know if I am approved for the program?

You will receive a letter notifying you of approval or denial within two weeks of your application submission.

- Approvals will explain what you can expect and what your role will be.
- Denials will explain why you were not approved and what you may be able to do to qualify. It may just be a matter of providing additional information to the Alliance.

If you are in an emergency housing situation, we will move things through as quickly as possible, so you are not evicted and your utilities are not shut off.

Aside from assistance with bills, what else is involved?

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

- Review your situation and budget
- Assist you with planning ahead to ensure you can keep up with housing needs
- Obtain paperwork needed to meet program requirements (ie. proof of your portion of rent payment)
- Ensure all providers you work with are on the same page to help you be as healthy as possible.

You will also need to:

- Pay 30% of your adjusted gross income towards rent each month (we will help in figuring this out)
- Pay your utility bill or make some back payments
- Return payments made for security deposit when you move
- Provide proof of payment to the Alliance for Positive Health
- Let us know if/when your income changes
- Communicate with us so all your questions are answered

Will all of my information be confidential?

Maintaining client confidentiality is a core value of the Alliance for Positive Health. Safe housing and good health care is a partnership, so we will need some releases of information in order for you to be enrolled in the program.