

# Transitional Housing Program

## Fact Sheet

### What are transitional housing programs?

Transitional housing (TH) is short-term housing assistance and related support services offered to victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking. Transitional housing is *not* an extended shelter stay. TH programs provide housing for a minimum of six months by providing rental assistance or other financial assistance (e.g. security deposits, utility assistance, relocation costs, etc.) to victims.

Participants should be offered related support services that support them in locating and securing permanent housing, securing employment, and integrating into a community. However, pursuant to the authorizing statute, OVW-funded transitional housing projects cannot mandate that recipients participate in support services as a condition of receiving housing.

### How does transitional housing differ from shelter programs?

Transitional housing differs from shelter programs in three key areas: (1) purpose, (2) length of stay, and (3) services provided.

1. **Purpose.** The purpose of shelters is to provide victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and dating violence with an immediate response, while TH programs provide homeless victims with longer-term support.
2. **Length of stay.** The length of stay for shelters is short term, a few days to a few months, while victims usually stay in transitional housing for 6 to 24 months and are offered follow-up services upon leaving the program.
3. **Services provided.** Shelters provide victims with crisis response advocacy; TH offers victims advocacy with safety, economic, personal and family, and housing planning and support.

### What is required of a transitional housing program?

Applicants that receive TH program funding are required to do the following:

- Submit policies and procedures used to govern their TH program and related support services to OVW for review. Submission is required to ensure victim safety is not compromised, the program is not operating unallowable activities (as specified in the solicitation), and the program is conforming to best practices to provide transitional housing to victims.
- Offer transitional housing and services for at least six months and no more than three years.
- Offer follow-up support services for participants who secure permanent housing. These services are limited to advocacy, support groups, case management, and minimal financial assistance and must be provided for at least three months but no more than one year.

- Significantly involve a victim service provider in the implementation, development, review, and provision of all policies and procedures pertaining to support services.
- Ensure that anyone working with TH participants is trained to work with victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking.
- Send the project coordinator and one other key staff to an in-person OVW grantee orientation and OVW-sponsored training on voluntary services.
- Provide transitional housing to their clients without requiring participation in support services.
- Identify the source of funds being used to provide the housing part of the transitional housing if it is not being provided with OVW Transitional Housing Program funds, and notify OVW of any changes to this arrangement.

## **What is an example of a Transitional Housing program?**

There are a variety of housing models and rent structures being used by transitional housing programs across the country. There is no one correct way to structure your transitional housing model or rent process. These things will vary based on your program's mission, the way in which you are funded, and the population of survivors you are serving. Following is a list of the various housing models and rent structures that exist.

### **Housing models**

- **Scattered site.** Individual housing units are scattered throughout the service area.
- **Clustered site.** Housing units are clustered together in a common location.
- **Communal living.** Similar to shelter design with shared spaces such as living rooms and kitchens.

### **Rent structures**

- **Subsidized.** TH program provides rental assistance to the victim's landlord.
- **Rent/Sublet.** TH program leases a unit in its name and subleases to the victim.
- **Own.** TH program owns and operates housing facilities for victims.

Furthermore, the types of support and follow-up services offered varies from program to program. However, those offered should help transitional housing participants locate and secure permanent housing, secure employment, and integrate into a community. Examples include

- case management;
- housing advocacy;
- counseling/support groups;
- financial counseling;
- civil legal assistance.