

Written Standards Checklist for the Emergency Solutions Grant Program

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development requires subrecipients to develop and implement Written Standards for programs provided through the Emergency Solutions Grant Program. The following guidelines must be followed when developing these Standards. Standards for emergency shelter programs will be different than Standards for homeless prevention and rapid re-housing programs so agencies must ensure that the Standards developed are appropriate for programs offered. Agencies are encouraged to use [THDA's ESG Guide](#) as a reference for their written standards. ESG Subrecipients under THDA must certify that the ESG Applicant has written standards that comply with the requirements of [24 CFR 576.400](#) including, but not limited to the following as applicable for the services provided.

All Program Components Require	Mark if implemented
Standards include the area of service where assistance is to be offered.	☐
Standards include all type(s) of assistance that will be offered through the ESG program. Describe all ESG program components, essential services and eligible costs your agency will provide under Emergency Shelter, Street Outreach, Rapid Re-housing and/or Homelessness Prevention.	☐
Standards shall include HUD definitions of homeless and at-risk of homelessness, as defined in 24 CFR 576.2 .	☐
Standards summarize the procedure in place that defines how program participants will be evaluated for eligibility of assistance under the ESG program. Written procedures <u>must establish this order of priority for obtaining evidence</u> as 1) Third-party documentation, 2) Intake worker observations, and 3) Certification from the person seeking assistance third. However, lack of third-party documentation must not prevent an individual or family from being immediately admitted to emergency shelter, receiving street outreach services, or being immediately admitted to shelter or receiving services provided by a victim service provider. Records contained in an HMIS or comparable database used by victim service or legal service providers are acceptable evidence of third-party documentation and intake worker observations if the HMIS retains an auditable history of all entries, including the person who entered the data, the date of entry, and the change made; and if the HMIS prevents overrides or changes of the dates on which entries are made. (Note: DV shelters must follow the requirements of the Violence Against Women Act and the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act which prohibits agencies from making its shelter or housing conditional on the participant's acceptance of service)	☐

Standards include procedures describing the coordination among emergency shelter providers, essential services providers, homelessness prevention, and rapid re-housing assistance providers, other homeless assistance providers, and mainstream service and housing providers in your service area. Explain how your agency will participate in Coordinated Entry.	☐
Standards describe the formal termination process established by the agency that recognizes the rights of individuals affected. The agency must exercise judgment and examine all extenuating circumstances in determining when violations warrant termination so that a program participant's assistance is terminated only in the most severe cases. As best practice, procedures should include that program participants should receive a written copy the program rules and termination process before the participant begins to receive assistance.	☐
Standards include steps used to ensure clients receiving ESG assistance are provided all applicable HMIS releases, forms, client complaint process, etc. as required by HMIS regulations. Standards include summaries regarding the requirement that clients served and activities provided with ESG funds will be entered into HMIS (or comparable database if a DV shelter), the timeframe for data to be entered, and the process for ensuring confidentiality of client records.	☐
Street Outreach/Emergency Shelter	Mark if implemented
Standards include a summary of how agency staff will target and provide services related to street outreach.	☐
Standards include policies and procedures for admission, diversion, referral, and discharge by emergency shelters assisted under ESG, including standards regarding length of stay, if any, and safeguards to meet the safety and shelter needs of special populations, e.g., victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking; and individuals and families who have the highest barriers to housing and are likely to be homeless the longest	☐
Standards include assessing, prioritizing, and reassessing individuals and families' needs for essential services related to emergency shelter.	☐
Homeless Prevention & Rapid Re-housing	Mark if implemented
Standards include a process for determining and prioritizing which eligible families and individuals will receive homeless prevention and/or rapid re-housing assistance. Refer to the homelessness definitions, as defined in 24 CFR 576.2 , that are eligible for each ESG activity. These policies must include the emergency transfer priority required under 24 CFR 576.409 .	☐
Standards for determining what percentage or amount of rent and utilities costs each program participant must pay while receiving homelessness prevention or rapid re-housing assistance.	☐

Standards for determining the type, amount, and duration of housing stabilization and/or relocation services to provide to a program participant, including the limits, if any, on the homelessness prevention or rapid re-housing assistance that each program participant may receive, such as the maximum amount of assistance, maximum number of months the program participant receive assistance; or the maximum number of times the program participant may receive assistance. Lengths of time must not exceed 24-months in a 3-year period.	☐
Other than a one-time payment of arrears, agencies must enact procedures to ensure that program participants are not receiving any other subsidies prior to rental assistance payments being made.	☐
Standards include how agency staff will document compliance with FMR and rent reasonableness standards for the service area, lead based paint inspections, and housing inspections. Included shall be procedures to verify and document the age of the units built before 1978 may contain lead-based paint.	☐
Standards include steps for determining how long a program participants will be provided rental assistance. Include whether or not (and how) the amount of that assistance will be adjusted over time.	☐
Standards include Housing Stability Case Management requirements as meeting with participants at least once a month and develop a plan to assist the program participant to retain permanent housing after the ESG assistance ends, taking into account all relevant considerations, such as the program participant's current or expected income and expenses; other public or private assistance for which the program participant will be eligible and likely to receive; and the relative affordability of available housing in the area.	☐
For rapid rehousing, this assistance cannot exceed 30 days during the period the program participant is seeking permanent housing and cannot exceed 24 months during the period the program participant is living in permanent housing.	☐
Standards include requirements that clients will be re-evaluated for program eligibility and the types and amounts of assistance the program participant needs. This re-evaluation process shall be conducted not less than once every 3 months for program participants receiving homelessness prevention assistance and not less than once annually for program participants receiving rapid re-housing assistance. Requirements of eligibility include, income limits shall not exceed 30% of AMI & the participants still lack the resources and support networks necessary to retain housing.	☐

Standards may require each program participant receiving homelessness prevention or rapid re-housing assistance to notify the agency regarding changes in the program participant's income or other circumstances (e.g., changes in household composition) that affect the program participant's need for assistance under ESG. When notified of a relevant change, the agency must re-evaluate the program participant's eligibility and the amount and types of assistance the program participant needs.	☐
If the program participant receives rental assistance or housing relocation and stabilization services, the Standards shall include the formal process for terminating a program participant that includes: 1) Written notice to the program participant containing a clear statement of the reasons for termination; 2) a review of the decision, in which the participant is given the opportunity to present written or oral objections before a person other than the person who made or approved the termination decision; and 3) prompt written notice of the final decision to the program participant. Included shall be language stating that termination under this section does not bar the participant from providing further assistance at a later date to the same family or individual.	☐

I certify that the Written Standards developed for the Emergency Solutions Grant Program (ESG) follow guidelines reflected above and the regulations under 24 CFR Part 576. Enclosed is a copy of the Written Standards that will be used by all agency staff who will participate in the ESG program.

Printed name of Agency Director

Date

Signature of Agency Director