



**Health Care Agency
Behavioral Health Services
Policies and Procedures**

Section Name: Administration
 Sub Section: Housing
 Section Number: 04.04.03
 Policy Status: New Revised

	SIGNATURE	DATE APPROVED
Deputy Director Behavioral Health Services		___6/25/2026

SUBJECT: Behavioral Health Bridge Housing (BHBH) Participant Assistance Funds

PURPOSE:

To establish a procedure that Orange County Health Care Agency (HCA), Behavioral Health Services (BHS) shall follow to administer the Behavioral Health Bridge Housing (BHBH) Program Assistance Funds.

POLICY:

It is the policy of BHS that specific procedures and eligibility criteria shall be followed when providing BHBH programs and participants.

SCOPE:

This policy is applicable to HCA, BHS BHBH programs, rental assistance programs and participants.

REFERENCES:

[DHCS Behavioral Health Bridge Housing](#)

[BHS 07.01.01 Fraud and Abuse Policy and Procedure](#)

[HCA VIII-23.01 Fraud, Waste, and Abuse Prevention Policy and Procedure](#)

FORMS:

Household Item Checklist (Attachment A)

DEFINITIONS:

Behavioral Health Bridge Housing (BHBH) – Short and mid-term residential settings with a goal to connect individuals to long-term housing stability. Bridge housing may include, but is not limited to, emergency/interim housing, rental assistance and auxiliary funding in assisted living settings.

SUBJECT: BHBH Participant Assistance Funds

Participant Assistance Funds – Funding used to remove barriers and support people with behavioral health conditions who are also experiencing homelessness to meet their immediate housing needs.

PROCEDURE:

- I. Participant Assistance Eligibility
 - A. Participant Assistance Funds are available to individuals who are actively participating in BHBH, to individuals exiting the BHBH program into permanent housing, and to participants who have been housed through BHBH and are receiving aftercare services and need assistance maintaining housing.
 - B. Up to \$3,000 per participant is available for the duration of their participation within the BHBH program. Requests can be made on a case-by-case basis for additional funding.
 - C. Funds may be made available to individuals that are in the progressive engagement phase with a BHBH service provider and require funds in order to participate in the BHBH program.
- II. Allowable Costs
 - A. Allowable uses of Participant Assistance Funds include, but are not limited to, security deposits, utility deposits, housing application fees and household furnishings.
 1. Household furnishing may include basic items such as a bed, table and chairs, dishes, utensils, a microwave, and refrigerator, if not supplied by property manager and cleaning supplies (Attachment A).
 - B. Funds may also be used to assist BHBH participants in securing documentation needed for applying to housing including birth certificate, state identification or driver's license, social security card, copies of financial statements and credit reports.
 - C. If a participant has a service animal, emotional support animal or companion animal, funds may be used to acquire documentation needed to allow for the animal to reside with the participant in their housing.
 - D. BHBH funding shall not be used to supplant any alternative funding sources available for the purposes of housing individuals with serious behavioral health conditions experiencing homelessness, including those who may be justice involved and/or Community Assistance, Recovery and Empowerment (CARE) Court participants.
- III. Required Documentation

SUBJECT: BHBH Participant Assistance Funds

- A. BHBH programs shall keep record of participant assistance funds paid and provide this information to the County as requested.
- B. This documentation shall include the participant's name, amount of assistance, dates of purchase or payment, transaction number and payment address, if applicable.

IV. Prevention of Fraud, Waste and Abuse

- D. The Orange County BHBH program shall ensure that funds made available are spent in accordance with DHCS standards for BHBH program and are administered effectively and according to the highest ethical and legal standards, as referenced in the individual contracts/Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).
- E. Regular Reviews completed by the BHBH Provider, shall include but are not limited to the following:
 - 1. Cost Reports
 - 2. Invoices
 - 3. Documentation review
 - 4. Rental Agreements
- F. BHBH providers shall complete training required by the County that reinforce the intent to eliminate program abuse.