

## Transitional Housing and Rapid Rehousing Joint Component (TH-RRH) Written Standards

The US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) created the TH-RRH joint component to allow communities to address a gap in supportive housing programming. [HUD's Statement on TH-RRH](#) explains: "Communities should establish performance benchmarks appropriate for a project's target population and encourage them to prioritize people with high needs, especially those who are unsheltered . . . have higher barriers to exiting homelessness and are more likely to be victims of violence or harm." The RICoC's Youth Action Board and Board of Directors believe this joint component can address a gap in supportive housing with the State of Rhode Island for Transitional Aged Youth (aged up to age 25) and those fleeing violence and have created these written standards for TH-RRH projects operating within the State.

### Goals of Written Standards of TH-RHH

The RICoC generally operates under the belief that many people who were traditionally assisted in long-term congregate transitional housing could be served more efficiently in permanent housing programs. However, since its transition to permanent housing programs, ongoing gaps analysis has indicated that **an option to choose transitional housing may be appropriate for some people, including unaccompanied LGBTQ+, BIPOC, immigrant/refugee, disabled, and pregnant or parenting youth who are unable to live independently or who prefer a congregate setting with access to a broad array of wraparound services and survivors of domestic violence and other forms of severe trauma who may prefer the security and onsite services of a congregate setting.** To address this gap, the RICoC has selected joint TH-RRH projects within its DV Bonus funding and its Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP) funding to assure transition aged youth have opportunities for their supportive housing that align with the services model they choose.

These standards are a framework of policy requirements that providers implementing TH-RRH Program policies and procedures within Rhode Island must incorporate into their programs. These are intended to be a baseline; programs are strongly encouraged to develop upon this structure with their person centered, population specific wrap-around services to best serve the youth and young adults engaging in their TH-RRH program.

As this is a new component within Rhode Island and projects are beginning in fall of 2022, the RICoC and its Youth Action Board commit to continuous quality improvement of these written standards over time as this program type evolves within Rhode Island.

## Guiding Principles for Effective Practice

The United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) core principles of effective practices provide guidance in planning, monitoring, and enhancing YHDP funded projects, including the development of the CCP. These operating principles align with and reflect many traditional beliefs and current understanding regarding inclusion, equity, and just practice with and for Rhode Island youth, their families, and our communities. Strategies to monitor and establish accountabilities will be designed and implemented for each principle. All YHDP funded projects will be required to implement programs and interventions that incorporate these principles and to present their plans for continuous quality improvement (CQI)--including how youth have and will be part of program design, implementation, and CQI; this will be reflected in their performance review. What follows is a description of how our community will live into these commitments in each part of our system, from governance to entry to exit, in order to create the system young people deserve and in which they can and will thrive. The principles, practices, and considerations we'll weave into our practice include:

- Equity
- Positive youth development
- Trauma-informed and healing centered care
- Social integration
- Family engagement
- Housing first
- Youth choice
- Unsheltered youth
- Individualized, client driven support
- Coordinated entry

<b>Equity</b>	
<b>A commitment to:</b> consider and measure racial inequities and other disparities in the risks for, and experiences of youth and young adults experiencing homelessness	
<b>How we will live into our commitment to Equity</b>	<p>Required/Must Have</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The RICoC Equity Committee will analyze youth data and recommend policies and practices to remedy disparities which are based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, foster care experience, parenting status, experience with trafficking, etc.</li> <li>● Accountability measures will be identified to ensure this goes beyond data analysis and training and move toward ways to address disparities being baked into the funding/system evolution and program implementation</li> <li>● Agencies will need to monitor the practice of established policies to ensure consideration of the needs of the most marginalized populations are being proactively addressed in practice. (E.g. warm and welcoming places and staff, providing access to translators, gender neutral bathrooms.)</li> <li>● Ensure that access to services (physical locations and electronic resources) are accessible to everyone--offer closed captioning for virtual events/meetings; affirming identities and culture inclusive of race, sexual orientation, neurodiversity, gender identity/expression, disability, etc.; flexibility on timeline/schedules; when services are not accessible, providers are able to enact modifications that remove service barriers.</li> <li>● Ensure that the YHDP provider workforce has been trained on diversity so that they treat</li> </ul>

	<p>individuals with dignity and respect. Include training on how to provide both competent and culturally relevant care-across all vulnerable populations. Training will be led by youth leaders who are paid appropriately.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide opportunities to youth to offer program feedback and share their experiences, with strong protections for youth to ensure there is no backlash from the programs/staff. Also providing staff protections from the consequences of misinformation.</li> <li>● Providing direct service staff opportunities to report on and share their experiences, with protections from retaliation.</li> </ul> <p>Recommended/ Must Consider</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Advocacy on local, state, and federal level to abolish discriminatory legislation as well as putting in place legislation that protect marginalized populations and enable equitable practices.</li> <li>● Use of restorative and transformative justice practices within program/organization</li> <li>● Youth assessment and engagement tools include explicit considerations for those historically marginalized and/or impacted by system level disparities</li> <li>● Create a continuous improvement process that assesses implementation to continually enhance and evolve practices to enhance equity and dismantle the practices that result in disparities.</li> </ul>
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**Positive Youth Development (PYD)**

**A commitment to:** integrate best practices of PYD in the youth homelessness response (focus on relationships, strengths, youth as co-creators & leaders, inclusive; able to experiment, try and fail without life-altering consequences, harm reduction)

<p><b>How we will live into our commitment to PYD</b></p>	<p>Required/Must Have</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Clear expectations for YHDP providers that are connected to funding</li> <li>● Youth as partners in decision-making at every level and in every component of the system</li> <li>● Youth input and feedback used to make program improvements/changes</li> <li>● Community building included in the process and project design</li> <li>● Relationship focused approach</li> <li>● Accommodating a full range of needs/access beyond housing itself</li> <li>● Targeted Universalism</li> <li>● Use strengths-based models of care and eliminate punitive program practices that limit opportunities for youth to try and fail without life-altering consequences</li> <li>● Ensure youth have access to and understanding of a range of information and resources in order to have more knowledge on the topic, enabling them to provide feedback and contribute to decision on the given issue</li> <li>● Centering holistically on the needs of young people to set them up for success - full programmatic design, supportive services, technological services, life skills, mental health, etc.</li> <li>● Remove deficit-based (blamed based) language and thinking; be clear that homelessness is a failure of the system and not a failure/reflection of the individual</li> <li>● Being mindful of adultism - ensuring to create a space that at minimum is welcoming to youth, and as often as possible is youth-lead and youth-centered</li> </ul> <p>Recommended/ Must Consider</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Youth are valued and compensated as experts in their own lives and how systems affect them</li> <li>● Focus on dynamic youth mental health and wellbeing for youth success and thriving as well as how homelessness affects youth mental health</li> </ul>
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- Youth are offered and supported to engage as leaders in a variety of ways in the YHDP and other youth-specific initiatives, as well as all elements of the homeless system

### Trauma Informed Care (TIC)

**A commitment to:** integrate TIC into youth homelessness response (culturally grounded, healing as restoration of identity, focuses on wellbeing we want vs symptoms to suppress, strengths focused, harm reduction approach)

#### How we will live into our commitment to TIC

##### Required/Must Have

- Develop system-wide standards for TIC; review protocols and training received by case managers, system coordinators, program leads, etc.
- Peer support to discuss issues--show you're not alone, place to give voice to your experience and get support--is integrated in program design
- Abolitionist driven intervention that minimizes (or completely removes) punishment-based, systemically oppressive methods
  - Addressing shelter/program models that perpetuate punishment-based methods
  - Adding TIC training when training peer supports and other peer positions
- Training and technical assistance to planners and partners who interact with youth to include an understanding of trauma in their work to integrate knowledge of trauma and its effects into policies, procedures and practices
- Hold organizations accountable (Youth Action Board) to provide trauma-informed training, to implement trauma informed practices, and to sustain those practices.
- Universal screening for trauma history and strengths as part of coordinated entry and program intake
- YHDP projects required to show how they'll integrate TIC (assess and develop individualized plans, emphasize physical and emotional safety, promote personal control; build skills and coping mechanisms, etc.)
- YHDP agencies will have referral process to trauma specific treatments available and will demonstrate practicing TIC principles--Safety, Trust, Choice, Collaboration & Empowerment
- TIC principles will be integrated in trainings and project monitoring
- Providing strong support system--people who youth can go to for healing and restoration
- Supervision, support and training for youth workers (case managers, etc.) to ensure they are working in and providing trauma informed environments
- Youth have voice and agency in determining the appropriateness of family reunification and/or reconciliation
- Provide opportunities to youth to offer program feedback and share their experiences, with strong protections for youth to ensure there is no backlash from the programs/staff. Also providing staff protections from the consequences of misinformation.
- Providing direct service staff opportunities to report on and share their experiences, with protections from retaliation.

##### Recommended/ Must Consider

- Removing any barrier that stands between access to good trauma-informed health care and diagnosis.
- Use of restorative and transformative justice practices within program/organization

### Family Engagement

**A commitment to:** strategies to strengthen, stabilize, or reunify families.

<p><b>How we will live into our commitment to Family Engagement</b></p>	<p>Required/Must Have</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Use broad definition and understanding of family guided by youth choice</li> <li>● Safety and youth choice in reconciliation and/or reunification with family of origin</li> <li>● Locate shelters/housing in diverse locations that allow youth to maintain ties to social supports and avoid school disruption</li> <li>● YHDP projects required to support reconnection with family, as defined by youth (calls, visits, mediation, locating family, etc.); invite youth to establish family engagement goals as part of individual plans; training on how to establish boundaries with family and friends</li> <li>● Integrate exploration of natural supports and use of family engagement in every aspect of system; begin with natural support exploration in CES/diversion appointments; consistent outreach to viable permanent connections</li> <li>● Short term crisis housing models that provide opportunities for youth/families to have a break and create plans for healing/repair; Include within the continuum using host home model as part of the continuum (“Cool Beds”)</li> <li>● Ensure options for youth with no or minimal family (however they define it) support; ensure connections to family across state lines</li> <li>● Build social network and community support into design of all programs</li> </ul> <p>Recommended/ Must Consider</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Use two/multi-generation models that work to improve economic security, improved relationships, connections to employment and education pathways (approach to services that consider the needs of the entire family for example a parenting youth and their child having wraparound supports)</li> <li>● Build robust connections to family mediation and reconciliation support services to reduce family conflict</li> </ul>
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**Housing First**

**A commitment to:** strategies to offer youth immediate access to safe, secure and stable housing without preconditions (without proving that they’re “ready” for housing).

<p><b>How we will live into our commitment to Housing First</b></p>	<p>Required/Must Have</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Require all YHDP housing programs commit and adhere to Housing First principles including low or no barrier access to safe and stable housing</li> <li>● Eliminate barriers to housing; and leave room for error and mistakes without life altering consequences</li> <li>● Information and support will be given to landlords, host homes and community partners regarding Housing First principles</li> <li>● Training to and oversight of participating agencies on Housing First principles, expectations and requirements</li> <li>● Providers incorporate strategies to solicit and consider youth feedback to ensure lived experiences with providers align with commitment to Housing First principles</li> <li>● Eliminate ability of programs to “cherry pick” who gets housing</li> <li>● Expand and enhance housing navigation and case management (particularly by peers and those with lived experience of homelessness) services to allow youth to access housing quickly by eliminating barriers to housing (ID, paperwork, etc.)</li> <li>● Establish a landlord and tenant program for youth focusing on relationship building, maintaining housing, and restorative practices/responses to housing agreement infractions.</li> <li>● Ensuring access to housing for post-secondary students who have no other options for school breaks (winter, summer, etc.)</li> </ul> <p>Recommended/ Must Consider</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Help people get more resources to get housing and keep housing--case workers, more housing options</li> <li>● Provide access to ongoing support and services for as long as needed (diversion &amp; aftercare wraparound services) to establish stability, recover from trauma, build life skills, connect to education and employment, establish healthy connections, and create strong linkages with community resources</li> <li>● Explore opportunities to ensure that for youth who need housing, the system identifies appropriate housing first and works out how it's paid for/program model - while our system adopts housing first in policy, we believe that in reality/implementation, coordinated entry and the various programs serving youth and their unique eligibilities end up acting as barriers to rapid access to housing</li> </ul>
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**Unsheltered Homelessness**

**A commitment to:** address and decrease unsheltered youth homelessness

<p><b>How we will live into our commitment to address Unsheltered Homelessness</b></p>	<p>Required/Must Have</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Street, virtual, and place-based outreach focused on engaging unhoused youth and young adults</li> <li>● Drop-in spaces that offer lockers, showers, laundry facilities, food/kitchen, computer access, and opportunities for social engagement, social worker or access to external services</li> <li>● Youth outreach workers co-locate with other youth service organizations to reach youth not engaged with outreach or housing providers</li> <li>● Providing youth with safety planning support exploring temporary housing options</li> <li>● Provide peer and case management support to youth and young adults, particularly those who do not identify family and other social supports</li> <li>● Expand identification and support within the schools and after school setting</li> <li>● Create a contact person within each diversion department to liaison with non-profits and other youth-lead organizations.</li> </ul> <p>Recommended/ Must Consider</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide diversion programs through state agencies that work with youth (DCYF, DOC)</li> </ul>
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**Youth Choice**

**A commitment to:** youth having choices about which providers and interventions they'll engage with; youth having options and self-determination regarding the kind of housing youth need and the extent and nature of supports and services they access; harm reduction approach

<p><b>How we will live into our commitment to Youth Choice</b></p>	<p>Required/Must Have</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Rated service experiences will be reviewed by YAB, YHDP Steering Committee, YHDP Project Review Committee; those service providers with multiple or notably bad reviews will be addressed and held to some standard of accountability, up to and including loss of funding for unresolved issues</li> <li>● Programs specify the youth they're serving--race, LGBTQ+ youth, parenting youth, young people with disabilities, etc. and be sure that their safety is prioritized and that they're housed and served in a space that is affirming and comfortable; all spaces should be affirming and create safety for the most marginalized/oppressed (universal design)</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Learn from kinship care/elder care (allowing youth to identify a family member, friend, or mentor to live with) and to provide this person some financial assistance to give them the resources they need to provide housing/board.</li> <li>● Develop a variety of flexible housing options, including dorm-like transitional housing with services on site that allows time to build skills and finances before they move into permanent housing; and provides access to those services without requiring participation in the housing program.</li> <li>● YHDP projects will be required to incorporate youth choice as a service policy and practice that will allow youth to exercise choice in all the following--goals and priorities, housing location and type, who they live with, supportive services and programs they access; projects will be encouraged to incorporate training in evidence-based practices that have a focus on youth choice such as Motivational Interviewing, Stages of Change and Healing Centered Engagement YHDP agencies required to commit to youth having the power/choice in the development and implementation of their services</li> <li>● Employment and education services developed based on personal interest and motivations; ongoing support services will include connections to agencies and individuals that honor and reflect the identities of youth and young adults</li> <li>● Peer navigators that make connections to resources/supports</li> </ul> <p>Recommended/ Must Consider</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Develop youth resource listing/electronic hum that young people can add to and rate their experiences with service providers</li> </ul>
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**Individualized, Client-Driven Support**

**A commitment to:** flexibility to accommodate unique needs of each person and respond to different needs for service type, intensity, and length of support.

<p><b>How we will live into our commitment to Individualized and Client-Driven Support</b></p>	<p>Required/Must Have</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● CES screening tools, referral processes and policies will serve to ensure that individual needs are identified and addressed</li> <li>● YHDP agencies commit to developing individualized and client-driven supports based on the unique identities and cultures of youth and young adults, built upon the strengths, competencies and desires of each individual served; provide regular training and support to organizations to establish and maintain individualized and client-driven supports</li> <li>● Client-driven processes defined and monitored for each program, and included in youth feedback processes</li> <li>● Case management approach that integrates lived experience to build trust, relationships, and shared experience/peer support</li> <li>● Culturally competent and linguistically diverse staff and peers to meet clients where they are and who understand culture and lived experience</li> <li>● CES and individual intervention/goal-setting tools made for youth, reviewed by youth, and used by youth</li> <li>● Co-locate support services in affirming, culturally relevant, community-based spaces</li> <li>● Evaluation process for clients to provide feedback without retaliation (and for case managers to provide feedback); a client and case manager relationship that doesn't click is OK--we need enough providers to be able to find a better fit for someone</li> </ul> <p>Recommended/ Must Consider</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Dedicated resource bank of committed, quality, and trained providers that remains at the ready to meet unique and diverse needs of clients</li> <li>● Develop process to match culturally competent &amp; diverse case managers with clients</li> <li>● Provide supports for practice specific to both core and other cities, as well as those</li> </ul>
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	intended to be use with/for specific populations vs for general population
<b>Social and Community Integration</b>	
<b>A commitment to:</b> offer meaningful opportunities for participation in community activities and the creation and/or strengthening of social supports	
<b>How we will live into our commitment to Social and Community Integration</b>	<p>Required/Must Have</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Housing located within community and close physical proximity to services/resources</li> <li>● Assess and include social and community inclusion in individual plans</li> <li>● Dedicated all-inclusive youth led and mentor supported spaces for social connecting inside and outside of the core cities (particularly making sure non-core city youth are connected)</li> <li>● Providers demonstrate youth leadership within programs to determine rules, procedures for intake and engagement, and program components</li> <li>● Establish intra- and inter-agency opportunities to attend events and activities, become oriented to community-based resources, and otherwise support social integration; develop a system-wide calendar of such supported engagement events; young adults hired as curators of these experiences, including organizing events, identifying community collaborators, promoting opportunities, etc.</li> <li>● Services and activities that support access to natural supports; engagement in meaningful activities through connection to community, education and employment; advocacy and system change to address inequities in access, inclusion and belonging, particularly for those holding marginalized identities</li> <li>● Include mentoring and peer-based interventions; use tech and social media to connect youth to supports and networks combined with harm-reduction training or coaching in use of technology</li> <li>● Peer navigators are paid living wages to make connections to affirming, culturally relevant community activities</li> <li>● Providers outline strategies to connect youth to their identified supports (family, friends, teachers, mentors, and others) in Rhode Island or elsewhere</li> <li>● YHDP providers adapt/adopt policies and practices to include youth and young adults as partners in decision-making--staff, volunteers, committee and board members.</li> <li>● Transportation assistance (Lyft/Uber/ridesharing, shuttles, RIPTA)</li> <li>● Require all YHDP projects to collect, report and address health and wellbeing measures</li> </ul> <p>Recommended/ Must Consider</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Advance policy that helps increase social inclusion (public transit, tenant rights, right to shelter, etc.)</li> <li>● Develop a youth resource listing that young people can add to and rate their experiences with</li> <li>● Advocate for youth participation requirements and/or policies in local city/town boards, committees, etc. to empower youth and provide decision-making authorities</li> </ul>
<b>Coordinated Entry System (CES)</b>	
<b>A commitment to:</b> ensuring the coordinated entry process (how youth get connected to resources when they request housing assistance) incorporates youth needs and is youth appropriate.	
<b>How we will live into our commitment</b>	<p>Required/Must Have</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● CES and individual intervention/goal-setting tools made for/by youth, reviewed by youth, and used by youth</li> </ul>



**to Youth-Centric Coordinated Entry**

- Review & update CES policies and procedures and guidelines; the YAB and YHDP Steering Committee will review the effectiveness of CES quarterly
  - Create youth specific coordinated entry tools and processes in collaboration with youth
  - Make sure schools and other youth serving agencies understand and can refer youth to an access point
  - Train all case managers/direct care staff in conducting screening for under age 18 and 18-24 year olds as well as DV situations and safety planning
  - Keep a youth only by-name list, updated weekly, reviewed in case conferencing regularly
  - Progressive intake and screening process that goes at youth person’s pace; develop a screening tool that youth can self-administer
  - Cast a wider net of folks who are door to CES--no wrong door approach. Create coordinated entry protocols and trainings to meet unique needs of different populations; ensure services delivery is provided in safe space with refinements based on youth feedback
  - Ensure that schools and other youth serving agencies understand the CES process and can refer youth to an access point (CES training at scale)
  - Develop a way to prioritize youth under the age of 18 to crisis or permanent housing as appropriate
  - Develop and deliver trainings on youth-specific coordinated entry, diversion, navigation and housing
  - Develop additional strategies for linking youth to community activities, peer mentoring and navigation, volunteer opportunities, creative endeavors, education and workforce pathways, etc.
  - Connection to prevention/diversion/aftercare outside the homeless services system, so services received to prevent homelessness or prevent a return to homelessness
  - Put practices/steps in place so that staff conduct follow-up to ensure that individuals get the services needed. (Closed loop referral system)
  - Staff are trained in culturally appropriate, TIC practices.
- Recommended/ Must Consider
- Ensure that CES system is minor-friendly and is able to appropriately direct them to affirming services.
  - Hire peer navigators as CES staff and pay living wages

**Racial Equity & Justice Core Principles**

Youth homelessness exists today largely due to America’s long history of structural racism and systemic inequities. In order to end youth homelessness, we will work to ensure our systems work for all youth. Partner organizations serving on the YHDP Steering Committee are committed to centering the importance of racial equity and justice in all of our work to end youth homelessness. We see equity as providing opportunities and resources based on need, realizing not everyone starts in the same place. Justice takes this concept a step further by removing the barriers that impede equal rights and self-determination; it seeks to overturn oppression at its roots. The YHDP Steering Committee, Youth Action Board, and Unaccompanied Youth Committee will strengthen our knowledge, skills, attitudes and personal competency to address inequity and injustice, internally and in our external efforts through continual practice of these core principles.

**Recognize and Center Intersectionality:**

Intersectionality looks at the interaction of multiple social identities and how those identities separately and together are subjected to oppression and discrimination.

- We challenge all of our partner organizations to be consistently intersectional in all of the work we do.
- We unapologetically center the voices and experiences of LGBTQ youth and youth of color, while upholding that all of us have many identities.

**Name and Challenge White Supremacy:**

- We name white supremacy as any condition where whites overwhelmingly control power and material resources.
- We will name and challenge conscious and unconscious ideas of white superiority, entitlement, and white dominance.

**Engage in Principled Struggle:**

Learning and growing are the results of struggle. Struggle causes change and liberation. As an initiative we strive to engage in Principled Struggle (attributed to NTanya Lee) and work to foster and cultivate spaces for members, coalitions, and communities to move through conflict in a way that makes us better.

To do this, we each commit to:

1. Being honest and direct while maintaining compassion.
2. Taking responsibility for our own feelings and actions.
3. Seeking deeper understanding. (We ask and read first).
4. Considering social positions and how they inform response to conflict.

**Practice Targeted Universalism:**

From John A. Powell “A targeted universal strategy is one that is inclusive of the needs of both the dominant and the marginal groups, but pays particular attention to the situation of the marginal group. Targeted universalism rejects a blanket universal which is likely to be indifferent to the reality that different groups are situated differently relative to the institutions and resources of society. It also rejects the claim of formal equality that would treat all people the same as a way of denying difference.”

- We commit to using targeted strategies to reach universal goals, mindful that blanket goals may be indifferent to the reality that groups are situated differently relative to the institutions and resources of society.
- We commit to evaluating the outcomes of our efforts for all populations and not just the output.

**Generate Transformative Visions Towards Liberation:**

- As a transformative initiative, we seek out those campaigns and activities that have the greatest potential to improve the lives of young people experiencing homelessness.
- We will reimagine opportunities to engage and win future fights that move us towards our long-term vision.

We commit to transforming power dynamics and systems. We want youth at the front lines of

marginalization to have full decision-making power when re-shaping systems to work better for them.

**Create a Culture of Accountability:**

Accountability refers to creating processes and systems that are designed to help individuals and groups be held responsible for their decisions and actions and whether the work being done reflects and embodies racial equity and justice principles.

- The Youth Action Board, YHDP Steering Committee, and Unaccompanied Youth Committee members understand that accountability is a cornerstone of racial equity work and are committed to the practice of white accountability in particular.
- We pledge to continually evaluate and analyze our work against the following questions:
  - How is the issue being defined? Who is defining it?
  - Who is this work going to benefit if it succeeds? Who will benefit if the work does not succeed?
  - How are assignments distributed among the stakeholders? How will a group know if its plan has accounted for risks and unintended consequences for different racial and ethnic groups?
  - What happens if people pull out before the goals are met?
  - Who anointed the people and groups being relied on for the answers to these questions?
  - Are there opportunities to diversify respondents to these questions?

## **Current TH-RRH Project Descriptions for reference**

**Applicant:** Foster Forward

**Project:** Foster Forward-YHDP-YWH TH-RRH

**Project description:**

This proposal would increase the number of RRH slots available and establish a temporary housing (TH) aspect to the work. Youth will be referred through CES, followed by direct outreach from Foster Forward. Participants will be provided information about the TH and RRH options — ensuring youth understand program parameters, what they can expect in terms of support, and what is expected of them. TH-participants will have a private room in an apartment that we own or lease. Locations will be near public transportation and likely in Pawtucket, Providence, or East Providence. Clients will have privacy and be able to keep their belongings safe with a locked door; bathroom, kitchen, and living room space will be shared. RRH participants will choose where in the state they want to live. Case managers will assist with identifying housing preferences, completing rental applications, apartment viewing, landlord negotiations, reviewing lease terms, ensuring habitability, and developing an Individualized Service Plan (ISP). The ISP creates a roadmap for the youth, case manager, Peer Support Specialist, and community partners to connect YYA to supportive services. Case managers meet with participants monthly for up to 24 months wherever the young person feels comfortable and safe. Core outcomes include youth: 100% moving to temporary and/or permanent housing within 30 days; 63% will increase their income; and 95% will maintain stable housing upon exit. Leadership staff serve as members on the UYC, HMIS and CES steering committees. We are a member agency of the RCoC, RI Coalition to End Homelessness, the HOMES RI Campaign, and the RI Coalition for Children and Families. We engage youth leaders with lived experience with foster care, juvenile/criminal justice, and/or homelessness to participate in advocacy activities. We partner with the Departments of Labor and Training, Children, Youth and Families, and Human Services, the RI Coalition to End Homelessness, Family Service of RI, Youth Pride Inc.

**Applicant:** Haus of Codec

**Project:** TH-RRH

**Project description:** Haus of Codec empowers youth to choose the kind of housing necessary for their support and services, is committed to addressing and decreasing unsheltered youth in the community and will accomplish this through place-based outreach initiatives involving community partnerships. HOC will work with partners to provide housing resources to their demographic of youth participants, many of whom identify on the LGBTQIA+ spectrum, BIPOC, and are involved in the juvenile justice system. In addition, HOC is committed to giving youth choices about providers and interventions with whom they engage. HOC currently operates a 6 transitional housing (TH) facility with 2 crisis beds. HOC currently has two facilities on the same campus that will provide a total of 19 TH units (10 SROs and 8 0 Bedroom Apartments) in individual, semi-private spaces with shared living spaces, kitchens, and bathrooms and 1 bedroom apartment. HOC will have 8 units designated for rapid rehousing that HOC will partner with Foster Forward to Manage which will also have shared baths, kitchens, and common areas. All of which are centralized on one campus located on Dexter Park on the border of the West End/South Side of Prov, RI providing access to other service providers and RIPTA bus lines. Residents

who reside in our TH units will be required to meet with CM bi-weekly as a group and individually to assess needs and determine goals that are in line with HUD requirements. Youth who reside in our rapid rehousing units will only be required to meet with CM once per month or more as needed. We will also employ one person to provide housing outreach at two core locations in Prov, AS220 Youth, and YPI one day a week while staffing our drop-in center 3 days a week. These are youth-developed agreements for behavior and respect for one another, themselves, and the space in which they reside. Weekly youth provide input and feedback to make improvements and changes to individualize their progress through the support of CMs. HOC engages in monthly art marketplaces providing residents with a way to engage with queer, BIPOC, activist, and artists communities encouraging the growth and development of relationships that focus on their workforce development, soft skills, and sense of community. HOC pays its residents a stipend to participate in our markets. 1 HOC leadership staff and 1 HOC support volunteer staff will also sit on this committee. As HOC residents move from TH to rapid rehousing, they will be given opportunities to take leadership role in day-to-day operations and earn \$15/h to work on various projects on campus and in the community. Youth in our programs will have the following outcomes: 100% will be meaningfully employed, 100% of our youth will find more permanent housing options and 100% of our youth will be an active member of their communities.

**Applicant:** Sojourner House

**Project:** Young Adult Domestic Violence Crisis Housing/Rapid Re Housing Project

The Young Adult Domestic Violence Crisis Housing / RRH Project will provide crisis housing, tenant-based rental assistance, and supportive services to young adults aged 18-25 fleeing abuse. The project will assist two sub-groups: pregnant/parenting youth, and those who identify as LGBTQ+. According to the Centers for Disease Control, most female (69%) and male (53%) victims of rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner had their first experience with intimate partner violence before age 25. The Department of Justice reports that girls and women 16-24 experience the highest rate of intimate partner violence, almost triple the national average. LoveisRespect, a national organization dedicated to promoting healthy relationships and educating youth about abuse, has collected data indicating violent relationships in adolescence put victims at higher risk for substance abuse, eating disorders, risky sexual behavior, and further domestic violence. Furthermore, being physically or sexually abused makes teen girls 6 times more likely to become pregnant and twice as likely to get an STD. Young adult living on the streets or couch surfing are more vulnerable to abuse. National research suggests that pregnant/parenting and LGBTQ+ young adults are at greater risk of experiencing homelessness than their non-pregnant and non-LGBTQ+ young adult peers. Because we offer programming specifically dedicated to both populations, we are positioned to successfully launch and implement this project. In partnership with the RI Department of Health, we offer the Healthy Families Program to engage pregnant and parenting young adults experiencing abuse from a partner or family member. We are the only domestic violence agency in the state with programming specifically dedicated to LGBTQ+ victims, and we work closely with Youth Pride Inc. and Honoring Youth Power and Experience (HYPE) to provide support, shelter, and housing to LGBTQ+ victims ages 18 and above regardless of gender, gender identity, sex assigned at birth, and sexual orientation. We are also the only domestic violence agency in the state with shelter for male-identified victims and one for victims of

human trafficking. We propose to provide 3 units of crisis housing and 12 units of rapid rehousing for youth. Each crisis housing unit has 2 bedrooms to house and stabilize 6 clients at full capacity (a higher number for clients with children). We expect to provide services to six clients in two six-month periods for a total of 12 clients. All clients will be referred through the Coordinated Entry list. Project goals include: 1) 90% of youth move from crisis housing to permanent housing; 2) 85% will be placed in job training or educational programs; 3) 100% will receive housing supports, and health services, including mental health counseling, financial literacy, and resources to increase their income. The program will be funded with CoC and match monies.

**Applicant:** Sojourner House

**Project:** Sojourner House TH-RRH

**Project description:** Sojourner House will provide 6 new units (beds) of Transitional Housing (configuration based on availability) and 9 new units (apartments/shared units) of Rapid Rehousing (five 1-bedroom and four 2-bedroom apartments) for youth and young adults who are fleeing/attempting to flee abuse (Category 4). Ideally, housing units will be located near each other to readily offer on-site case management and create a community among the participants. However, buildings/units are not yet secured, and we will need to adapt to the housing stock available at the time of program launch. Transitional housing units will be leased, and rental assistance will be provided to support housing costs for rapid rehousing units. A new full-time Case Manager position will be created to provide comprehensive case management, advocacy, and supportive services to participants. The intensity of services will be adjusted to reflect needs of the participants throughout their involvement with the program. Ideally, participants will progressively engage in managing their responsibilities, including paying their own rent. Core intended outcomes include: permanent housing, increased income through benefits and/or employment, and socio-emotional wellbeing. These outcomes are aligned primarily with Goal 2.1: Provide immediate access to youth specific crisis housing; Goal 2.2: Provide coordinated outreach, navigation, case management + housing; and Goal 2.3: Promote access to and support engagement with cross-sector supports that promote sufficiency and housing stability. Participants in the program can also attend our Housing Clinics, provided in both English and Spanish, to learn about various permanent housing opportunities and tenant rights. Clinics are currently offered weekly in Woonsocket and Providence, and once a month in Central Falls & West Warwick. Sojourner House has also been approved for a YHDP Navigation and Diversion program, through which a full-time Youth Navigator will be hired to connect clients with a range of services and resources so that they can avoid entering the homeless system or exit it quickly to safe housing. The Navigator will work out of all of our locations (offices in Providence and Woonsocket, at Women & Infants Hospital where we screen expectant and new mothers for intimate partner violence, and other community-based locations). The Youth Navigator will help young people develop creative solutions to the obstacles they face. Sojourner House works closely with a wide variety of other community organizations to share resources and expertise. Our youth-related collaborations ensure many options are available for clients and include, but are not limited to, Hope of Hope's HYPE program, Youth Pride, Haus of Codec, and Family Community Collaborative Partnerships. With each of these organizations, we refer clients to each other, help to brainstorm creative solutions to particular situations, and provide training to each other in our areas of expertise.

## Prioritization for TH-RRH

Priority	Prioritization Factor
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Youth in violent or potentially violent situations--includes potentially life-threatening situations, violence includes physical, sexual and psychological abuse; racism, homophobia, xenophobia and other forms/systems of oppression are violence.</li> <li>● LGBTQ+, BIPOC, Immigrant/Refugee, minor (under age 18); Intersectional/multiple prioritized identities.</li> <li>● Youth living outside</li> <li>● Youth with behavioral and/or mental health challenges or conditions (includes YYA actively using substances who request harm reduction, are overdose risk, etc.)</li> </ul>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Youth with disabilities</li> <li>● Youth with other chronic health conditions</li> <li>● Pregnant or parenting youth</li> </ul>
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Youth with foster care experience</li> <li>● Youth new to being houseless</li> </ul>
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Youth who have experienced incarceration and/or have interacted with any element of the criminal/carceral system (courts, etc.)</li> <li>● Young adults just entering adult system (ages 18-19)</li> </ul>
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Veterans</li> </ul>

### Guidelines for Transitional Housing (TH)

Transitional housing programs are generally expected to place individuals and families into permanent housing within 12 months. Transitional Housing is intended as a best practice to be used as bridge housing (i.e., temporary housing when shelter is not available, or participant is preparing to enroll in RRH or another PH program) that should not exceed 3 months (in particular for the TH/RRH programs).

A tenant in transitional housing will have a signed lease, sublease or occupancy agreement in place with the CoC/YHDP provider agency of at least 1 month that is renewable for up to 24 months. Program participants should receive only the assistance they need to exit homelessness safely and stably; therefore, not all program participants should automatically receive 24 months of assistance. No minimum time limit may be required by the program for enrollment in TH portion of the project; a client may choose the RRH program at any time.

All participants receiving transitional housing assistance will be expected to contribute to rental payments provided that they have income with which to make payments. Participants with zero income will be served regardless of their inability to pay rent. Rent charges will be calculated at 30% of the client's income. Rent charges will be calculated consistent with 24 CFR 578.77

As we build Transitional Housing back into the RICOC's portfolio, it's important to revisit how COC regulations affect eligibility for COC resources as it relates to Transitional Housing. Generally, persons who reside in transitional housing for homeless persons are considered homeless under paragraph 1 of the definition of homeless in section 578.3 of the [CoC Program interim rule](#). However, under most circumstances, persons residing in transitional housing (TH) are **not** considered chronically homeless and therefore, *do not* maintain their chronically homeless status for purposes of eligibility into other CoC Program funded projects, ***even if they were determined chronically homeless prior to entry into TH***. This is because to be considered chronically homeless, a household must meet the criteria outlined in the [Final Rule on Defining "Chronically Homeless,"](#) which does not include transitional housing as an eligible location. Further, in calculating the length of time homeless for the purposes of determining if a household is chronically homeless, time spent in transitional housing that is for seven nights or more would count as a **break** in homelessness as only time spent residing in a place not meant for human habitation, emergency shelter, or safe haven can be counted.

### **Guidelines for Rapid Rehousing (RRH)**

All participants receiving rapid rehousing assistance will be expected to contribute to rental payments provided that they have income with which to make payments. Participants with zero income will be served regardless of their inability to pay rent. Rent charges will be calculated consistent with 24 CFR 578.77. Rent will not exceed the maximum changes indicated in the regulations. Please see Rapid Rehousing Written standards below for specific rent payment requirements in the RICoC rapid rehousing program.

COC RRH households receiving rental assistance subsidies must contribute a minimum of 30% of their monthly adjusted income towards their monthly rent. This tenant rent contribution may be adjusted at any time based on changes to household income. There is no minimum rent requirement and tenant rent contribution may be zero, for households with no income. Income must be calculated in accordance with 24 CFR 5.609 and 24 CFR 5.611(a)

CoC/YHDP Recipients should not have a policy in place to provide all program participants with 12 months of rental assistance in the RRH portion of the project, but instead should determine the least amount necessary to help the program participant safely and stably exit homelessness, which will vary by person. The RICoC call this "Progressive Engagement" and encourages each CoC/YHDP project to develop its own progressive engagement policy and procedure based on the subpopulation the program is serving.



For CoC RRH, Participants may receive rental assistance of no more than the following percentages of the rent amount for each of the indicated time frames (security deposits are excluded from these limits):

- Months 1-6: rental assistance provided may be up to 100% of the rent amount
- Months 7-9: rental assistance provided may be up to 80% of the rent amount
- Months 10-12: rental assistance provided may be up to 60% of the rent amount
- Months 13-24: rental assistance provided may be up to 40% of the rent amount

Each provider may extend these assistance limits for up to 20% of those households approved to serve through RRH by contract with either HUD or the State of RI. All exemptions must be clearly indicated in the participant's files. The option of extending assistance limits for up to 20% of households does not change the minimum number of households a provider is contracted to serve based on their funding contract

If a provider needs to extend assistance limits for more than 20% of participants, it must place documentation to support the extension of assistance above the limit in the participant's file. Extending assistance limits for households on an RRH program does not change the minimum number of households a provider is contracted to serve based on their funding contract. Providers should carefully consider the budget effects of extending assistance with each household. Rental Assistance payments cannot extend beyond 24 months during a household's enrollment in an RRH program, unless the project is a YHDP project with a HUD approved waiver to extend RRH for up to 36 months.

Extending length of time in RRH to 36 months Rental assistance can be provided up to 36 months to a household for the RRH portion of the TH-RRH. The recipient may provide up to 36 months of rapid rehousing rental assistance to a program participant if the recipient demonstrates (1) the method it will use to determine which youth need rental assistance beyond 24 months and (2) the services and resources that will be offered to ensure youth are able to sustain their housing at the end of the 36 months of assistance. The total amount of time a participant can receive rental assistance in the approved project cannot exceed 36 months.

#### **Guidelines for Termination and Grievance Procedures**

-Still under consideration and planning by the community.

#### **Guidelines for Service Provision and Case Management**

The CoC/YHDP are re-investing in a transitional housing model with these TH-RRH programs. That is, in part, because the CoC believes that for some populations experiencing homelessness, the available of strong and robust services in a location convenient to the participant may be a benefit some clients choose. Therefore, in the transitional housing component of a TH-RRH project, supportive services must be made available to residents throughout the duration of their residence in the project. All TH-RRH programs are required to be operated in accordance with the CoC's Housing First Principles; therefore, while robust services are required to be available in the TH project, it is the client's choice how they wish to engage with those services that are available, and no services requirements may be required for ongoing program eligibility. The CoC see a benefit in adding TH-RRH projects that those services can be

based out of a location convenient to the project.

TH-RRH providers will conduct an annual assessment of the service needs of all program participants and adjust services as necessary. Whenever possible that annual assessment should be conducted in the HMIS or comparable database for survivors of violence.

When necessary to assist participants to obtain and maintain housing, supportive services should be offered to clients regularly and routinely.

**Performance Standards and Continuous Quality Improvement**

-Still under consideration and planning by the community.