



Human Services Housing Programs

Contact:

The Livery Building
314 10th Street
Honesdale, PA 18431

Monday – Friday from 8 AM to 4 PM

Housing@waynecountypa.gov

570-253-6758

Housing Staff:

- Heather Miszler, Housing Administrative Officer II
- Augustine DeJesus, Administrative Assistant I
- Stacey Mizwinski, Housing Caseworker II
- Kerry Willcox, Housing Caseworker II

General Inquiries:

Call 570-253-6758 and request a housing caseworker with time-sensitive situations or email housing@waynecountypa.gov for general inquiries.

Mission Statement:

Reduce homelessness and assist households with regaining housing independence.

Overview:

Housing is dependent upon awarded grants, which the Housing Administrator must request. Grants are a source of funding that does not require repayment.

The funds utilized, serve our community, provide case management services, and pay for the costs of Housing operations, including:

- Financial, rental, utility, and hotel assistance.
- Caseworker salaries and benefits to provide housing stability services.
- Administrative salaries, office supplies, benefits, building maintenance, etc.

Agency Funding:

If you come across a household in need of a hotel stay, rental assistance, utility assistance, security deposit, etc., please feel free to reach out to Housing for eligibility and availability prior to exploring other avenues.

Our grants are specific to housing needs, where other agency funds could pay for other needs, the county may not have funding for.

Eligibility:

Our housing programs require a household to demonstrate homelessness, or prove a risk of homelessness occurring, and a financial instability, in addition to the program specific Area Median Income (AMI) thresholds established by HUD each year.

In order to prove eligibility, we must reference the chart below to confirm what income-limit category the household is considered. Based on the program needed, eligibility varies. These figures below are updated every October by HUD (Housing and Urban Development).

HH Size	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
30% - Extremely Low	16,350	18,700	23,030	27,750	32,470	37,190	41,910	46,630
50% - Very Low	27,300	31,200	35,100	38,950	42,100	45,200	48,300	51,450
80% - Low	43,650	49,850	56,100	62,300	67,300	72,300	77,300	82,250

Homeless vs. HUD's Definition of Homelessness:

Often, we must say “the household isn’t considered homeless,” to which disagreement occurs. Housing recognizes someone is considered “homeless” when they have nowhere to go, or do not have a permanent housing option. However, HUD requires us to confirm homelessness based on where the household was the night prior.

Eligibility Criteria per HUD's Requirements (Housing and Urban Development)

Category	Eligibility Criteria	Eligible Programs
1: Literally Homeless	Household who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate night-time residence, meaning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has a primary night-time residence that is a public or private place not meant for human habitation; • Is living in a publicly or privately-operated sheltered designated to provide temporary living arrangements (including congregate shelters, transitional housing, and hotels paid for by charitable organizations or federal/state/local government programs); • Is exiting an institution where the household has resided for 90 days or less and who resided in an emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation immediately before entering that institution. 	Emergency Shelter, Transitional Housing, Rapid Rehousing
2: Imminent Risk of Homelessness	Household who will imminently lose their primary night-time residence, provided that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residence will be lost within 14 days; • No subsequent residence has been identified; and • The household lacks the resources or support networks needed to obtain permanent housing. 	Homelessness Prevention
4: Fleeing/Attempting to Flee DV	Any individual or family who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is fleeing, or is attempting to flee Domestic Violence; • Has no other residence; and • Lacks the resources or support networks to obtain permanent housing. 	Homelessness Prevention, Emergency Shelter, Transitional Housing, Rapid Rehousing
At Risk of Homelessness	Any individual or family who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has an annual income below 30% of AMI for Wayne County; • Does not have sufficient resources or support networks, e.g., family, friends, faith-based or other social networks, immediately available to prevent them from moving to an emergency shelter or another place. • Meets one of the following conditions: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Has moved because of economic reasons two or more times during the 60 days immediately preceding the application for HP assistance. 2) Is living in the home of another because of economic hardship; 3) Has been notified in writing that their right to occupy their current housing or living situation will be terminated within 21 days after the date of application for assistance; 4) Lives in a hotel and the cost is not paid by charitable organizations or by Federal, State, or local government programs 5) Is exiting a publicly funded institution, or system of care (such as a health-care facility, a mental health facility, foster care or other youth facility, or correction program or institution); 	Homelessness Prevention

Available Housing Programs:

Mortgage Assistance – Emergency assistance up to two months is provided to eligible homeowners who are facing a hardship, behind on their mortgage, and household income does not exceed 80% AMI.

Recovery Housing – Funding available through D&A/Housing for recovering addicts from stimulant or opioid use that need housing assistance in order to maintain their sobriety. No AMI requirement.

- Up to 3 months of recovery housing, up to 1 month of hotel assistance, and up to 6 months of rental assistance.

Rental Assistance - For homeless individuals/families in need of assistance with moving into a new place and short-term rental assistance while they work towards sustaining on their own. i.e. obtaining income, housing voucher or financial benefits. Household income cannot exceed 30 to 50% AMI, depending on the program being utilized. COVID Rental Assistance - Up to twelve months may be provided to eligible renters who are facing a hardship during the pandemic and household income does not exceed 50% AMI.

Shelter Assistance – For homeless individuals/families with no place to go and in need of shelter. Housing may be able to offer short-term hotel assistance and emergency food assistance. Household income cannot exceed 30 to 50% AMI, depending on the program being utilized.

- To be considered for a short-term hotel stay, the household must have ties to Wayne County. If the household does not have ties, shelter referrals are provided to neighboring counties. If transport is needed, Housing will coordinate with Wayne County Transportation to arrange a ride.

Utility Assistance – Emergency COVID assistance up to twelve months may be provided to eligible renters who are facing a hardship and household income does not exceed 50% AMI.

Transitional Housing:

Transitional Age Youth (TAY) Transitional Housing

- Two apartments available for youth ages 18 through 24.
- Eligibility: Youth who are experiencing a housing crisis and/or who have experienced barriers in their lives which would prevent them from successful independent living.
- When a youth is eligible, Housing can partner with Children and Youth (CYS) through their Independent Living (IL) program and Wayne County Behavioral Health (BH), to ensure the best outcome for our youth population. Other referrals are provided, as appropriate.

Continuum of Care (CoC) Transitional Housing

- An apartment is available for an individual or small family who are homeless and need assistance regaining sustainability successfully with case management support and connection to other agencies.

Supportive Case Management Services:

Supportive Services are offered through the Housing Caseworkers for anyone who reaches out for our help. We offer:

- Benefits Counseling – SNAP, TANF, Medical Assistance, etc.
- PREP Curriculum – (Prepared Renter Education Program) Education with budgeting, financial planning, leasing basics, how to approach landlords with issues.
- Housing Assessment – Review of consumer’s history of housing instability, barriers, needs, etc.
- Housing Stabilization Plan – An outlined goal plan that both consumer and housing establish and follow to obtain housing stabilization goals.
- Housing Relocation – Locating possible housing options, arranging moving preparations, etc.
- Landlord Engagement/Mediation – Conversations with Landlords of what is offered, how the program works, mediate possible issues between consumer and Landlord as needed, etc.
- Community Integration – Making new connections in the community, offer agency referrals and programs available, etc.

Referrals:

Referrals to Housing must be received through 211, which is a requirement of the grant funding we utilize. 211 screens each caller to confirm if the caller is eligible for a referral.

- Hours of operations for Housing referrals are Monday through Friday from 9 AM to 2 PM. You can also dial (855) 567-5341.

Some of our funding does not require a 211 referral. If you are unsure how your consumer should proceed for a referral or their eligibility, please reach out to us for guidance.

During the Housing Program Enrollment:

- Housing receives a 211 referral for a household facing a housing crisis.
- A caseworker verifies the housing and assesses housing barriers, needs and preferences.
- Once the caseworker gathers the above information, they present a recommendation to the Housing Administrator.
- If the consumer is deemed eligible, an intake is scheduled, which includes paperwork, explaining the program, expectations from the consumer, what they can expect from us, and setting goals.
- During their time with housing, supportive services are provided to guide the consumer along in the process of regaining housing independence and successfully sustaining on their own.
- Once the consumer completes the program, an exit assessment is performed, to ensure the household can sustain on their own. Our programs aren’t mandatory and households can withdraw at any time.

- Along with completing documentation, confirmation is made to ensure the household will succeed on their own. i.e. receives income to sustain independently, obtained low-income housing assistance, receives mainstream benefits, obtained transportation, paid fines off, etc.

Once permanent housing is found:

For consumers who need assistance to find permanent housing and don't have the means to pay for the moving costs, Fair Market Rent (FMR) is a rental standard followed to ensure landlords are charging a fair value to the apartments being leased in a specific area.

Below is the most recent FMR we must follow when finding apartments for our consumers, in order to financially assist them.

EFFICIENCY	ONE-BEDROOM	TWO-BEDROOM	THREE-BEDROOM	FOUR-BEDROOM
\$651	\$730	\$885	\$1,123	\$1,229

A required inspection is performed to confirm the apartment is safe and habitable for the household.

Terms are set between the Landlord and Tenant so leasing documentation is finalized and moving can begin.

Regional Connections and Efforts:

By Name List (BNL) meetings with the Pocono Region (Carbon, Monroe, Pike, and Wayne) to assess the list of homeless individuals/households within the region and collaborate as needed.

Monroe and Pike County – Collaboration of mutual consumers, possible referrals, and partnering efforts for joint-advertising with Pike/Wayne ERAP.

Pocono Regional Homeless Advisory Board (RHAB) – A member of the board with the mission to reduce/end homelessness in the four-county region.

Regional Housing Advisory Committee (RHAC) – A northeast committee advises DCED of housing, homelessness, economic and community development needs.

Youth Point-in-Time Committee – A part of a committee to have a better understanding of youth homelessness in Eastern PA, including youth who are unstably housed.

United Way of Monroe – Awarded funding throughout the Pocono region with the goal to prevent homelessness.

Ways to get involved and stay connected –

❖ **LHOT – Local Housing Options Team:**

LHOT was created with the intent to find needs and gaps in services within our community. Since the start of LHOT, Transitional Age Youth (TAY) Program was created. When grant opportunities arise, feedback is requested from LHOT members. LHOT attendees consist of both county and non-county sponsored housing partners.

The Housing Administrator provides:

- Grant announcements
- Upcoming events and trainings
- Housing-related updates of program availability, program status, available funding
- Then an open discussion is offered to address any concerns or community suggestions, to collaborate as a team as needed.

Community Partners then have an opportunity to provide agency updates.

- All LHOT meetings take place via Zoom.
- If you would like to receive the meeting invites, please let Heather Miszler know.

❖ **Annual Point-in-Time (PIT) Count:**

PIT is a coordinated outreach and search effort designed to identify and assist individuals and/or families experiencing housing challenges/homelessness in Wayne County. This is an annual requirement to continue receiving housing funding.

- Volunteer teams will attempt to locate and approach homeless individuals, or families, to provide referral information, toiletries, blankets, snacks, etc.
- Training is provided to all volunteers.
- The Point-in-Time Count provides data used in allocating Federal and State resources to assist in addressing homelessness.
- Wayne County continually serves homeless individuals and families throughout the year. We can't get the funding if we can't show a need and WE HAVE THE NEED!