

TB RA

Tenant Based Rental Assistance

PARTICIPANT SELECTION PLAN & PROGRAM MANUAL

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Equal Opportunity Housing * Equal Opportunity Employer
We encourage and support the nation's affirmative housing program in which there are no barriers to obtaining housing because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, handicap, or familial status.



1. PROGRAM INTRODUCTION

The TBRA Program assists formerly incarcerated individuals in the process of re-entry through rental assistance and security/utility deposit assistance – with the ultimate goal of helping individuals achieve self-sufficiency and successful re-integration into the community. TBRA serves eligible individuals/households in Grant County, focusing specifically on Marion residents.

The term "re-entry" describes the process and challenges faced by the vast numbers of individuals released from prison and jail each year, such as drug/alcohol addiction, homelessness, unemployment, physical/mental impairment or illness, and other disabling conditions.

TBRA recognizes that stable and safe housing is a major component of successful re-entry, including mitigating these challenges and reducing the likelihood of reoffending. In the 2018 report, “No Where to Go: Homelessness Amongst Formerly Incarcerated People,” the Prison Policy Initiative estimates that formerly incarcerated people are 10 times more likely to be homeless than the general public. Those that have formerly been incarcerated are more likely to have unique housing challenges.

The TBRA Program provides an alternative option for adults reentering the Grant County community. TBRA offers a supportive framework in which an individual may seek help in locating quality housing, accessing supportive services, and working on financial goals, in addition to receiving rental assistance.

The amount of rental assistance varies per household, and is based on the adjusted income of your household and the rent requested by the landlord.

TBRA Program participants choose their own rental unit (single home or apartment), ensuring that the rental unit meets inspection requirements and the rent charged by the landlord is considered reasonable.

2. ELIGIBLE PARTICIPANTS

Eligible participants must meet the following requirements:

1. The TBRA participant must meet ONE of the following three criteria:
 - a. The individual is currently incarcerated and is exiting incarceration within 6 months; or
 - b. The individual is currently **homeless** (See Section 2.1) and has been incarcerated at some point; or
 - c. The individual is experiencing a **housing crisis** (See Section 2.2) and has been incarcerated at some point
2. Household income must be at or below 60% Area Median Income (AMI):

One Person Household	Two Person Household	Three Person Household	Four Person Household	Five Person Household
\$31,320	\$35,760	\$40,260	\$44,700	\$48,300

3. Household must be willing to:
 - a. Sign a 1 year lease
 - b. Live in Grant County
 - c. Contribute a minimum of \$25 per month
4. Household must have a qualifying "Referral Partner"
 - a. Referral Partner must be a professional, such as a Case Manager, Community Corrections/Probation Officer, Program Manager, etc.



- b. Referral Partner must recommend the client for services through filling out the TBRA Referral Form and participate in the Client Intake Meeting
- c. Individuals that do not have a professional Referral Partner that can submit the Referral Partner Form may self-refer by reaching out directly to Lorri Cox at lorri@ahcindiana.org or (765) 662-1574 ex. 101

**Individuals exiting incarceration or experiencing homelessness will be prioritized.
TBRA follows the Equal Access Rule and VAWA.

2.1 – DEFINITION OF HOMELESSNESS

AHC follows HUD's definition of homelessness, as per 24 CFR 578.3 Categories 1 to 4:

- (1) An individual or family who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, meaning:
 - (i) An individual or family with a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground;
 - (ii) An individual or family living in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangements (including congregate shelters, transitional housing, and hotels and motels paid for by charitable organizations or by federal, State, or local government programs for low-income individuals); or
 - (iii) An individual who is exiting an institution where he or she 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;
- (2) An individual or family who will imminently lose their primary nighttime residence, provided that:
 - (i) The primary nighttime residence will be lost within 14 days of the date of application for homeless assistance;
 - (ii) No subsequent residence has been identified; and
 - (iii) The individual or family lacks the resources or support networks, e.g., family, friends, faith-based or other social networks, needed to obtain other permanent housing;
- (3) Unaccompanied youth under 25 years of age, or families with children and youth, who do not otherwise qualify as homeless under this definition, but who:
 - (i) Are defined as homeless under section 387 of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5732a), section 637 of the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9832), section 41403 of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 (42 U.S.C. 14043e-2), section 330(h) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254b(h)), section 3 of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2012), section 17(b) of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1786(b)), or section 725 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11434a);
 - (ii) Have not had a lease, ownership interest, or occupancy agreement in permanent housing at any time during the 60 days immediately preceding the date of application for homeless assistance;
 - (iii) Have experienced persistent instability as measured by two moves or more during the 60-day period immediately preceding the date of applying for homeless assistance; and
 - (iv) Can be expected to continue in such status for an extended period of time because of chronic disabilities; chronic physical health or mental health conditions; substance addiction; histories of domestic violence or childhood abuse (including neglect); the presence of a child or youth with a disability; or two or more barriers to employment, which include the lack of a high school degree or General Education Development (GED), illiteracy, low English proficiency, a history of incarceration or detention for criminal activity, and a history of unstable employment; or
- (4) Any individual or family who:
 - (i) Is fleeing, or is attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or other dangerous or life-threatening conditions that relate to violence against the individual or a family member, including a child, that has either taken place within the individual's or family's primary nighttime residence or has made the individual or family afraid to return to their primary nighttime residence;
 - (ii) Has no other residence; and
 - (iii) Lacks the resources or support networks, e.g., family, friends, and faith-based or other social networks, to obtain other permanent housing.



2.2 – DEFINITION OF HOUSING CRISIS

An individual is defined as experiencing a housing crisis if they meet one of the following categories:

- a. Has been issued a formal eviction notice from their current landlord or rental agency
- b. Living temporarily with a family or friend and has been asked to leave within 90 days
- c. Living in transitional housing under a non-renewable lease that expires within 90 days
- d. Living in an uninhabitable, unsanitary rental unit that does not meet minimum habitability standards according to the [IHCDA Inspection Checklist](#)
- e. Experiencing difficulty paying their rent and the situation will likely result in an eviction

3. PROGRAM DESIGN

1. Application Referral –
 - a. Case Manager / Community Corrections Officer / Other Professional completes and submits the [TBRA Referral Form](#)
 - b. AHC Program Manager reaches out to the referred individual (within 2 to 3 business days) using the contact information provided and offers the following:
 - i. Information on the TBRA Program
 - ii. Instructions for filling out the TBRA Application and Supporting Documents
2. Application Submittal –
 - a. Client submits [TBRA Application](#) and supporting documents through email, mail or drop-off at office
 - i. Application available online at:
<https://www.ahcgrantcounty.com/rentalassistance>
or printed copies available for pick-up at AHC office (call 765-662-1574 to arrange a time to pick up an application)
 - ii. Supporting Documents include:
 1. Proof of former incarceration (Prison/Jail Release Letter, Attorney Letter, Probation Officer Letter, etc.)
 2. Proof of Employment and Income
3. Application Initial Review –
 - a. TBRA Program Manager conducts initial review of application and eligibility criteria to determine conditional approval
 - b. TBRA Program Manager calls applicant to verify all factors relating to the applicant's eligibility, including household composition, preference, and income information
 - c. TBRA Program Manager schedules Intake Meeting with client and their Referral Partner (within 2 to 3 business days after application submittal)
4. Intake Meeting –
 - a. Client and Referral Partner meet with TBRA Program Manager
 - i. Instruct client on program guidelines, unit quality standards, etc.
 - ii. Issue [TBRA Intake Survey](#)
 - iii. Develop [Client Action Plan](#)
 - iv. Administer the [Rental Resource Guide](#) and offer assistance in seeking rental housing options.



5. Conditional Approval –
 - a. TBRA Program Manager conducts verification of income/employment
 - b. After verification of income/employment is received, TBRA Program Manager will issue the conditional approval letter (within 14 business days after Intake Meeting)

6. Unit Inspection –
 - a. Client submits Request for Unit Approval Form
 - b. TBRA Program Manager will ensure the unit meets Rent Reasonableness Requirements
 - c. Unit Inspection
 - i. TBRA Program Manager, AHC Maintenance Director/Tech, and Client meet at unit to conduct unit inspection utilizing the [HUD-52580-A Inspection Form](#)
 - ii. Unit is Approved or Denied
 1. If Approved, client will set up a meeting with TBRA Program Manager
 2. If Denied, client will continue their search for a rental unit

7. Unit Approval –
 - a. Meet with Counselor
 - i. Finalize Budget & Financial Plan
 - ii. Calculate Tenant Contribution using the Income Rent Calculation Worksheet
 - iii. Review Lease to ensure it meets requirements
 - iv. Draft Contract between AHC and Client
 - v. Draft Contract between Landlord and Client

8. Lease Execution –
 - a. Execute Contract between AHC and Client
 - b. Execute Contract between Landlord and Client

9. Project Management –
 - a. Issue monthly rental assistance to landlord
 - i. Landlord will submit the [Landlord Participation Form](#) by the 25th of the month.
 - ii. Checks are mailed to Landlord on the 1st of the month.
 - b. Submit monthly claim and IDIS Report form
 - c. Counselor follows up with client monthly
 - d. Counselor schedules a 6-month Check-In Meeting
 - e. At 12 months, the Counselor initiates Close Out Meeting
 - i. Administer Close Out Survey
 - ii. Review Action Plan
 - iii. Assess the client's need for ongoing services



4. AMOUNT OF RENTAL ASSISTANCE

The monthly rental assistance cannot exceed the difference between the rent standard for the unit size and 30% of the household's monthly adjusted income. To calculate the amount of rental assistance the tenant will be receiving:

- a. Counselor must calculate the adjusted household income. ([Section 6.6 of TBRA Program Manual](#))
 - i. IHCDA requires sub-recipients to deduct from annual income any of five mandatory deductions for which a household qualifies. The resulting amount is the household's adjusted income. Mandatory deductions are found in 24 CFR 5.611:
 1. \$480 for each dependent;
 2. \$400 for any elderly household or disabled household;
 3. Unreimbursed medical expenses, to the extent the sum exceeds 3% of annual income;
 4. Disability assistance deduction; and
 5. Any reasonable childcare expenses necessary to enable a member of the household to be employed or to further his or her education.
- b. Counselor must calculate the difference between the monthly rent amount and 30% of the household's monthly adjusted income

5. LENGTH OF TBRA ASSISTANCE

TBRA participants will receive 12 months of rental assistance, unless the client is terminated from the TBRA Program through either voluntary or involuntary termination.

6. RENT REASONABLENESS

Counselor must determine that the monthly rent amount the landlord is requesting is reasonable, utilizing www.GoSection8.com. ([Section 5.2 of TBRA Program Manual](#) & [User Guide to GoSection8](#))

- a. Use the following Login information:
 - Username: mikayla@ahcgrantcounty.com
 - Password: AHCGRANTCOUNTY123!
- b. Click the "Rent Reasonable" tab
- c. Then select "Create Certification" to create a Rent Reasonableness Certification
- d. Input the property and family details and report will determine whether the unit's rent is reasonable.
- e. If the rent is not considered reasonable, counselor must contact Landlord and attempt to negotiate a reduced monthly rent amount with Landlord. If the Landlord will not reduce amount, Client must find a different rental unit.

7. OTHER ASSISTANCE

Utility Deposits: The TBRA Program will pay for Utility Deposits, such as hook-up or connection fees for gas or electric, for all TBRA Participants. This includes *only* deposits, NOT ongoing monthly utility payments.

Security Deposits: The TBRA Program will pay for Security Deposits for TBRA Participants whose household income falls below 30% Area Moderate Income, as per the chart below:

	1 Person Household	2 Person Household	3 Person Household	4 Person Household	5 Person Household	6 Person Household
30% AMI Income Limit	\$15,660	\$17,880	\$20,130	\$22,350	\$24,150	\$25,950



8. APPLICANT PROCEDURE

Applications will be available for participants to pick up, fill out, and drop off at AHC. Applications will also be available in a fillable digital format, available on AHC's website (www.ahcindiana.org/rentalassistance). All applications must be complete and legible. Applications not filled out completely and/or legibly will not be considered for the waiting list until all information can be confirmed. Reasonable accommodation, such as alternative means of receiving or submitting applications, will be made for persons with disabilities. Additional third-party verifications (proof of incarceration, proof of employment, etc.) should be submitted with the applicant be submitted with the application or at the Intake Meeting.

An applicant must complete and sign an application in order to be considered for selection in the TBRA Program. An applicant will be processed and considered **conditionally** eligible for TBRA based solely on statements given on the application form. The completion of an application and/or contact by AHC does not constitute acceptance of the applicant for TBRA. Formal determination of eligibility will be made after submission, review of supporting documentation, verification of income/employment, and an in-person meeting occurs with the TBRA Program Manager.

9. FINAL SELECTION PROCESS

No applicant will be admitted without an in-person meeting (the Intake Meeting) with the TBRA Program Manager. Participants will be asked to sign forms that will be sent out to verify the information given on their application (proof of incarceration, proof of income, etc.). Intentionally providing false information is considered fraud and can result in severe penalties, including, but not limited to, loss of eligibility for the TBRA Program. All information provided on the application will be verified. False, inaccurate or incomplete information may disqualify the applicant. AHC will complete third party verifications for certification and verify that the applicant meets the maximum income requirements.

10. UNIT INSPECTION

When the client submits the Request for Unit Approval Form, the Program Representative, Maintenance Director/Tech, and Client will arrange a time to meet at the unit and conduct the inspection. AHC will conduct the unit inspection utilizing the [HUD-52580-A Inspection Form](#). The Program Representative and Maintenance Director/Tech will inspect each room in the house, going through the HUD checklist to check for floor/ceiling/window conditions, electrical hazards, lead based paint, working appliances, smoke detectors, ventilation, plumbing fixtures, etc. After the Inspection, the client's Request for Unit Approval will be approved or denied.

11. CLIENT ACTION PLAN

Once conditionally approved, the client will attend an Intake Meeting with the TBRA Program Manager and their Referral Partner, such as their Case Manager, Probation Officer, or Program Manager. At this meeting, the Housing TBRA Program Manager review both the client's self-directed goals and the benchmarks required by their programs and create an Client Action Plan.

For example, Client A has been conditionally approved for the TBRA Program and sets up their Intake Meeting. Client A is enrolled in Drug Court, one of Grant County Probation's problem-solving courts, and invites their Probation Officer to attend the Intake Meeting. At the Intake Meeting, the Probation Officer explains that the client is required to obtain employment within 90 days of their release and attend Group Therapy weekly. The Housing Counselor will ask the client to identify any additional



goals that they would like to pursue, such as savings goals, applying for health insurance, or becoming a homeowner. The Housing Counselor will ensure both the requirements outlined by the Probation Officer and the Client A's expressed self-directed goals are incorporated into the Action Plan.

12. TERMINATION OF SERVICES

TBRA to the household may end under either of the following circumstances:

1) Voluntary Termination

Voluntary Termination occurs when the client chooses to leave the program for any reason, including: the client no longer requires assistance, or the client has enrolled in the Housing Choice Voucher Program or another program that provides housing assistance.

2) Involuntary Termination

Involuntary Termination occurs when the client fails to comply with program requirements or commits fraud. Examples of non-compliance/fraud include but are not limited to:

- Client is no longer occupying the unit or subleases to another person who is not on the lease
- Client fails to execute a lease or provide requested information for application processing
- Client fails to report all sources of household income
- Client fails to identify all household members
- Client falsifies information in order to receive assistance

13. TBRA COMMUNITY PARTNERS

AHC is partnering with the following community agencies to administer the TBRA Program:

- Grant County Probation Department (GC Probation)
- Grant Blackford Mental Health (GBMH)
- Family Service Society, Inc (FSSI)
- Hope House (HH)
- Grace House for Transition and Recovery (GH)

14. LANDLORD OUTREACH PLAN

AHC is working with its Community Partners to build out a comprehensive list of rental agencies and individual landlords that are 1) willing to rent to formerly incarcerated individuals and 2) willing to work specifically with the TBRA Program. For the privacy and security of the landlords, the Rental Housing for Formerly Incarcerated Persons Database is located on a secure SharePoint excel spreadsheet. Community Partners can add to this database by filling out the [Rental Housing for Formerly Incarcerated Persons Database google form](#). AHC is working with Community Partners to obtain existing lists of rental agencies and individual landlords in Grant County, and will be conducting outreach through: 1) a mailing, 2) social media posts, and 3) phone calls. As AHC reaches out to rental agencies and individual landlords and they express a willingness to rent to formerly incarcerated individuals and work with the TBRA Program, they will be added to the Rent Housing for Formerly Incarcerated Persons Database. This Database will be shared strategically shared with Community Partners and participants that have been conditionally approved for the TBRA Program and are actively seeking housing options



A “TBRA 1 Pager for Landlords” has been created; copies are handed out to all participants that are conditionally approved for the TBRA Program. When participants have been conditionally approved and searching for rental housing, they may hand out the 1 pager to rental agencies or landlords to provide information on the TBRA Program.

15. CLIENT OUTREACH PLAN

AHC promotes equal opportunities for safe, decent and affordable housing to all persons, regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, handicap, or familial status.

AHC has created a page on their website (www.ahcgrantcounty.com/rentalassistance) that contains information about the TBRA Program. This website page features the program eligibility guidelines and links to the TBRA Program Manual, the TBRA Referral Form, and the TBRA Application.

AHC’s Community Partners will provide the greatest marketing impact and outreach. These organizations specifically serve the target population and already have strong communication lines established with their clients. All marketing materials will be shared with Community Partners.

Advertisements. AHC has created a one-pager containing all necessary information on the TBRA Program. Copies of this one-pager are distributed to AHC’s Housing Counselors and all Community Partners to distribute as necessary. The content includes program information and instruction on the TBRA process, including the website address.

All advertising will provide as much information as feasible regarding the documents necessary to submit an application. Notices will be sent to non-profit organizations and other agencies serving the target population. Applications will be available in both digital format (posted on AHC’s website) and in hardcopy (available for pick up at AHC). Announcements will be posted at AHC and at other locations as appropriate. Because the target populations to be served by the housing are not effectively reached through commercial media, ads will generally not appear in local newspapers or on social media.

Marketing Records. AHC shall keep records of its activities in implementing the affirmative marketing plan, including records of advertisements and other community outreach efforts. Racial and ethnic characteristics of program participants will be maintained at the AHC office and will be updated annually in accordance with funding agreements.

Reasonable Accommodations. AHC will apply the same screening criteria to all participants. However, AHC is obligated to offer qualified participants with disabilities additional consideration in the application of rules and practices, or services and structural alterations, if it will enable an otherwise eligible applicant or tenant with a disability an equal opportunity to access and enjoy the housing program. AHC is not, however, required to make a reasonable accommodation or physical modification if the accommodation or modification will cause a financial burden to the organization or if it requires AHC to alter or change a basic component of the TBRA Program.



After receiving third-party verification from a healthcare professional identified by the applicant that the applicant is disabled and requires the type of accommodation requested, AHC will make all efforts to supply the accommodation. If AHC finds that the accommodation requested is not reasonable, AHC will make all efforts to find an accommodation that is both effective and reasonable. Reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities will be provided at all stages of the application, interview, selection and residency process. Reasonable accommodation includes adjustments to rules, policies, practices and procedures.

Waiting List. As the TBRA Program is a first-come, first-serve program, there will be no waiting list. Participants begin by having their Referral Partner submit the TBRA Referral Form. All submissions of the TBRA Referral Form are saved in a spreadsheet, and the TBRA Program Manager, Lorri Cox, follows up with each submission within 2 to 3 business days via email and/or phone call (whichever contact preference was indicated on the TBRA Referral Form). It is the applicant's responsibility, then, to follow up by submitting the application and supporting documents. If no response is received from the applicant after initial contact, Lorri will follow up 2 more times before closing the file.

