



Date

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Department of Transitional Assistance
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Field Operations Memo 2001-36
 November 5, 2001

To: Transitional Assistance Office Staff

From:  Cescia Derderian, Acting Assistant Commissioner for Field Operations

Re: Hotel/Motel Placements

Introduction

The Department's Emergency Assistance program provides shelter to eligible homeless families. The preferred type of shelter is a Department-contracted family shelter which provides the family not only shelter but also a variety of services which assist the family in its search for and transition to permanent housing. When family shelter is not available, hotels/motels are used. This memo outlines:

- the process for placing a family in a hotel/motel,
- how those placements will be reviewed for appropriateness and how transfers will occur;
- guidelines for housing search activities for families in hotels/motels;
- protocol for transferring AU records;
- the Central Office process which will be followed when the Department uses a hotel/motel for the first time.

Initial Placement of a Family in a Hotel/Motel

Once it is determined that no appropriate Department-approved temporary emergency shelter is available, the following activities must occur.

NOTE: This is an outline of the necessary steps. For more detail please refer to the *EA Reference Guide*.

- ♦ The Homeless Coordinator/ AU Manager must explain to the family that the placement may be anywhere in the state depending on availability. The Homeless Coordinator/ AU Manager gives the *Notice to Recipients of EA Staying in Hotels/Motels* to the family. This document outlines the rules and responsibilities for the family while in the hotel or motel and **must** be signed by each adult EA AU member.

**Initial Placement
of a Family in a
Hotel/Motel
(continued)**

- ♦ The Homeless Coordinator/ AU Manager completes the *Emergency Placement Request* (TES-EPR-1 Rev. 11/01) (Attachment A) with family information and unique circumstances - job location, medical issues, physically challenged, etc. This information is used in both the initial hotel/motel placement and any requests for a transfer.
- ♦ The Homeless Coordinator/ AU Manager faxes both the *Notice to Recipients of EA Staying in Hotels / Motels* (HM-NT) and the TES-EPR-1 forms to Central Office Housing Division (COHD) at 617-348-5355. Requests for new placements must be received by 4:00 p m.

Note: Initial placements may be for one to seven days. Requests for continued placement may be for up to seven days and must be received by COHD by 10:30 am.

- ♦ When COHD secures a hotel/motel placement, COHD will call the AU Manager or Homeless Coordinator and fax the TES-EPR-1 with the hotel/motel information to the TAO. COHD will forward a copy of the TES-EPR-1 form to Central Office Field Operations.
- ♦ When the TES-EPR-1 with the hotel/motel information is received from COHD, the Homeless Coordinator /AU Manager gives the EA AU:
 - the directions to the hotel/motel; and
 - the name and telephone number of the Homeless Coordinator/ AU Manager on the *Information Contacts* (TES-IC) form.
- ♦ If the family refuses to go to the hotel/motel, the Homeless Coordinator/ AU Manager must immediately notify COHD and advise the family of the consequences for refusing available shelter placement.

If the Homeless Coordinator/ AU Manager discovers subsequently that the family did not go to the hotel/motel, COHD must be notified immediately.

- ♦ When the family arrives at the hotel/motel, the management will give them a *Motel Information Sheet* which contains information on specific social service agencies which will be available to the family, as well as practical information such as locations of supermarkets, laundromats, ATMs and banks, and medical facilities.
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**Initial Placement
of a Family in a
Hotel/Motel
(continued)**

Note: It is the responsibility of the TAO Director that covers the hotel/motel location to:

- develop the *Motel Information Sheet*;
 - maintain the accuracy of the information on the sheet;
 - provide the *Motel Information Sheet* to the hotel/motel(s) in their area.
- ♦ If the hotel/motel informs COHD that the family did not stay at the hotel/motel, COHD will contact the Homeless Coordinator/ AU Manager. Action must be taken to terminate the EA shelter benefits for the family.
 - ♦ The Homeless Coordinator/ AU Manager annotates the original TES-EPR-1 form and faxes it to COHD at 617-348-5355 to notify COHD of:
 - a request to continue hotel/motel placement beyond the initial authorized stay; or
 - hotel/motel exit information, including the last night the AU will spend in the hotel/motel and the type of housing the AU is moving into.

Note: When there is a change to the EA eligibility status or the demographics of the family, **call COHD at 617-348-5636** with the new information.

**Review of
Hotel/Motel
Placements and
Transfers to
Other Hotels/
Motels**

Whenever possible, the Department is committed to modifying hotel/motel placements to ensure that they are not disruptive to work schedules and addressing circumstances of severe health issues and any other extenuating circumstances.

After the initial placement when a TAO makes the determination that the current placement meets one of the above criteria, the Homeless Coordinator/ AU Manager will e-mail the request for hotel/motel transfer to Maureen Mulkern at COHD. The e-mail must include a statement explaining why the request is being made and provide as much detail as possible.

The COHD will handle all requests for transfer on a first come, first serve basis. If an office believes they have an extraordinary situation which merits moving to the top of the list, they must e-mail their Regional Director and the Director of Field Operations explaining the circumstances. The Director of Field Operations will then contact the COHD.

**Review of
Hotel/Motel
Placements and
Transfers to
Other Hotels/
Motels
(continued)**

The COHD will call and fax the new information to the Homeless Coordinator/ AU Manager when a transfer has been arranged. The Homeless Coordinator/ AU Manager must complete and fax the TES-TR-1, *Notice of Shelter Transfer*, to the hotel/motel to be given to the family **immediately**, i.e., **before** the transfer occurs. (The TES-TR-3 is used when the transfer results from a rule violation or threat to health or safety.)

**Transfer of AU
Records**

No AU record transfers will be made during the first 30 days of a hotel/motel placement unless the family expresses interest in relocating and agrees to do active housing search in the new area where the hotel/motel is located.

After 30 days in a particular hotel/motel setting, AU records will be transferred to the TAO covering the hotel/motel location **unless** there are issues regarding:

- employment;
- health issues;
- imminent placement in a family shelter;
- permanent housing; or
- domestic violence,

which may justify not transferring the AU record at this time.

In addition, the AU record will not be transferred if there is a pending appeal or an outstanding noncompliance decision.

When there are questionable extenuating circumstances, the TAO must consult with their Regional Director concerning transfer of AUs involving these circumstances.

**Transfer of AU
Records
Identified by
Regional
Director**

The Regional Directors will review COHD's 10/30/2001 list of all hotel/motel placements, identifying the AUs that have been in a hotel/motel placement more than 30 days. The Regional Director will notify the current TAO which AU records that, barring any of the issues stated above, should be transferred to the TAO covering the hotel/motel location. The transfer of AU records for hotel/motel placements that occurred after 10/1/2001 are to be made based on the instructions in the paragraph above, *Transfer of AU Records*.

**Transfer of AU
Records
Identified by
Regional
Directors**

The Homeless Coordinator/ AU Manager of the transferring TAO must:

- contact the recipient;
- explain that the AU record is being transferred;
- provide the address and telephone number of the new TAO;
- complete and give the *Notice of Shelter Transfer* (TES-TR-1) to the recipient or fax the TES-TR-1 to the hotel/motel to be given to the family **before** the transfer occurs;
- inform the recipient that he or she will be contacted by the new AU Manager; and
- explain the housing search process will continue in the new location and what is expected of the recipient.

The Homeless Coordinator/AU Manager of the receiving TAO must:

- contact the recipient within seven days of receipt of the AU record;
- update the AU's EA Self-Sufficiency Plan (EA-Plan); and
- fax/send Part 1 of the updated EA-Plan to the appropriate HAP provider. Part 1 is never sent to the hotel/motel.

Housing Search

During the first 30 days of a hotel/motel placement, the family may choose the location where it wishes to do housing search. After the initial 30 days and the AU record transfer, the family must do housing search in the area where the hotel/motel is located.

**Notification
when a
Hotel/Motel is
used for the
First Time**

When a hotel/motel is used for the first time, COHD will ensure that both the TAO covering the location of the new hotel/motel and the appropriate officials of the municipality where the hotel/motel is located are notified.

COHD will notify Central Office Field Operations when a hotel/motel is used for the first time. The Regional Director will notify the TAO which covers the location of the hotel/motel. Appropriate Central Office staff will also notify the officials, including but not limited to the Superintendent of Schools, that a particular hotel/motel may now be used for placement.

Questions

If you have any questions, please have your Hotline designee call the Policy Hotline at 617-348-8478.



Emergency Placement Request

A.

Date of Placement Request _____

TAO Approval Person _____
(Print)

TAO Approval Person _____
(Signature)

TAO Contact Person _____

TAO Name _____

Telephone # _____

Fax # _____

ALL INITIAL PLACEMENT REQUESTS MUST BE RECEIVED BY HOUSING DIVISION BY 4:00 P.M.

B. Family Demographics

Recipient Name _____ Recipient SSN _____ Male Female

Last First

Children (Circle boy or girl AND indicate age) boy/girl _____ boy/girl _____ boy/girl _____

boy/girl _____ boy/girl _____ boy/girl _____

boy/girl _____ boy/girl _____ boy/girl _____

Other Adult Name _____ (Circle) None Husband Wife Other Parent Other _____
(Specify Relationship)

EA Eligibility Status (Circle one) TAFDC EA only Current Reason for Homelessness _____
(See Section B on reverse side.)

Placement Dates (Not to exceed seven days) _____

Last Permanent Address _____
City State *Country, if outside USA

Town of Recipient's Employment _____ Check to indicate abuse or domestic violence within the past year.

Physically Challenged (explain) _____

C. Placement Information (Completed by Central Office Housing Division)

Hotel/Motel Placement _____ # of Rooms _____ Room Rate _____

Hotel/Motel Address _____ Greater than 15 miles yes no

Placement Agency _____ Shelter Placement _____ # of Rooms _____

D. Continued Hotel/Motel Placements Requested

Additional Sheet

_____	_____
Dates (not to exceed seven days)	TAO Contact Person's Signature
_____	_____
Dates (not to exceed seven days)	TAO Contact Person's Signature
_____	_____
Dates (not to exceed seven days)	TAO Contact Person's Signature
_____	_____
Dates (not to exceed seven days)	TAO Contact Person's Signature

E. EXIT Disposition Hotel/Motel Exit Date _____ Type of Housing Moved Into _____
(See Section E on reverse side.)

If Shelter, give name _____ If Other, specify _____

Continued placement requests and exit notifications MUST be received by Housing Division BEFORE 10:30 a.m.

F. Signatures

_____ Date _____

TAO Contact Person's Signature

Fax to Central Office Housing Division 617-348-5355 Attn: Maureen Mulkern (Phone 617-348-5636).

(See reverse side for instructions on completing the form.)

Instructions for Form Completion

The TAO Contact Person (TAO/CP), as determined by the TAO Director, is to complete **ALL** necessary sections of the *Emergency Placement Request* form:

- whenever an eligible family is requesting Emergency Placement through COHD into a shelter or hotel/motel; or
- a placement continuation is requested, or exit information is available.

The *Emergency Placement Request* form must have a TAO approval signature.

Section A

Identifies the date of this placement request made by the TAO on behalf of an eligible family (this date does not change unless there is a break in the homelessness). Identifies the local TAO name, contact person, telephone number and fax number of the TAO/CP.

Section B

Identifies some demographics of the family requesting emergency placement, specifically: the recipient's name, SSN, age and sex (circle either boy or girl) of child(ren), whether or not there is another adult and the adult's name and relationship, the last permanent address, and if there has been abuse/domestic violence within the past year. The TAO/CP must identify the type of assistance the recipient is currently receiving by circling one of the following: TAFDC or EA only. Indicates the dates the family is being approved to stay at the hotel/motel (which will not exceed seven days per approval).

NOTE:

In the event the demographic information changes during the course of the emergency placement, the TAO/CP must use this form to report the changes and the date the change occurred to the Central Office Housing Division (COHD).

Select the most current Reason for Homelessness:

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|
| a. Evicted from private housing | f. Health and Safety | k. Favorable appeal |
| b. Evicted from subsidized housing | g. Domestic Violence/Abuse | l. Medical reasons |
| c. Asked to leave by primary tenant | h. Fire/natural disaster | m. DSS referral |
| d. Terminated from shelter | i. Foreclosure | n. Other(specify) |
| e. Overcrowded situation | j. Building sold | |

Section C

Placement Information is completed by the COHD. It identifies the hotel placement for the family, the number of rooms the family will occupy, the hotel/motel room rate and the placement agency who coordinated the hotel/motel placement. If a shelter placement is approved, the placement location will be identified, the number of rooms the family will occupy and whether the placement is beyond 15 miles from the last permanent address.

Section D

This section is completed by the TAO/CP when a family requests continued placement beyond the initial stay. Each continued placement stay may not exceed seven days. Please note that placement dates should not end on a Friday, unless the family is expected to exit the hotel/motel on Friday. The COHD MUST approve ALL continued placements. COHD will notify the TAO/CP by telephone if continued placement cannot be approved. *If there are more than four continued placement requests, the TAO/CP is to complete an additional Emergency Placement Request form. Sections A, B, C and D must be completed again. (Please note that the Date of Placement Request in Section A DOES NOT change.)* In Section D, indicate by checking the box that this sheet is an additional sheet to the *Emergency Placement Request* form.

Section E

This section is completed by the TAO/CP when the family exits the hotel/motel. The TAO/CP identifies the last date the family will spend in the hotel/motel unless otherwise advised by COHD, and identifies the type of housing the family has moved into from the list below. Exits must be received before noon unless an earlier checkout time is indicated.

Select **ONE** of the following for Type of Housing Moved Into:

- | | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|------------------------|--------------------|
| a. Private Housing | c. Public Housing | f. Whereabouts unknown | h. Other (specify) |
| b. Subsidized Housing | d. Shelter | g. Other Hotel/Motel | |

Section F

The TAO/CP signs, dates and faxes the form to Central Office Housing Division, Attn: Maureen Mulkern.