



ForwardHealth has developed this FAQ document to capture submitted questions about the 1915(i) Housing Support Services Benefit and share answers. This document will be revised with new information as it is available.

Topic Category Guide

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Provider Enrollment

Question: What agencies can enroll as a supportive housing agency for the 1915(i) benefit?

Answer: Agencies must be a part of a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)-funded Continuum of Care lead agency or a Wisconsin Tribal nation.

Question: How do I start the provider enrollment process?

Answer: Eligible agencies can enroll in Wisconsin Medicaid through the [Provider Enrollment Information](#) page of the ForwardHealth Portal (the Portal) and select the supportive housing agency provider type in the enrollment application.

Question: What qualifications do supportive housing agency employees need to have to provide services?

Answer: Staff who provide housing support services need to have:

- A Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university **or** equivalent related experience or training, including lived experience.
- Appropriate knowledge and experience with local community resources.
- Competency to assess the needs of persons served and knowledge of the resources available to meet those needs.
- Training in Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) data entry processes or HMIS-comparable databases used by domestic violence providers.
- Training in evidence-based models of care for interviewing and engagement (for example, motivational interviewing, cultural humility, or trauma-informed care).

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Created: 01/22/2025

Question: After I've submitted a provider application, how long will I need to wait until my agency's onsite visit with the Office of Inspector General (OIG)?

Answer: The OIG onsite visit will occur within 10 business days of receiving the application. Once the onsite visit is completed, ForwardHealth notifies the supportive housing agency of their enrollment status within 60 days after receiving the completed enrollment application. ForwardHealth will then either approve or deny the application.

Question: What information will OIG need during the onsite visit?

Answer: During the onsite visit, OIG will verify the information in the agency's Medicaid application.

Question: Do I need to create a secure Provider Portal account?

Answer: Once the supportive housing agency is enrolled in Wisconsin Medicaid, they are encouraged to establish a Provider Portal account. Establishing a Provider Portal account allows supportive housing agencies to keep their information current with Wisconsin Medicaid. Supportive housing agencies may update their information, check a member's eligibility, and submit claims on the Portal. Refer to the [ForwardHealth Provider Portal Account User Guide, P-00952](#), for information on various functions of the Portal including verifying member enrollment; submitting electronic claims, adjustments, and PA requests; and viewing other reports and data.

Question: Is there a timeline for how soon I'll receive a PIN for Portal access?

Answer: After the supportive housing agency successfully requests Portal access, a letter with a PIN will be mailed to them within three to five business days. Supportive housing agencies must have a PIN to access the Portal.

Question: When will my agency be reviewed?

Answer: The External Quality Review Organization will conduct an annual quality and compliance review as part of the housing benefit quality improvement strategy to ensure that providers are meeting federal and state quality guidelines. This review will evaluate whether:

- The person-centered plans address the determined needs of 1915(i) participants, are updated annually, and document the choice of providers.
- Applicants who need housing support services receive an evaluation for 1915(i) state plan eligibility, the processes for determining their 1915(i) eligibility are applied appropriately, and the enrolled individuals' eligibility is re-evaluated at least annually.
- Providers meet required qualifications.
- Housing meets home and community-based service setting requirements.
- The supportive housing agency appropriately and timely addresses incidents of abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

Question: What can the relocation support funds be used for?

Answer: Relocation support funds can be used for a security deposit, utility activation, health and safety (such as pest eradication), and basic home furnishings. Relocation supports cannot be used for rent due to federal requirements.

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Created: 01/22/2025

Member Eligibility and Enrollment

Question: What if I identify a member who meets all the eligibility criteria but isn't enrolled in Wisconsin Medicaid?

Answer: The supportive housing agency should direct this member to [enroll in Wisconsin Medicaid](#). After they are enrolled, they will be eligible for housing support services.

Question: What if a member's eligibility is denied?

Answer: This member will receive notice of their appeal rights directly and can request a fair hearing and appeal the eligibility decision. Refer to the ForwardHealth Online Handbook Appeals topic [#432](#) for more information.

Question: Are members enrolled in the 1915(c) waiver eligible for 1915(i) housing supports?

Answer: Generally, 1915(c) members (Children's Long-Term Support [CLTS], Family Care, Family Care Partnership, and IRIS [Include, Respect, I Self-Direct]) are excluded from receiving the housing support services as part of the state plan 1915(i) benefit. Members in these programs should access their 1915(c) housing waiver benefit to receive services.

ForwardHealth allows CLTS members to participate in housing support services with a valid exception identified on a prior authorization (PA) request when:

- They are aging out of the CLTS program.
- They are aging out of foster care.

Question: Could an individual enrolled in the 1915(i) housing support services receive other types of community housing supports?

Answer: Yes, as long as the service is not offered under the 1915(c) waiver, members can receive other housing support services such as Rapid Rehousing or Tenant-Based Rental Assistance.

Question: Are members housed in permanent supportive housing eligible for the housing support services?

Answer: Eligibility requires that the individual fall into one of the four HUD categories of homelessness. New clients who have not yet been housed or members who lose housing may be eligible.

Question: What if a member I'm working with is moving to an area that my agency no longer serves?

Answer: Supportive housing agencies can consult the provider directory once it is available to see a list of agencies that can provide housing support services. Warm handoffs (coordinating with another supportive housing agency to make the member's transition easier) are encouraged between the member's current care team and their new care team.

Question: I haven't heard from the member in months. What can I do?

Answer: An unsuccessful attempt at contacting the member is not a billable service. Contact resulting in a conversation or meeting about housing is billable.

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Created: 01/22/2025

Prior Authorization

Question: Do I need approval in advance for housing support services?

Answer: Yes, ForwardHealth requires approval in advance for members to receive housing support services through a PA request. PA requests may be submitted either through the Portal or on paper using the 1915(i) Housing Support Services Eligibility Evaluation and Needs Assessment form, F-03274. Wisconsin Medicaid determines eligibility of the individual for the supportive housing benefit based on the information submitted in the PA request.

Question: How long is a PA valid for?

Answer: A PA is valid for one year or 365 days (not a calendar year). This aligns with the requirement to evaluate and assess the member's eligibility annually. Supportive housing agencies are responsible for submitting new PAs to make sure services are continued.

Question: When will I know if a PA has been approved?

Answer: If the supportive housing agency submits a PA electronically through the Portal, they will know in real-time if a PA is approved or denied, based on how the eligibility questions were answered. In some circumstances, the PA may be routed for manual review. All PAs submitted via mail or fax are routed for manual review, which may take several days to complete. Once the manual review is completed and the PA decision is made, ForwardHealth will mail the supportive housing agency a decision letter. These letters are also available on the Portal when they search for the PA.

Question: What happens if I miss the annual mark to be re-authorized?

Answer: Supportive housing agencies are responsible for re-evaluating a member's eligibility annually and for updating their person-centered plan. If the PA expires, claims will be denied.

Question: The member already has an open PA with a previous supportive housing agency. What should I do?

Answer: Subsequent supportive housing agencies can bill under the member's initial PA without submitting any extra paperwork. This makes sure there is no lapse in access to services if a member needs to make a sudden move for any reason (for example, fleeing domestic violence). Contact Provider Services at 800-947-9627 to find out how many units or days are left on a PA.

Question: I need to ask for more units. What should I do?

Answer: The supportive housing agency that submitted the initial PA can request more units using the PA amendment process on the Portal. The supportive housing agency that did not submit the initial PA will need to submit their own PA to request any future amendments. For more information, supportive housing agencies can refer to the Prior Authorization section of the Housing Support Services service area of the Online Handbook.

Question: I haven't heard from the member in months. Do I need to close my PA?

Answer: A PA will automatically end after 365 days, so there is no need to close it manually. If the member moves and starts services with another supportive housing agency without a warm handoff, ForwardHealth may end date a PA. Supportive housing agencies may check the status of a PA in one of three ways:

- Log in to the Portal, and go to the Prior Authorization page.

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Created: 01/22/2025

- Access WiCall at 800-947-3544.
- Call Provider Services at 800-947-9627.

Question: Where can I find resources such as the 1915(i) Housing Support Services Eligibility Evaluation and Needs Assessment form, the Online Handbook, or other information about the benefit?

Answer: More information about the benefit can be found on the [Resources for Supportive Housing Agencies](#) page of the Portal.