
APS Policy Bulletin #2021-10

Date: August 18, 2021

DISTRIBUTION: ALL SOCIAL WORK STAFF

ASSISTING APS CLIENTS WHO ARE AT RISK OF EVICTION

Purpose: The purpose of this policy bulletin is to instruct social work staff on how to assist clients who are at risk of eviction or being relocated due to an eviction. This procedure is informational for all other APS staff.

■ **OVERVIEW**

Adult Protective Services (APS) provides services to adults, who are 18 years of age or older, who, because of mental or physical impairments,:

- are unable to meet their essential needs for food, shelter, clothing or medical care, secure entitlements due them or protect themselves from physical or mental injury, neglect, maltreatment or financial exploitation;
- need protection from actual or threatened harm, neglect or hazardous conditions caused by the action or inaction of either themselves or other individuals; and
- have no one available who is willing and able to assist them responsibly.

Individuals facing an eviction due to a nonpayment of rent, holdover, or ejectment proceeding may be eligible to receive assistance through APS, if the above eligibility requirements are met.

■ **SOCIAL WORKER ACTIONS**

The APS Field Office director, deputy director or designee identifies cases in need of social work intervention and refers those cases to the Social Work Unit. The case is conferenced with the social work staff in person or via any form of teleconferencing. Upon evaluating the potential risks of the client, when possible, the caseworker will coordinate an initial joint visit with the assigned social work staff.

Client Visit

Prior to the initial social work visit, the social work staff will prepare the following tools to be completed during the client's assessment:

- **Social Work Assessment form** (not required if a current psychosocial evaluation is completed).
- **Interview for Decisional Abilities Tool** unless the client:
 - declined to participate,

- has a neurocognitive disorder and is unable to participate,
 - has a psychiatric disorder and is unable to complete reality testing, or
 - is fluent in a language other than English and translation is required.
- Any other tools provided by the social work supervisor and are relevant to the identified issues presented which may include the following:
 - Psychosocial Evaluation;
 - PHQ-9 Patient Depression Questionnaire;
 - Mental Status Examination;
 - Suicide Risk Assessment Tool;
 - Safety Planning Tool;
 - Homes Multidisciplinary Risk Assessment;
 - Generalized Anxiety Disorder Scale;
 - Cage-Aid Substance Use Screening; and
 - Resources for the client.

During the visit, social work staff will complete an assessment using the above tools, or any other applicable tools, to determine if a psychosocial evaluation is necessary to assist the client with housing relocation to housing through the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities Residential Housing, supportive housing, or for Article 81 Guardianship and/or other community supports needed. If a psychosocial evaluation is necessary, social work staff will gather additional information that may be beneficial to complete the evaluation.

Social Work Plan

Social work staff will create a social work plan with the client based on the risk of eviction.

Examples of a social work plan may include:

- Completing psychosocial evaluation for relocation options;
- Discussing coping mechanisms to assist over time while navigating the eviction;
- Identifying support systems that can assist;
- Follow up on resources provided to the client;
- Implementing a Solution-Focused Approach and Motivational Interviewing to discuss client goals;
- Utilizing the Life Events Checklist tool as a guide for discussions around the underlying trauma and distress (the checklist is located in the social work shared drive in the Eviction folder); and
- Utilizing the additional tools found in the Eviction folder in the social worker shared drive including:
 - Housing Referral Manual;
 - Completing the HRA 2010E;
 - Overview of Community Mental Health Services and Housing;
 - Overview of SPOA;
 - YAI Ultimate Guide; and
 - Tools to assist in completing a Biopsychosocial.

The social work plan should be discussed with the social work staff supervisor and/or deputy director or designee prior to implementation.

All interventions utilized must be documented in APSNET. If the social work plan is discontinued, enter a progress note in APSNET and indicate the reason for discontinuing the social work plan.

Documenting the Case

Social work staff will enter referred cases in the Social Work Tracking tool on a weekly basis. Information to be included in the tracking tool are:

- Case Name;
- Referral ID
- Date of Social Work Service;
- Case Type;
- IDA Risk Assessed
- IDA sent (to Customized Assistance Services, VPS Clinical Intake);
- Field Office;
- Brief Case Summary;
- Social Work Plan; and
- Supervisory Comments.

Upon supervisory review of the case information provided in the tracking tool, the social worker will receive comments and next steps for the following client visit.

All notes from interactions and visits with clients must be entered in APSNET within five business days. Visit outcomes and the social work plan must be documented as progress notes. Contacts with clients and collateral sources must be documented as an interaction.

Effective immediately.