

Financial vs. Services Costs: 24 CFR §576.105

Housing relocation and stabilization services.

(a) *Financial assistance costs*. Subject to the general conditions under §576.103 and §576.104, ESG funds may be used to pay housing owners, utility companies, and other third parties for the following costs:

(1) *Rental application fees*. ESG funds may pay for the rental housing application fee that is charged by the owner to all applicants.

(2) *Security deposits*. ESG funds may pay for a security deposit that is equal to no more than 2 months' rent.

(3) *Last month's rent*. If necessary to obtain housing for a program participant, the last month's rent may be paid from ESG funds to the owner of that housing at the time the owner is paid the security deposit and the first month's rent. This assistance must not exceed one month's rent and must be included in calculating the program participant's total rental assistance, which cannot exceed 24 months during any 3-year period.

(4) *Utility deposits*. ESG funds may pay for a standard utility deposit required by the utility company for all customers for the utilities listed in paragraph (5) of this section.

(5) *Utility payments*. ESG funds may pay for up to 24 months of utility payments per program participant, per service, including up to 6 months of utility payments in arrears, per service. A partial payment of a utility bill counts as one month. This assistance may only be provided if the program participant or a member of the same household has an account in his or her name with a utility company or proof of responsibility to make utility payments. Eligible utility services are gas, electric, water, and sewage. No program participant shall receive more than 24 months of utility assistance within any 3-year period.

(6) *Moving costs*. ESG funds may pay for moving costs, such as truck rental or hiring a moving company. This assistance may include payment of temporary storage fees for up to 3 months, provided that the fees are accrued after the date the program participant begins receiving assistance under paragraph (b) of this section and before the program participant moves into permanent housing. Payment of temporary storage fees in arrears is not eligible.

(7) If a program participant receiving short- or medium-term rental assistance under §576.106 meets the conditions for an emergency transfer under 24 CFR 5.2005(e), ESG funds may be used to pay amounts owed for breaking a lease to effect an emergency transfer. These costs are not subject to the 24-month limit on rental assistance under §576.106.

(b) *Services costs.* Subject to the general restrictions under §576.103 and §576.104, ESG funds may be used to pay the costs of providing the following services:

(1) *Housing search and placement.* Services or activities necessary to assist program participants in locating, obtaining, and retaining suitable permanent housing, include the following:

- (i) Assessment of housing barriers, needs, and preferences;
- (ii) Development of an action plan for locating housing;
- (iii) Housing search;
- (iv) Outreach to and negotiation with owners;
- (v) Assistance with submitting rental applications and understanding leases;
- (vi) Assessment of housing for compliance with Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) requirements for habitability, lead-based paint, and rent reasonableness;
- (vii) Assistance with obtaining utilities and making moving arrangements; and
- (viii) Tenant counseling.

(2) *Housing stability case management.* ESG funds may be used to pay cost of assessing, arranging, coordinating, and monitoring the delivery of individualized services to facilitate housing stability for a program participant who resides in permanent housing or to assist a program participant in overcoming immediate barriers to obtaining housing. This assistance cannot exceed 30 days during the period the program participant is seeking permanent housing and cannot exceed 24 months during the period the program participant is living in permanent housing. Component services and activities consist of:

- (A) Using the centralized or coordinated assessment system as required under §576.400(d), to evaluate individuals and families applying for or receiving homelessness prevention or rapid re-housing assistance;
- (B) Conducting the initial evaluation required under §576.401(a), including verifying and documenting eligibility, for individuals and families applying for homelessness prevention or rapid re-housing assistance;
- (C) Counseling;
- (D) Developing, securing, and coordinating services and obtaining Federal, State, and local benefits;
- (E) Monitoring and evaluating program participant progress;
- (F) Providing information and referrals to other providers;
- (G) Developing an individualized housing and service plan, including planning a path to permanent housing stability; and
- (H) Conducting re-evaluations required under §576.401(b).

(3) *Mediation.* ESG funds may pay for mediation between the program participant and the owner or person(s) with whom the program participant is living, provided that the mediation is necessary to prevent the program participant from losing permanent housing in which the program participant currently resides.

(4) *Legal services.* ESG funds may pay for legal services, as set forth in §576.102(a)(1)(vi), except that the eligible subject matters also include landlord/tenant matters, and the services must be necessary to resolve a legal problem that prohibits the program participant from obtaining permanent housing or will likely result in the program participant losing the permanent housing in which the program participant currently resides.

(5) *Credit repair.* ESG funds may pay for credit counseling and other services necessary to assist program participants with critical skills related to household budgeting, managing money, accessing a free personal credit report, and resolving personal credit problems. This assistance does not include the payment or modification of a debt.