



## Creating Housing Options In Communities for Everyone

***A Partnership between Mississippi Home Corporation, Mississippi Department of Health, Mississippi Division of Medicaid, and Mississippi's Community Mental Health Centers***

CHOICE provides rental assistance to make housing affordable for individuals with serious mental illness. Community Mental Health Centers provide services appropriate to the individual based on their individual needs.



### **Applicants will be assisted in order of the following priority:**

**Priority 1:** Individuals being discharged from a State psychiatric hospital after a stay of more than ninety (90) days; or, nursing facility, or intermediate care facility for individuals with intellectual disabilities after a stay of more than ninety (90) days; or

**Priority 2:** Individuals who have been discharged from a State psychiatric hospital within the last two (2) years and;

- Had multiple hospital visits in the last year due to mental illness; or
- Are known to the mental health or state housing agency to have been arrested or incarcerated in the last year due to conduct related to mental illness; or
- Are known to the mental health or state housing agency to have been homeless for (1) full year or have had four (4) or more episodes of homelessness in the last three (3) years.

**Priority 3:** Individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence and includes a subset for an individual who is exiting an institution where he or she resided for ninety (90) days or less and who resides in an emergency shelter or a place not meant for human habitation immediately before entering that situation.

**For more information contact your local Community Mental Health Center**

### **ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE UNDER CHOICE**

- Rental assistance
  - Tenants pay 15% of income toward rent.
  - If a person is employed and rent is 30% or less of gross income, rent assistance is not available under CHOICE.
  - CHOICE pays 100% of rent if tenant has applied for Supplemental Security Income or Supplemental Security Disability Income but benefits have not started at the time the individual moves into housing.
- Guided assistance to find suitable housing using [www.mshousingsearch.com](http://www.mshousingsearch.com).
- The individual will be reviewed for eligibility for HUD Housing Choice Voucher or Public Housing which may affect the length of time CHOICE assistance will be provided.
- Depending on individual need, CHOICE may also cover:
  - Rental application fee
  - Rental security deposit
  - Rental arrears
  - Utility deposit
  - Utility arrears

**The individual will be reviewed for eligibility under Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) program and Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) grant program. Eligibility for these programs may reduce assistance provided under CHOICE. These programs may provide one or more of the following services:**

- Job search assistance
- Financial management
- Negotiations with landlords
- Transportation, if available
- Transition assistance

