

**Housing Stabilization Services Benefit Design, Rate
Methodologies, and Payment Rates**

PROVIDER SURVEY INSTRUCTIONS

– distributed by –

BURNS & ASSOCIATES

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A Division of Health Management Associates

– on behalf of –

Minnesota Department of Human Services

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction..... 2
 Assistance with the Survey 2
 Overview of the Survey 2
 Completing and Submitting the Survey 2
 Considerations for Government Agencies, Multi-State Organizations, and Similar Providers 3
Definitions..... 4
 Administration, Program Support, and Direct Care..... 4
 ‘Admin & Program Staff’ – Administrative and Program Support Staff - Wage and Benefit Costs..... 5
Direct Care Staff Costs 6
 ‘Direct Care Wages’ - Direct Care Workers - Wages, Turnover, and Training 6
 ‘Direct Care Benefits’ – Direct Care Workers – Fringe Benefits 6
‘Non-Staff Expenses’ – Expenses Other Than Staff Salary and Benefits..... 7
‘Staffing Pattern’ Sections 8

INTRODUCTION


The Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) is in the process of studying provider payment rates for the Housing Stabilization Services program. Burns & Associates, a division of Health Management Associates (HMA-Burns), has been contracted to assist with this rate study. Rates for Housing Consultation, Housing Transition, and Housing Sustaining are included in the rate study.

As part of the rate study, HMA-Burns has developed a survey to collect data regarding program designs and costs. The survey is voluntary, but all providers are strongly encouraged to participate as the information collected will be a key consideration in the rate study.

Data collected through this survey will be used solely for the purpose of evaluating provider payment rates. HMA-Burns will not share individual provider surveys and only aggregated data will be reported.

Assistance with the Survey

HMA-Burns recognizes the survey can be complicated, and has established several resources to assist agencies in completing the survey:

- These instructions supplement the embedded directions and should be reviewed before completing the survey.
- Guidance for many questions is embedded in the survey itself. Within the survey, click on any cell with an “” icon to access relevant directions.
- Providers may contact HMA-Burns at any time during the survey period at HousingStabilizationRateStudy@healthmanagement.com or (517) 993-9229 for assistance or questions.

Overview of the Survey

The survey is a Microsoft Excel file compatible with Excel 2010 and newer versions. Broadly, it is designed to collect information in the primary areas:

- Service revenues from Housing Stabilization Services and all other revenues
- Wages and benefits of administrative and program support staff
- Direct care worker wages, turnover, and training
- Allocation of direct care worker hours
- Benefits for direct care workers
- Non-staff operating expenses
- Service-specific factors, such as caseloads, productivity, and mileage

Throughout the survey, fields in which users may report data are shaded in light green. Examples are shaded in grey. Dark green fields are automatically calculated based upon other responses.

Completing and Submitting the Survey

All reported revenue and cost data should reflect providers' most recently completed fiscal year. For most cost-related data, the survey requires providers to allocate expenses across the various programs they operate to ensure all expenses reasonably attributed to delivering Housing Stabilization Services are considered and fairly apportioned across all programs being supported by an agency. For example, if an agency delivers Housing Stabilization Services as well as other behavioral health services, only a portion of the executive director's salary

should be allocated to Housing Stabilization Services since this position also supports the behavioral health program within the agency. The survey therefore distinguishes between Housing Stabilization Services and all other programs that your agency operates for the purposes of cost (and time) allocation.

When saving the survey, add your agency's name to the beginning of the file name; e.g., "ABC Agency DSPD Rate Study Provider Survey".

The deadline for submitting completed surveys is **July 9, 2025**. Submit completed surveys to HousingStabilizationRateStudy@healthmanagement.com.

Partially completed surveys will be accepted. Even if a submitted survey is incomplete, the information that your agency is able to provide will be considered as part of the analysis of survey responses. If any information requested in the survey is unavailable, leave that field blank. Similarly, if there is any survey form that your agency cannot complete, that form may be left blank.

If there are any factors that you believe should be considered but were not included in the survey, note those issues (and any other comments) in the transmittal email when submitting the survey. You may also submit any other documentation that you would like considered as part of this study.

Considerations for Government Agencies, Multi-State Organizations, and Similar Providers

The survey is designed to collect all costs and revenues associated with each organization's HSS program. For some organizations – such as a multi-state provider or a county or municipal government agency – HSS may represent a small part of overall revenues and cost expenses. In these cases, providers should report revenue and expense information at the lowest organizational level (such as an operating unit or division) that still fully captures all associated revenue and expenses for the HSS program, including administrative and program support expenses that may be shared across the organization. Indirect costs that may be allocated to the reported operating unit or division may be reported on the Non Staff Expenses form under the line labeled Allocation of Parent Organization Overhead.

If you have a question about what level of detail to report in your survey, please contact HMA-Burns at HousingStabilizationRateStudy@healthmanagement.com or (517) 993-9229.

DEFINITIONS

Administration, Program Support, and Direct Care

The survey asks providers to differentiate between direct care, program support, and administrative costs. There are not always clear distinctions between these categories and definitions of these terms vary. For the purposes of this survey, the following guidelines should be used:

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|-----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Administration | Includes expenses associated with the operation of your agency, but which are not program-specific and therefore cannot be allocated to individual services. Employees that are typically considered administrative include general management, finance/accounting, information technology, and human resources staff. Expenses associated with these staff (for example, their office space) are also considered administrative. Other examples of non-staff expenses include office equipment and furniture, office supplies, general insurance, and other operating expenses that cannot be allocated to specific programs or services. |
| Program Support | Includes expenses that are program-specific, but not part of direct service delivery. Examples include first-line supervisors, staff responsible for clinical oversight, program design, quality assurance, and training of direct care workers. Expenses associated with these staff (for example, their office space) are also considered program support. Other examples of non-staff expenses include accreditation and professional licensing fees, software and devices for electronic visit verification, and personal protective equipment for staff providing services. |
| Direct Care | Includes the salaries and benefits of staff providing direct, billable services as well as activities specifically related to direct care. For example, time spent traveling between service visits and writing progress notes after a billable service should be categorized as direct care even though that time may not be directly billable. Direct care also includes transportation expenses for persons who receiving Housing Transition or Housing Sustaining. |

‘ADMIN & PROGRAM STAFF’ – ADMINISTRATIVE AND PROGRAM SUPPORT STAFF - WAGE AND BENEFIT COSTS

This form collects wage and benefit data for administrative and program support staff. This form is used to report information regarding the staff responsible for the administrative and program support functions of your organization while a second form (“Direct Care Wages”) collects information related to staff who provide direct, billable services. **Staff should be listed on only one of the two wage forms (Admin & Program Staff or Direct Care Wages) based on their primary function.** These forms allow time to be allocated to other tasks.

- Job Title** Enter the job title for each administrative or program support employee.
- If your organization has multiple employees within a given job title (e.g., three Human Resource Specialists), you may list them in the same row if their time is allocated similarly (e.g., each spends 100 percent of their time on administrative functions; see the discussion below for the Allocation of Staff Time/ Cost columns).
- This level of detail is requested to ensure direct care staff are not reported on this schedule. For external reporting purposes, only a total cost for wages and for benefits will be reported and organization-specific data will not be released.
- Cost Allocation** For the employee(s) listed on each line, there are six columns across which employees’ costs should be allocated based on the program supported (HCBS programs and all other programs) and, within each program, their function (administrative, program support, and direct care). The total across the six columns should equal 100 percent. Although this sheet is only intended to capture information regarding administrative and program support staff, the direct care column is included because reported staff may have other direct care duties at times.
- If your agency does not already have a methodology for allocating costs across programs, it is recommended that your organization conduct a one-week time study in which staff maintain logs and record (no less frequently than once per hour) the program on which they are working. After that week, each employee’s time would be allocated based on their log. For example, if an employee worked 40 hours and 10 of their hours were related administration of Housing Stabilization Services, 25 percent of that employee’s time (10 hours divided by 40 hours) would be allocated to administration and the remaining 75 percent would be allocated to other activities or programs. If a time study is not feasible for your organization, contact HMA-Burns to discuss other potential allocation methodologies.

DIRECT CARE STAFF COSTS

The survey includes two forms to collect information regarding direct care workers payroll and benefits. **Staff should be listed on *only one* of the two wage forms (Admin & Program Staff or Direct Care Wages) based on their primary function.** These forms allow time to be allocated to other tasks.

‘Direct Care Wages’ - Direct Care Workers - Wages, Turnover, and Training

This form collects information regarding the wages paid to your agency’s direct care workers, including staff employed or contracted by your agency to provide billable Housing Stabilization Services. Providers do not need to list direct care workers who do not provide billable Housing Stabilization Services. The form additionally collects information regarding actual payroll tax and benefit expenses as well as turnover and training hours.

Under the Job Titles column, providers may report staff individually or grouped under shared job titles (e.g., “Housing Stabilization Services Coordinators”). Do not group staff with different employment classifications (i.e., employees or contractors) and do not group employees with supervisory responsibilities with employees who do not have supervisory responsibilities.

The form also collects information about each employee or group of employees by education level, years’ experience in delivering housing-related supports, and a field to identify if the individual or individuals reported on any given line have lived experience with housing instability. If employees share all of the same attributes (e.g., the same levels of education, the same years of experience, and the same status in having or not having lived experience with housing instability), they may be reported on the same line. If any given attribute differs, please report on separate lines.

This form also requests that you allocate the work time of the direct care staff reported on each line of the form. Informed judgement will be necessary to estimate how much staff time should be allocated to each to Housing Stabilization Services and to all other services and activities over the course of the reported fiscal year.

For the staff in each job title, report the percentage of their time spent on each Housing Stabilization Service as applicable (Housing Consultation, Housing Transition and/ or Housing Sustaining) during the reported fiscal year. For the listed services, consider both direct service time and associated activities (e.g., time spent traveling between individuals). Report all other time supporting other services and activities in the final column of the form.

Only working hours should be considered when completing this form; do not include paid time off (holidays, vacation, or sick leave). Zeroes do not need to be reported. The total allocation of time across the time allocation columns should equal 100 percent. If it does not, an error message will appear to the right of the table.

‘Direct Care Benefits’ – Direct Care Workers – Fringe Benefits

This worksheet requests information regarding the benefits available to direct care staff. Consider only direct care staff when completing this worksheet (do not report benefit information for administrative and program support staff). There are separate columns for full-time and part-time direct care staff. For the purposes of the survey, full-time is defined as 30 hours per week.

‘NON-STAFF EXPENSES’ – EXPENSES OTHER THAN STAFF SALARY AND BENEFITS

This sheet collects information for all non-staff costs, including all other administrative, program support, and direct care expenses.

Expense Categories For each category of expense, report the total expense for your agency’s most recently completed fiscal year.

It is understood that there may be some differences regarding how agencies categorize their expenses. Agencies are not required to report an amount for each listed expense and should use the categories that are closest to their own accounting classifications. For example, an agency’s accounting system may combine advertisement expenses for job postings with other advertising expenses. In this case, the agency can report its total advertisement expense on Line 22 (advertising) rather than trying to break out the advertisement expense related to job postings on Line 17.

Lines 27 through 31 are available to report expenses that do not fit well into the provided categories. If costs are reported on these lines, you must enter a description of the costs in the available space.

‘STAFFING PATTERN’ SECTIONS

The service-specific worksheets for Housing Consultation and Housing Transition & Sustaining include a section that requests information regarding the ‘Staffing Pattern’ for a typical week for a direct care worker providing the service, reflecting the average across the agency’s workforce. These sections should reflect current weekly staffing patterns.

To complete this section, report the total number of hours that a direct care worker performing the service works in a typical week (on average) in the first line of the section. For example, if most of your workers are full-time and work 40-hours per week, report “40” on the first line of the staffing pattern sections. Then, in the remaining lines, report the *average* number of hours a week a direct care worker spends in each of the listed activities. The sum of hours for all reported activities must be equal to the total number of work hours reported on the first line of the section.

As necessary, there are ‘Other activities’ lines that can be used for responsibilities not provided on the predefined list. Do not use these lines to report hours associated with training, holidays, or paid time off as, in general, training and paid leave is not assumed to be part of a worker’s typical work week (that is, most staff do not participate in training or take time off every week). Information related to training and paid time off is collected elsewhere in the survey.

It is understood that the number of hours that a direct care staff works and how they spend their time may vary from week-to-week. To complete this section, informed judgement will be necessary to consider these variations and determine what constitutes a ‘typical’ week. This could be done by considering how much time a direct care worker spends on each of these activities over the course of a year and then dividing that total by 52. For example, direct care workers may spend 65 hours per year participating in employer time (such as attending staff meetings or participating in supervisory meetings), so your agency would report 1.25 hours per week (65 hours per year divided by 52 weeks in the year).