



NYC Department of Homeless Services

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Assistant Commissioner  
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## MEMORANDUM

April 22, 2008

**TO:** Shelter Providers

**FROM:** Marya Kuklick, Director of Quality Assurance, Program Evaluation & Policy Analysis

**SUBJECT:** Guidance for New Housing Placement Guidelines

In December 2007, Deputy Commissioner George Nashak issued a housing placement guidance memo which detailed the expectations that DHS has for its Adult Services providers concerning the quality of housing placements. This memo is intended to help shelter staff navigate the NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Development, NYC Department of Buildings, and NYS Department of Health websites in order to determine whether the placement meets DHS quality standards. Whether or not placements meet these guidelines must now be confirmed on the new QA Client Placement Report.

Placement forms must be submitted within 72 business hours of placement. Placements submitted later will be disallowed and not counted toward your PIP placement target. DHS will enforce this policy as of June 1<sup>st</sup>.

### New York State Department of Health (DOH)

DOH issues licenses for adult homes and adult residences, allowing them to operate. DHS directly operated or contracted shelters may not refer clients to facilities that appear on the DOH "Do Not Refer" lists. DOH regularly updates three separate lists on its website: licensed and certified Adult Care Facilities that have received official written notice from DOH of an action based on endangerment of residential health or safety or a pending action against the operating certificate, called the "Referral Suspension List"; facilities that have been closed as a result of the actions described above, called "Closed Facilities"; and uncertified facilities that do not meet personal care and supervision requirements, called the "Uncertified Facilities List."

### How to Access This Information

All of these lists can be found on one web page: [www.nyhealth.gov/facilities/adult\\_care/memorandum.htm](http://www.nyhealth.gov/facilities/adult_care/memorandum.htm). This page can be accessed by first going to the NYS DOH home page at [www.nyhealth.gov/](http://www.nyhealth.gov/), then clicking on "Hospitals, Nursing Homes, and Other Health Care Facilities" on the Site Contents list, then clicking on "Adult Care Facilities," and finally on "About the 'Do Not Refer' List."



## **New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD)**

HPD enforces the City and State residential housing codes and regulations. DHS directly operated or contracted shelters may not refer clients to any unit in a building if HPD has initiated litigation against the landlord or owner because he or she has failed to perform maintenance to comply with these regulations. HPD may also issue a vacate order against a unit or an entire building because it is not safe to live in. When the vacate order is for one unit, DHS may not refer a client to that unit but other units in the building are acceptable; when the vacate order is for the entire building, no unit in that building is an acceptable placement.

### **How to Access This Information**

To find out if HPD has issued a vacate order for a building or entered into litigation against the owner/landlord, go to the HPD website at [www.nyc.gov/hpd](http://www.nyc.gov/hpd). Enter the building's address on the right hand side of the screen (separating the house number from the street name), under "Complaints, Violations, and Registration Information" and you will be taken to a page that provides information about that building.

- To find out about litigation, click on "Litigation/Case Status" on the left hand side of the screen. If nothing is on that screen, there is no litigation against the building; if there is a case listed, clients should not be placed there unless the status is "closed." If there are multiple cases listed, they must all be closed in order for the placement to be acceptable. Litigation will affect the entire building, so if a building is in litigation no unit is acceptable for placement.
- To find out about vacate orders, click on "All Open Violations" on the left hand side. You will have to read through the violations – if a unit or apartment has been vacated, it will say something such as "the premises have been vacated" or "the apartment has been vacated." If just one unit has been vacated, and it is clearly not the unit to which you are referring a client (for example, if an illegal basement apartment has been vacated and your client is moving to the fourth floor), this is an acceptable placement.

## **New York City Department of Buildings (DOB)**

The NYC Department of Buildings ensures the safe and lawful use the City's buildings by enforcing the City's Building Code, Electrical Code, Zoning Resolution, New York State Labor Law and New York State Multiple Dwelling Law. DHS directly operated or contracted programs may not refer to housing for which DOB has issued a vacate order.

### **How to Access This Information**

Visit the DOB website at [www.nyc.gov/buildings](http://www.nyc.gov/buildings). Enter the building's address under "BIS Web Query" on the right hand side. This will pull up the "Property Profile Overview." Scroll down to the gray box on the bottom where you are allowed to select from a list of actions. Select "VAC – VACATE – ACTIVE" and submit. If any vacate orders are revealed, the building is not acceptable for a placement.

## **Housing Placement Form**

All shelters should have received a new Client Placement Report, to be submitted to the QA unit. For long-term housing placements, shelter staff are now required to confirm that:

- The placement meets all three the DHS standards described above; or



- If the placement does not meet all three standards, staff must confirm that the client has been informed that the housing fails to meet DHS minimum standards, and has consented to this placement anyway. Shelter staff must document this conversation in the client record.
- Whether or not the housing meets DHS standards, shelter staff must also confirm that the client has been given the opportunity to view the unit.

### **DHS Quality Assurance Mechanisms**

DHS staff check 10% of reported long-term placements to guarantee that they conform to the standards listed above. If a placement is found to not conform, without client consent, 100% of that shelter's placements will be checked in the future. If a pattern of inappropriate placements is discovered DHS may take action under the contract.

Attachments: Client Placement Report

cc: Executive Staff