**Hennepin County Policy Criterion for**

**Long-Term Homelessness (LTH) 7/2015**

Clients admitted into a Hennepin County Long-Term Homeless program must meet the State of Minnesota’s LTH definition. They must be homeless at a location(s) and for the duration/frequency outlined below. Time spent homeless outside of the country is not included.

**Definitions**

**Long-Term Homeless:** homeless continuously for one year OR at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years.

**Homeless:** lacking a fixed, adequate night time residence.

**Homeless Episode**:Time in homeless settings is separated by time in non-homeless settings. Changing from one homeless location to another back to back is one episode of homelessness.

**Homeless Locations:**

Emergency or domestic violence shelter (could be one night)

Sleeping outside, in a building not intended for habitation, or in a car

Couch hopping or doubled up (not on a lease) in order to avoid staying in a shelter or on the streets

Being doubled up at the same location for more than one year is not considered a homeless location. Staying with a family member who owns their own home is not considered a homeless location.

 Motel stays that are less than 12 months

Board & Lodges are not homeless settings and time spent in them cannot be counted toward time homeless when documenting long-term homelessness.

Note: a homeless location must also include lacking a fixed, adequate night time residence.

**Neutral Stay Locations:** settings that are considered neither a homeless location nor fixed/permanent housing

Transitional Housing (two years or less)

Most Board & Lodges in Hennepin County are permanent housing and are not transitional housing. Hennepin County imposes no time limits on length of stays in Board and Lodges.

Hospital

Treatment Program

Jail

Foster Care

**Neutral Stay Locations and LTH**

Continuously for a year or more

Homeless time before and after a neutral stay location can be added up to make 12 months. Neutral stays are like a pause button when counting duration.

**or**

At least four times in the past three years

Being homeless is distinctly different from being housed or staying at a neutral location. Episodes of homelessness are bookended by time being housed or at a neutral location.

Providers should not be accepting participants into LTH Supportive Housing programs directly from Board & Lodges.

More information can be found on MN Housing’s web site. Hennepin County housing providers are responsible for verifying their client’s homeless history.