

Apple Health and Homes Overview

In 2022, the Washington General Assembly passed [Engrossed Substitute House Bill 1866](#)¹ to create Apple Health and Homes (AHAH). The AHAH initiative was designed to align housing resources (rental assistance and capital financing) with supportive services (Foundational Community Supports) for some of Washington's most vulnerable residents. AHAH requires close collaboration between multiple state agencies, given the integration of service delivery and the braiding of funding sources.

Washington recognizes the importance of addressing the [social determinants of health \(SDOH\)](#)² by providing integrated services and supports that take a holistic perspective of an individual's needs. Social determinants of health significantly impact people's health, well-being, and quality of life. AHAH is predicated on the fact that housing is an SDOH, and a lack of safe housing can contribute to health inequities and impede improving an individual's medical, behavioral health, or physical impairments.

Understanding the Housing First Approach

The AHAH legislation included funding for multiple components that aim to:

- wrap services and supports around individuals with complex needs,
- increase the inventory of housing available for individuals receiving permanent supportive housing (PSH) services, and
- build the capacity of Washington's provider community to provide PSH.

FOUNDATIONAL COMMUNITY SUPPORTS

Foundational Community Supports (FCS) is a Medicaid-funded service that provides supportive housing and supported employment to high-risk/high-cost Medicaid recipients. These services are targeted toward individuals experiencing significant barriers to finding stable housing and employment. FCS is designed to promote self-sufficiency and recovery by helping participants find and maintain stable housing and employment. While FCS was not funded under the AHAH legislation, as the state's supportive housing service, FCS is the foundational component of the AHAH program.

RENTAL ASSISTANCE

The Department of Commerce (Commerce) in 2023 SFY received \$6M to provide rental subsidies to landlords on behalf of AHAH-eligible individuals. This funding will be used to offer tenant-based rental assistance (TBRA) or project-based rental assistance (PBRA) vouchers. Commerce has contracted with a third-party vendor (H2 Consulting) to facilitate rental assistance payments to landlords on behalf of AHAH participants.

CAPITAL FUNDING

In SFY 2023 Commerce was allocated \$60 million in capital funding to increase housing availability for AHAH-eligible participants. These funds will be used for the construction of PSH units or to acquire property that can be converted into PSH units. Units built or acquired with these funds must be restricted to AHAH referrals. Nonprofit housing providers and community organizations can leverage funding to expand their capacity for PSH.

CAPACITY BUILDING GRANTS

In addition to capital funding, Commerce will issue capacity grants to support organizations interested in providing PSH. The goal is to create a strong network of providers to support the AHAH program. These grants are designed to enhance the ability of community support services providers and housing providers to deliver FCS and PSH services through the provision of technical assistance and other training activities.

AHAH Eligibility

AHAH benefits are provided to individuals with the greatest need in WA state, as determined by their eligibility for FCS supportive housing services. AHAH participants must meet specific medical risk factors and have a disability or long-term care need. The AHAH eligibility criteria are as follows:

1. be enrolled in Apple Health (Medicaid),
2. be at least 18 years old,
3. Meets the requirements for a complex need:
 - a. Mental health need
 - b. Substance Use Disorder
 - c. Needs assistance with activities of daily living
 - d. Be a person experiencing homelessness with chronic health conditions
4. Have one of the following risk factors:
 - a. Be homeless or chronically homeless
 - b. History of lengthy institutional contacts
 - c. History of stays at adult residential care facilities or residential treatment facilities

AHAH units and rental assistance are only available to individuals authorized to receive FCS supportive housing services. Individuals who only receive FCS supported employment services are not eligible for AHAH rental assistance.



AHAH Eligibility Process

The first step in the process for accessing AHAH rental assistance services is for an individual to receive a comprehensive assessment from an FCS provider. During the assessment, the provider determines whether the individual is eligible for the program and identifies what type of housing they need (i.e., housing preferences, environmental conditions, and support needs).

The FCS provider shares the results of the housing assessment with the AHAH coordinating entity, Amerigroup. As the FCS third-party administrator of the FCS program, Amerigroup utilizes the housing platform to find a unit within the available AHAH inventory that best meets the individual's assessed needs and preferences.

AHAH Program Authorities and Administrators

Commerce is responsible for creating the Office of Apple Health and Homes/ Permanent Supportive Housing (The Office of AHAH/PSH). The Office coordinates with the Health Care Authority (HCA), other state agencies, and housing and service providers. The Office of AHAH/PSH is responsible for implementing the following components of the program:

- Rental assistance vouchers
- Capital financing to build and acquire housing
- Capacity building and technical assistance for PSH providers

HCA is the agency responsible for Apple Health's administration, including the FCS Program. HCA holds the contract with the FCS coordinating entity.

Amerigroup, the FCS coordinating entity, is a managed care organization. Amerigroup manages the FCS provider network, determines participant eligibility, authorizes services, and provides administrative oversight for the program.



ENDNOTES

¹ Engrossed Substitute House Bill 1866. “Apple Health and Homes: Supportive Housing and Community Support Services,” June 9, 2022. Available at [https://lawfilesexternal.leg.wa.gov/biennium/2021-22/Pdf/Bills/Session Laws/House/1866-S.SL.pdf?q=20230228162351](https://lawfilesexternal.leg.wa.gov/biennium/2021-22/Pdf/Bills/Session%20Laws/House/1866-S.SL.pdf?q=20230228162351)

² “Social Determinants of Health - Healthy People 2030,” Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, accessed April 27, 2023. Available at <https://health.gov/healthypeople/priority-areas/social-determinants-health>.