



# *Department of Human Services*

Monroe County, New York

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## **Monroe County OMH Forensic Housing Initiative Supported Housing (10 Units) Allocation Plan**

As part of New York State Office of Mental Health's commitment to enhance community-based housing services for individuals with a serious mental illness diagnosis that have been referred from Central New York Psychiatric Center (CNYPC) Pre-Release Services, Monroe County was awarded 10 units of supported housing.

It is the intent of Monroe County Office of Mental Health (MCOMH) to allocate these supported housing units to organizations within the County with a demonstrated history of providing forensic and/or housing programming. MCOMH plans to release a request for proposals for these ten forensic supported housing units. The timeframe for this request for proposals is below:

<u>Task:</u>	<u>Due Date:</u>
MCOMH solicits Letter of Interest from housing providers	Friday, September 4, 2015
MCOMH Releases Forensic Supported Housing RFP	Friday, September 11, 2015
Questions from Interested Providers	Wednesday, September 16, 2015
MCOMH Provides Answers to Submitted Questions	Friday, September 18, 2015
Forensic Supported Housing Proposals Due to MCOMH	Friday, October 2, 2015
MCOMH Makes Award Decision	Friday, October 9, 2015

Monroe County stakeholders have been proactive in planning for the needs of individuals being released from CNYPC pre-release services. The intent of this meeting was to identify potential barriers and solicit potential solutions for effectively supporting the needs of this population as they transition from prison into the community. Community meetings have occurred which included the Rochester Psychiatric Center Mobile Integration Team, Monroe County Office of Mental Health, Monroe County dedicated mental health parole officers, and Monroe County residential providers to plan for this population. In addition Monroe County clinical providers have been made aware of the transition of this population to the community and two mental health clinics with trauma informed expertise, as well as clinical forensic expertise have been identified to be a part of this community planning group.

It has been communicated that the inclusion of mental health dedicated parole officer will be an essential support associated with the 10 newly allocated forensic supported housing units. Monroe County mental health dedicated parole officer staff communicated that they are interested in partnering with housing providers regarding this population and stated they would make themselves available to supported housing staff to visit apartment units together and to support housing plans. Mental Health dedicated parole officers reported that individuals would need to reside within the City of Rochester in order to access this mental health parole officer. It was also reported that individuals identified as sexual offenders would be linked to a sexual offender team and not the mental health dedicated parole officer team.

MCOMH shared the guidelines associated with the newly awarded supported housing units with parole and the interested housing organizations within Monroe County, ensuring that all organizations were aware of the eligibility criteria, as well as the expectations associated with these supported housing units. Monroe County Single Point of Access (SPOA) will accept referrals directly from CNYPC and will work closely with the identified stakeholder groups in both the implementation of the forensic supported housing units and on a case-by-case basis with referrals.

It is anticipated that individuals with a serious mental illness diagnosis, who are being released from prison will be offered the opportunity to transition directly into the independent, permanent housing option (versus a proxy referral into a higher level of residential care). In order for individuals to be offered an opportunity to transition into the independent, permanent forensic supported housing units, it will be essential that all ten units have access to additional push in supports to aid in the successful transition from incarceration to recovery in the community.

It is important to note that MCOMH and Monroe County stakeholders continue to see the need for housing options for individuals with a serious mental illness that are released from prison. Housing providers within Monroe County are currently housing a forensic population within their supported housing programs. Within Monroe County, the Rochester Psychiatric Center (RPC) has seen an increase in 2PC referrals directly from prison for individuals with a Serious Mental Illness diagnosis. Currently within Monroe County, seven individuals have been 2PCed to RPC and discharged into the reinvestment supported housing units within Monroe County. In order to continue to effectively meet the needs of individuals referred to forensic supported housing, MCOMH and housing organizations have expressed interest in knowing additional information about the population of individuals that will be referred to these units. Additional information will be essential to informing the implementation plan for these ten supported housing units, ensuring that the appropriate clinical and wrap around supports are in place to support the successful transition from prison back into the community. Additional information such as history of criminal charges, clinical needs, and utilization of physical and behavioral health services post release from prison would be key elements in developing a forensic supported housing community plan. MCOMH will be utilizing individuals referred to directly from prison to MCOMH Single Point of Access (SPOA) during the 2014 calendar year as a proxy for this population and plans to provide additional information to housing providers regarding the aggregate healthcare utilization of this population. In addition, stakeholders within the Monroe County have identified additional questions, as well as best practices that would support the effective transition of this population back into the community. These questions/suggestions include:

- Push-In Supports- It has been communicated that the 10 forensic supported housing units will have access to an undetermined level of push in or clinical supports. When will these push in supports be made available to supported housing providers? What is the type of push in and/or clinical support identified for this population? It is requested that these supports be made available within the same timeframe as the supported housing award so that implementation planning can occur simultaneously.
- Timeframe for SPOA Referrals- it is requested that SPOA referrals for housing/care management originating from prison are sent approximately 3-4 months prior to the identified release date. This enhanced timeframe will increase the likelihood that housing providers and parole can plan and support a timely transition from prison to independent apartment.
- Sharing of Criminal History- It is requested that when possible, consent forms are signed within prison so that history of criminal offenses are shared with housing and clinical providers prior to time of release. This information is often not part of the clinical record as shared by NYS OMH.
- Prescription Supply- It is requested that when possible individuals are provided with a 30 day supply of psychiatric medication (versus a 15 day supply). This enhanced timeframe will allow sufficient time for individuals to have Medicaid activated and/or to be transitioned on to the Medicaid Grant Program.
- Length of Parole- What is the anticipated length of parole for individuals referred to the forensic supported housing units?
- Sex Offender Status- What level sex offenders will be considered for forensic supported housing units? Are the sexual offender dedicated parole officers aware of the supported housing units?