



December 9, 2015

SNAPS In Focus: Equal Access for Transgender People

Transgender people face discrimination and mistreatment in many facets of their lives. These challenges not only increase the likelihood of homelessness, but they also prevent individuals in need from accessing community services. A joint [report](#) by the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force and the National Center on Transgender Equality in 2011 found that for those respondents who had attempted to access homeless shelters, 29% were turned away altogether, 42% were forced to stay in facilities designated for the wrong gender, and others encountered a hostile environment. 55% reported being harassed, 25% were physically assaulted, and 22% were sexually assaulted. This same joint report found that the rate of homelessness among transgender or gender non-conforming persons was nearly double that of the general population. This is unacceptable.

HUD is committed to ensuring that all persons experiencing homelessness have access to inclusive and nondiscriminatory housing. At the [2015 National Alliance to End Homelessness Conference on Ending Family and Youth Homelessness](#) in February 2015, HUD Secretary Julián Castro stated, “It’s an injustice that any transgender person is mistreated when seeking help.” ([Hear more](#) from Secretary Castro on the proposed Gender Identity rule). For this reason, HUD published [Notice CPD-15-02: Appropriate Placement for Transgender Persons in Single-Sex Emergency Shelters and Other Facilities](#), which provides guidance to Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG), Continuum of Care (CoC), and Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS (HOPWA) funded providers on how best to provide shelter to transgender persons in a single-sex facility and on appropriate and inappropriate inquiries related to a potential client’s sex for the purposes of placing transgender persons in temporary, emergency shelters, or other facilities with shared sleeping areas or bathrooms.

On November 20, 2015, HUD published [FR-5863-P-01: Equal Access in Accordance With an Individual’s Gender Identity in Community Planning and Development Programs](#), which proposes to codify into law the non-discrimination practices that HUD first introduced in February 2015. The deadline for submitting comments is January 19, 2016. Your feedback is important in helping HUD to ensure that all persons experiencing homelessness have access to inclusive and nondiscriminatory shelter environments. We encourage you to [read the new Proposed Rule](#) thoroughly and submit your comments by the deadline. The instructions for submitting comments are outlined in the beginning of the Proposed Rule, and we encourage you to [submit comments electronically](#), as this ensures that HUD receives and considers your comments in a timely manner.

Creating inclusive and welcoming communities is a fundamental part of HUD’s mission as America’s housing agency. Therefore, HUD is strongly encouraging providers to begin now to implement the best practices highlighted in [CPD-15-02](#). HUD understands that in many communities this will require staff training and changes to program design. In the coming months we will be publishing several technical assistance materials on the HUD Exchange to help providers adopt these best practices and determine whether



they have done so successfully. In the meantime, if you need assistance, please submit a question to the [Ask A Question](#) (AAQ) portal to request policy clarification or guidance. You can also find additional information on requirements related to Equal Access to housing that are already in place and resources for implementing those requirements on the HUD Exchange [Equal Access to Housing Final Rule page](#).

Our nation is at its best when we open our arms, our minds, and our hearts to our fellow Americans in need. It's our commitment that these resources will do their part to shape a future where all people are accepted, respected, and safely housed.

Thank you for all of your hard work,

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