



**Higher Education Housing and Opportunities Act
(HOUSE)
Standard Operating Procedure**

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PURPOSE

Public Act 102-0083 prescribes that higher education institutions must create a process to help students experiencing or are at risk of homelessness. Institutions are also required to designate an individual or individuals to serve as the HOUSE Liaison. This document will detail the process for providing support and services to Waubonsee Community College students challenged by housing constraints.

POLICY

The Waubonsee Care Team is dedicated to supporting students facing basic needs challenges, including housing, food, transportation, and childcare. We are committed to utilizing all available institutional and community resources to assist students in overcoming these barriers so they can refocus on their education..

DEFINITIONS

Student experiencing homelessness – (homeless student) means an individual enrolled in an institution who lacks or is at imminent risk of lacking a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence or whose parent or legal guardian is unable or unwilling to provide shelter and care and includes a homeless individual as defined under the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. For the purposes of this definition, the term "fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence" does not include residence in an institution of higher education's on-campus housing. At this time, Waubonsee Community College does not offer on-campus housing.

Student in care – means any person, regardless of age, who is or was under the care and legal custody of the Department of Children and Family Services, including youth for whom the Department has court-ordered legal responsibility, youth who aged out of care at age 18 or older, or youth formerly under care who have been adopted and were the subject of an adoption assistance agreement or who have been placed in private guardianship and were subject of a subsidized guardianship agreement.

House Liaison – a person who is responsible for overseeing a process to provide support to students facing/experiencing homelessness and oversee the following functions:

- understand financial aid guidelines,
- identify services and resources appropriate for homeless students,
- assist students with applying for and receiving federal and state financial aid and available services,
- track and monitor the graduation rate and retention rate of homeless students and students in care,

- report annually to the Board of Higher Education or the Illinois Community College Board,
- act as an intermediary between a homeless student or student in care and the financial aid office and student support services,
- connect students experiencing or at risk of homelessness to a local continuum of care program,
- publish on the institution's website information about the services and resources available through Waubensee Community College, and
- train the institutions' employees to identify students experiencing homelessness and refer those students to the Waubensee Community College Care Team.

Care Team – Waubensee staff and administrators, nominated by the HOUSE Liaison to operationalize the process detailed in this SOP (Standard Operating Procedures) to support students identified as homeless or a student in care.

IBHE – Illinois Board of Higher Education

ICCB – Illinois Community College Board

RESPONSIBILITY

List the department/unit/person(s) responsible for carrying out the functions in this procedure.

Financial Aid Services – (by role)

Director of Student Financial Aid Services	They are designated as House Liaisons and have chief oversight of the process creation, assimilation of resources, and communicator of the process to the campus community.
Manager, Financial Aid	Handle referrals for "special circumstance" review for students whose housing/employment may support a reevaluation of financial need or dependency status override.
Financial Aid Advisor of Scholarships	In partnership with a Student Success Counselor, receives student referrals, coordinates outreach and initial intake interviews, and creates a care plan that

	identifies appropriate student services for additional student support and follow-up through a referral process.
Financial Aid Administrative Assistant	Regularly reviews published community resources and updates as needed, including website address, physical address, point of contact, and phone number.

Student Success and Retention – (by Role)

Counseling and Student Support Manager	Helps triage counseling-related referrals, including coordinating counseling follow-up with SSR Counselor.
SSR Counselor	In partnership with the Financial Aid advisor, provide counseling follow-up and create a care plan that identifies appropriate student services for additional student support and follow-up through a referral process.

PROCESS OVERVIEW

Questions related to the HOUSE process and student resource referrals should go to HOUSE@waubonsee.edu.

Waubonsee Community College Administrators, Staff, and other interested parties who are actively engaging with a student facing housing insecurities or have observed that a student may need additional assistance as they may be demonstrating subtle or overt changes in behaviors or attendance patterns should use the Housing Outreach Request webform accessible through the Financial Aid Home page through the *Unstable Housing Arrangements* link or <https://mywcc.waubonsee.edu/housing-outreach-request> . Once an inquiry is submitted, the Care Team will receive requests via HOUSE@waubonsee.edu.

Students experiencing housing insecurities can reach out for assistance.

Upon receipt of an outreach request, in up to two business days, Financial Aid will contact the student to conduct the initial intake process or schedule a time to facilitate the process. The

intake process can be performed by phone, online (Zoom), or in person. Following the intake process, the advisor will share resources to support housing and food insecurities, along with a written plan of referrals.

The referral process will include contacting other Student Support or Academic Support Service areas to inform them of the student's interest in connecting for support.

For students experiencing challenges completing the Financial Aid process, the Financial Aid Manager/Director will review the student's file for special circumstance considerations.

Data from the intake process will be stored in BANNER Financial Aid, screen ROANYUD for reporting purposes. Annual reporting requirements to ICCB/IBHE will involve Institutional Effectiveness.

RELATED INFORMATION

Related Documents

RELATED DOCUMENTS	
DOCUMENT NAME	LOCATION OR LINK TO DOCUMENT
HOUSE Public Act 102-0083	X:\FinAid\HOUSE
McKinney-Veto Homeless Assistance Act	X:\FinAid\HOUSE
Transitional Housing Resources	X:\FinAid\HOUSE
Waubensee Cares Intake Form_Final	X:\FinAid\HOUSE
WCT_Inter-Departmental_Form_Final	X:\FinAid\HOUSE

REVISIONS HISTORY

DATE	CHANGE	EDITOR
2/22/2023	SOP CREATION DATE	MARY GREENWOOD
05/09/2024	Reviewed for accuracy	Mary Greenwood

VERSION CONTROL

DOCUMENT NAME	Higher Education Housing and Opportunities Act (HOUSE) Standard Operating Procedure
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VERSION	First Draft	
FUNCTIONAL OWNER APPROVAL	Name: Mary Greenwood, Director of Student Financial Aid Services	Date: 03/31/2023
QUALITY ASSURANCE APPROVAL	Name: Lisa Richardson, Executive Dean for Student Success and Retention	Date: 04/06/2023

1.0 HOUSE REFERRAL REVIEW

When we receive an inquiry, add tracking requirement HOUSE to the BANNER screen and leave the status at N until the intake process is completed. Index the inquiry form to the requirement in Xtender for record-keeping purposes.

The first level of monitoring the HOUSE email inbox will occur daily as a shared responsibility between the Financial Aid Advisor of Scholarship and the Counseling and Student Support Manager.

Second-level monitoring will be a shared responsibility between the Financial Aid Manager and the designated Financial Aid Administrative Assistant when the first-level monitors are out of the office.

Lead contact for intake scheduling will be the responsibility of the Financial Aid Advisor and should take place within 1 to 2 business days following receipt of the inquiry. A student who exhibits signs of mental or physical distress should be routed to Waubonsee Personal Counseling (630-466-2361) or other appropriate service found at <https://www.waubonsee.edu/student-experience/health-and-wellness-resources/personal-counseling> and follow up with the student the next business day.

1.1 Financial Aid Outreach

During intake calls or scheduled appointments, the Financial Aid Advisor will assist the student in completing the Waubonsee Cares Intake Form (see section 1.2). The Financial Aid Advisor will attempt to reach the student by the preferred method to conduct the intake. If the student is unavailable during outreach, the advisor will leave a voicemail and send an email (the order depends on the student's preference). Suppose the student does not respond or attempt to contact us within five calendar days. In that case, the inquiry will be recorded in BANNER as a non-response. The Financial Aid Advisor will send a courtesy email to both the student's school-issued and personal email informing them of Financial Aid's contact information, hours of operations, and crisis hotline information.

1.2 Student Success and Retention Outreach

Counselor will provide relevant personal counseling support and reinforce resources shared by the Financial Aid Advisor.

2. HOUSE INTAKE PROCESS

During the intake process, both the student and advisor will review the form. While the student should take the lead in completing the form, the advisor will explain the purpose of the form and reassure the student that all information shared will be kept confidential and retained as part of their student file. The advisor will also help to provide clarification of questions as needed.

2.1 Purpose of the Waubonsee Cares Intake Form

The State of Illinois requires public 2-year and 4-year institutions to provide information on resources available for community support to its enrolled students with transitional housing needs. Waubonsee is committed to informing students of available community resources and our rich academic and student support services. To best help us customize a support plan for students in need, the questionnaire allows us to understand their circumstances better.

2.2 Navigating the Waubonsee Care Intake Form

Depending on the student's situation, the intake form may be the first opportunity to capture the student's current contact information. Being sensitive to the student potentially not having a permanent mailing address, we should remind the student to complete and submit the [Student Information Change Form](#) to ensure important school-related information continues to reach them. Paper forms can be forwarded to any Registration and Records Office, and no explanation for the change is needed. Following the initial demographic, mode of contact, and availability questions, the student is encouraged to answer the following five questions to begin curating a care plan and initiate the referral process:

- 1. Do you live with your parents? Yes or No**
 - a. If no, please describe your living situation (ex: temporarily with others, on your own, transitional housing program, hotel/motel, or an unsheltered location):*
- 2. Is your living situation reliable and safe?** *(Ex: are you at risk of being asked to leave, is there running water, heat, electricity, windows & doors)*
- 3. Are there any particular circumstances that brought you to this living situation?**
(There may be one-time assistance available)
- 4. Do your parents financially support you in any way?** *(Ex: rent, bills, insurance.)*
 - a. If yes, please describe what type of assistance you receive:*
 - b. If no, how do you support yourself, and how long have you supported yourself:*

5. Have you ever been declared an unaccompanied homeless youth by any of the following organizations?

Based on the student's responses to their living arrangements, there may be an opportunity to reevaluate their financial aid eligibility or dependency status. Below are advising suggestions based on their response:

1. Lives with parents/own their own but is at risk of losing their home or being displaced – confirm if they have secure shelter or need shelter resources.

- a. **FAFSA/ALT MAP** – Check current year financial aid to see if the student applied for financial assistance. If not, offer to help them complete the process (if eligible to help secure funding to remain in classes). If yes, check to see if the student is Pell/Map eligible – if not, and they have not earned an advanced degree, proceed to explain that we can try to reevaluate the need based on their current year's circumstance through our special circumstance process.
- b. **Emergency Needs Fund** – Does the student fit the criteria for ENF? The emergency must be a "one-time, new barrier or obstacle" that is "unexpected or unusual":

- Provide clear, supporting documents of the circumstance
- Submit a clear statement on how this impacts their ability to attend classes for the semester
- Have completed six credits at Waubensee Community College
- Are enrolled in a minimum of 6 credit hours
- Have demonstrated potential for academic success
- Academically in good standing
- Do not have student conduct cases that put them in a negative standing at the College

- c. **Documentation** – They will need to gather documentation to pursue a special circumstance review or EMF. Following the Special Circumstance process outlined in the Financial Aid Policies and Procedures guide, the advisor will advise the student to collect items such as eviction notices/foreclosure/short-sale notices, past-due rent/mortgage notices, and police reports (or similar documents) if disaster-related displacement. This is not an exhaustive list, and they can submit multiple documents.

2. Lived with parents/own their own but forced or asked to leave home –

- a. **FAFSA/ALT MAP** – Check current year financial aid to see if the student applied for financial assistance. If not, offer to help them complete the process (if eligible to help secure funding to remain in classes). This situation may warrant

a dependency override, and we will need to meet with the Financial Aid Manager or Director to assess eligibility.

- b. **Emergency Needs Fund** – Does the student fit the criteria for ENF? The emergency must be a "one-time, new barrier or obstacle" that is "unexpected or unusual":
- Provide clear, supporting documents of the circumstance
 - Submit a clear statement on how this impacts their ability to attend classes for the semester
 - Have completed six credits at Waubensee Community College
 - Are enrolled in a minimum of 6 credit hours
 - Have demonstrated potential for academic success
 - Academically in good standing
 - Do not have student conduct cases that put them in a negative standing at the College
- c. **Documentation** – If the Financial Aid Director or Manager determines that a dependency override is warranted, they will follow the Dependency Override process outlined in the Financial Aid Policies and Procedures guide.

3.0 REFERRAL PROCESS (STUDENT SUPPORT & ACADEMIC SUPPORT SERVICES)

The last question of the intake form assesses the student's interest and desire for outreach from other areas of Academic and Student support offices. Based on the student's needs, each office will receive an email from the Financial Aid office informing them that the student needs additional services to foster additional academic support. Details related to the student's housing status will only be shared on a need-to-know basis (will this information help the requestor perform their duties in assisting the student?).

The following list of support areas may change based on available services:

- Information regarding local transitional housing
- Information regarding local food pantries
- School Counseling Services
- Tutoring and Student Support
- Money Management & Budgeting Services
- Academic Advising
- Financial Aid Review

- ADA Accommodations
- Student Employment
- WIOA Grants (if applicable)
- DCSF School Funding Info.

4.0 BANNER INPUT

The HOUSE Intake should be indexed in Xtender and appended to tracking requirement **HOUSE**.

Use the following tracking statuses on RRAAREQ:

Status Code	Status Description	When to Use Status
A	Appointment Scheduled	Use when a student requests to complete the intake process later.
C	Complete	Use after the student and advisor have facilitated the intake process, and a DEPO or SC is unnecessary.
N	Needed	Use when adding the HOUSE requirement upon receipt of a request for housing outreach.
R	Received, Not Yet Reviewed	Use when a student needs to meet with the Financial Aid Manager or Director to determine if a Dependency Override is required.
X	Closed	Use when a student fails to respond to outreach attempts within five calendar days.
Reserved for the future status		
Reserved for the future status		

Notate BANNER screen RHACOMM at each change in status and detail what steps were taken and what steps remain to support the student.

For IBHE and ICCB reporting, use the following chart to record data collected on BANNER screen ROANYUD (fields 21 – 59). Institutional Effectiveness can supply data related to persistence and graduation.

ROANYUD Field	ROANYUD Description	Value (Response) Y – Yes; N – No	Corresponding Intake Form Question
21	Heading: <i>HOUSE Intake Questions (22-27)</i>	N/A	N/A
22	Residing with parent	Y/N	Question 1
23	Temp. housing - family members, friends, others	Y/N	Question 1
24	Living by themselves but at-risk of losing shelter	Y/N	Question 1
25	Shelter/Transitional Housing	Y/N	Question 1
26	Hotel/Motel/Temp. Rentals (i.e., Airbnb)	Y/N	Question 1
27	Unsheltered location (i.e., car, park, public space)	Y/N	Question 1

28	Blank	N/A	N/A
29	Current Living Situation Safe	Y/N	Question 2
30	Unusual/Unexpected Circumstances	Y/N	Question 3
31	Heading: Receive Parental Support (32-35)	N/A	N/A
32	for rent?	Y/N	Question 4
33	for bills?	Y/N	Question 4
34	on parent's health insurance?	Y/N	Question 4
35	other?	Y/N	Question 4
36	Heading: Ever Declared Unaccompanied Homeless Youth (37-40)	N/A	N/A
37	High School Homeless Liaison	Y/N	Question 5
38	Runaway & Homeless Youth Act Director	Y/N	Question 5
39	HUD Assistance Program Director	Y/N	Question 5
40	Financial Aid/Trio/GEAR Up Director	Y/N	Question 5
41	Heading: HOUSE Review (42-46)	N/A	N/A
42	Student Experiencing Homelessness	Y/N	Upon Review
43	Student In Care	Y/N	Upon Review
44	Blank	N/A	N/A
45	FA Professional Judgment performed (SC/DEPO)	Y/N	Upon Review
46	FA Director Interview (UHY Determination)	Y/N	Upon Review
47	Blank	N/A	N/A
48	Heading: Referrals (49-59)	N/A	N/A
49	Transitional Housing	Y/N	Question 6
50	Food Pantries	Y/N	Question 6
51	School Counseling Services	Y/N	Question 6
52	Tutoring or Student Support Services	Y/N	Question 6
53	Money Management & Budgeting Services	Y/N	Question 6
54	Academic Advising	Y/N	Question 6
55	Financial Aid Review (PJ)	Y/N	Question 6
56	ADA Accommodations	Y/N	Question 6
57	Student Employment	Y/N	Question 6
58	WIOA Grants	Y/N	Question 6
59	DCSF School Funding Info	Y/N	Question 6

5.0 SUGGESTED EMAIL LANGUAGE

Below is suggested text for standard student communication:

5.1 Housing Outreach Follow-Up Email

Subject: Housing Concern Outreach & Community Resources

Body:

Dear [insert name],

Your information was given to the Waubonsee Cares Team as a student who may need transitional housing or food insecurity resources.

Attached you will find local community resources that you may find useful in navigating uncertain times. If you need more help communicating and reaching any of the resources, please respond to this email and a Waubonsee Cares Team member will help connect you with the appropriate contact.

If you ever need to talk to someone about your situation you can call the **WCC talk line which is available 24/7 at 630-264-0394**, they will listen and can give you information about any services that you qualify for.

A Waubonsee Cares Team member will contact you to do an intake form and help you connect with other Waubonsee resources or do a financial aid review. If you would like to schedule a meeting with a financial aid representative, please reply to this email and an intake form can be completed via phone or in person. This information will remain confidential and only be used to help you navigate this time at Waubonsee and connect you with more resources for success.

Additionally, if you have not already applied to the Waubonsee Emergency Needs Fund and feel that you qualify, please apply and attach supporting documentation at the following link, questions can be directed to emergencyneeds@waubonsee.edu <https://waubonsee.academicworks.com/opportunities/982>.

Sincerely,

The Waubonsee Cares Team

Attachments:

Transitional Housing Resources

Student Help Resources List

Agency Referrals Counselor UPDATED

5.2 Appointment Confirmation Email

Subject: Housing Intake – Appointment Confirmation

Body:

Hello [insert student name],

The Waubonsee Care Team is contacting you to confirm your upcoming intake appointment.

Your appointment is currently booked at (time) on (date), (location/modality). We're looking forward to meeting you. If you have questions before the appointment or need to change or cancel, please contact me at (insert details).

Sincerely,

The Waubonsee Cares Team

5.3 Missed Appointment Email

Subject: Housing Intake – Missed Appointment

Body:

Dear [insert student name],

We are sending this letter to follow up on your missed intake appointment scheduled for (time), (date), with the (Name). We understand that schedules may change expectedly. Please let us know if you wish to reschedule.

To reschedule your missed appointment, please call us at (630) 466-5774 and ask to speak with a member of the Waubonsee Care team or reply to this email. If we do not hear from you within 48 hours (about 2 days), we will assume non-interest and close the request for outreach. You are always welcome to reach open and reopen your request and schedule an appointment.

Sincerely,

The Waubonsee Cares Team

Attachments:

Transitional Housing Resources

Student Help Resources List

Agency Referrals Counselor UPDATED

5.4 Post Intake: Care Plan Email

Subject: Housing Intake Follow Up and Care Plan

Body:

Dear [insert student name],

Thank you for completing the intake process with a member of the Waubonsee Care team today. As discussed, your care plan will include the following steps and connections:

- Action/Referral One
- Action/Referral Two

Below are direct links to resources that may offer additional assistance and resources during your housing transition.

Please let me know if I can answer any questions, provide additional information, or follow up on any ideas we discussed.

Sincerely,

The Waubonsee Cares Team

Resources:

[Financial Aid and Scholarships | Waubonsee Community College](#)

[Emergency Needs Fund Scholarship - Waubonsee Community College \(academicworks.com\)](#)

[Special and Unusual Circumstances | Waubonsee Community College](#)