



DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA

How Matches Are Made

From an opening to an offer – how prioritization actually works.

City of Durham · Durham County · Durham Community Safety Department

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From an opening to an offer — how prioritization actually works.

When an opening becomes available anywhere in the system, the path from that opening to a neighbor getting keys follows four steps.

Four steps

1 · The eligibility screen. Every resource has its own eligibility rules. When an opening surfaces, we screen the by-name list against those rules and produce a resource-specific list: the people or households who could be eligible for this particular opening.

2 · The Housing Barriers Assessment orders the list. Households on that list are prioritized using their HBA score — the standardized read on risk, vulnerability, and barriers that keeps prioritization consistent and fair across the whole system.

3 · Context completes the picture. The HBA is the guide, not the verdict, for three reasons. No assessment captures a person's or household's entire context. Scores age — an HBA done two or three months ago may not reflect conditions today. And important information often emerges in case conferencing that no assessment question would have surfaced. So before a match is made, the households at the top of the list are considered in full — score *and* context.

THIS IS HOW HUD SAYS IT SHOULD WORK

Federal coordinated entry guidance (Notice CPD-17-01) is explicit that an assessment score alone does not necessarily determine the relative order of participants for resources, and that additional consideration — including case conferencing — is often necessary to align outcomes with a community's prioritization process.

4 · Chronicity breaks ties. Where two households are comparably prioritized, chronicity determines who matches to the resource.

The score and the resource are not a one-to-one crosswalk

The HBA is a composite of many factors. That means someone can score very high without having severe behavioral health or medical needs — while someone scoring lower has exactly the needs that permanent supportive housing exists to serve. The

crosswalk between an HBA score and a PSH match is highly related but not direct. In step three, that context is explored — and at times a household with a higher HBA score is matched to rapid re-housing while a household with more intensive needs is matched to PSH. That isn't the system overriding the score; it's the system matching the resource to the need.

Where Homeward Durham fits

Essentially every household is eligible for Homeward Durham. Even so, we match into RRH, PSH, and voucher programs — HUD-VASH, SSVF, and others — **first**, and turn to the Flexible Housing Assistance Fund after. Three reasons:

1 · Restricted slots should go to the people who fit them. Many of those programs carry tight eligibility rules. When an eligible household takes a restricted slot, the less-restricted openings stay available for households who qualify for nothing else.

2 · Longer-term resources are better matches. For a household that qualifies for PSH or a long-term subsidy, that is the stronger, more durable solution — matching them to twelve months of assistance instead would be a worse outcome.

3 · Funds that must be drawn down should be. Many programs must spend their allocations or risk losing them, or face penalties. Matching to those programs first protects the system's total resources.

HOW THE PIECES INTERACT

Homeward Durham can also be the place **from which** a household moves into PSH or a voucher — someone can be enrolled, stabilize, and then move into a longer-term subsidy from there.



Making homelessness rare and brief — in a voice
the whole city can trust.

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