

# HRSA Issues Final Notice on Ryan White Housing Policy 99-02 Amendment 1

24 Month lifetime cap and impossible reporting requirements reinstated

*Please forgive any sent duplications*

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## **For Immediate Release**

Out of the blue, the Health Resources Services Administration (HRSA) published in the Tuesday, February 26, 2008 Federal Register a final notice amending its Emergency and Transitional Housing Policy. ([Click here to view the notice](#)). Thanks to the terrific response of congressional supporters and many of you (200 comments to HRSA, overwhelmingly in opposition) HRSA withdrew the amendment in winter 2007. For background visit the [NAHC Archives](#) and scroll to February 27, 2007.

Despite acknowledging receipt of over 200 comments with only a few in support, amazingly, the final notice (HRSA HAB Policy Notice -- 99-02, Amendment 1, effective March 27, 2008) distills the public comments to three points and disposes of them as follows:

1. 24 month lifetime cap on housing assistance is too restrictive and does not allow for exceptions: HRSA disagrees and retains the requirement but makes it prospective. The clock would begin to tick on March 27. HRSA underscores that Ryan White housing assistance must be short-term and geared to helping people access more permanent housing options.
2. Immediate effective date is problematic: HRSA believes that the March 27, 2008 effective date for the running of the clock on assistance will provide programs time to "properly improvement"
3. Failure to grandfather current clients close to the 24 month cap and the challenges of establishing new tracking systems: HRSA has made the policy prospective so that housing assistance prior to the March 27 effective date will not count toward the cap.

HRSA's disposition of NAHC's (and other commenters) objections to the earlier proposed policy amendment are completely unacceptable.

- The policy would require the creation of an entirely new tracking process for this policy, establishing a new administrative burden with no new resources, at a time when the Ryan White grantees have much less funding than ever to administer the the programs.
- The policy comes at a time when people with HIV are living longer and any cumulative utilization cap disregards the episodic nature of HIV medical problems--even for those who are able to successfully manage their disease. The client base for Ryan White are predominantly low-income, people of color who are facing myriad socio-economic challenges.
- With the affordable housing market crumbling around us and the economy tanking-- this is the wrong policy at the wrong time. Only one in four households eligible for the federal low income housing programs receive assistance.
- HRSA funds are used to support transitional housing because it remains an essential service for people living with HIV/AIDS. There are no other funding streams to supplant Ryan White. Indeed, Ryan White is the payer of last resort and denying access to housing support through Ryan White would put many clients at high risk for homelessness.

NAHC is working on a response and will post a proposed action strategy shortly. In the meantime, alert your Congressional delegation about what this housing policy will mean for your community.

**The National AIDS Housing Coalition** is a national non-profit housing organization that works to advance the creation, development, management and growth of housing for persons living with HIV/AIDS in our communities.

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**About National AIDS Housing Coalition:** *The National AIDS Housing Coalition (NAHC) is a 501(c)(3) organization founded in February 1994. NAHC believes that persons living with HIV/AIDS have a fundamental right to decent, safe, affordable housing and supportive services that are responsive and appropriate to their self-determined needs. The purpose of the NAHC is to ensure that the diverse voices of those infected and affected by HIV are heard and their needs are met.*

<http://www.nationalaidshousing.org>

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