Colbert and Williams Consent Decree Programs
Policies and Procedures:
Bridge Subsidy Units Over Fair Market Rent

Policy Number:	P4.06
Subject:	Bridge Subsidy Units Over Fair Market Rent
Section:	P4 Housing Search
Scope:	Comprehensive Program, Front Door Diversion Program
Effective Date:	2/1/2021
Last Revision:	10/1/2026

POLICY STATEMENT

Colbert and Williams Class Members and Front Door Diversion Program (FDDP) Participants have the right to financial housing assistance provided by the Bridge Subsidy if they meet the eligibility criteria. The Bridge Subsidy is subject to financial limitations including the maximum allowable rent for a particular geographic area, called the Fair Market Rent (FMR). The FMR is determined on an annual basis by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and is assigned by county, metropolitan area, or zip code. Current FMR amounts can be found on the HUD website at: https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/fmr.html. Note that the HUD-published FMR amounts include all utilities; Housing Locators should defer to the Bridge Subsidy Administrator for information on utility allowances and maximum permitted FMR.

Prime Agencies and FDDP Providers are expected to help Class Members and FDDP Participants locate housing that meets 100% of the FMR for the individual's preferred housing location. In cases where Housing Locators are unable to locate housing below 100% FMR or a rent increase causes a Bridge Subsidy recipient's recertification to go over 100% FMR, reasonable accommodations to allow rent amounts over 100% may be granted according to the procedures outline below. That said, rent increases are not guaranteed to be approved. This policy will apply to initial applications for the Bridge Subsidy as well as to annual recertifications. Whether the Bridge Subsidy Administrator or by IDHS is allowed to grant the reasonable accommodation depends on whether the request depends on if the request is for an initial application for the Bridge Subsidy or a Bridge Subsidy recipient annual recertification, and the relevant FMR%. This policy does not apply to Bridge Subsidy recipients who are participating in the Employment Incentive Program.

The Bridge Subsidy is intended to support Class Members and Front Door Diversion Program Participants in securing housing in the community, but it is a temporary solution to housing assistance until Bridge Subsidy recipients can secure permanent housing support. For any approvals over 100% FMR, the Prime Agency and Subsidy administrator must make Bridge Subsidy recipients aware that under a permanent subsidy through the public housing authority, their tenant portion would likely increase to accommodate the cost over the FMR. Generally, PHAs will not approve tenant rent amounts of more than 40% of the tenant's adjusted gross income (AGI).

It is the expectation that all agencies develop and follow internal operating procedures surrounding consent decree activities. However, these internal procedures must align with IDHS policies and procedures.

PROCEDURES

1. Housing Locators must exhaust all efforts to secure affordable housing for potential subsidy recipients within 100% of the FMR, including any applicable utility allowance, before requesting a reasonable accommodation.
    a. Housing Locators must use the HUD.gov website to calculate FMR for a particular location. (https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/fmr.html)
    b. Housing Locators must defer to the Bridge Subsidy Administrator for applicable utility allowance.
    c. Housing Locators must assist participants in applying to at least two units in their preferred geographic areas under 100% of the FMR prior to assisting the participant to view units over 100% FMR.
2. If the rent amount for the individual's desired housing unit exceeds 100% of the FMR after factoring in any applicable utility allowance, the Housing Locator should submit a written request to the applicable Bridge Subsidy Administrator for approval using form 4.10 Bridge Subsidy Waiver Request. This request should include:
    a. Class Member or FDDP Participant name and RIN
    b. Desired housing unit address, including apartment number
    c. Size of unit (number of bedrooms)
    d. Requested rent amount
    e. Applicable FMR and any applicable utility allowance
    f. Class Member or FDDP Participant's income, or anticipated income for individuals currently residing in a long-term care facility; and
    g. Previous Housing Applications Submitted and Outcome (at least two)
    h. Rationale for requesting a reasonable accommodation and substantiated justification. Examples of rationales could include the lack of affordable units within the individual's preferred geographic area, the need for a larger unit to accommodate medical equipment or difficulty being approved for more affordable housing due to justice involvement or background.
    i. Details of attempts made to utilize Statewide Referral Network (SRN), Section 811, and/or other affordable housing voucher option(s) in lieu of Bridge Subsidy utilization. The Class Member or FDDP Participant's SRN application number and date applied are required.
    j. Details of attempts to locate and apply for affordable housing in the Class Member's or FDDP Participant's preferred area.
    k. Details of attempts to mitigate barriers to obtaining affordable housing in the Class Member's or FDDP Participant's preferred area.
    l. Details of attempts to meet Class Member's or FDDP Participant's accommodation needs prior to request.
    m. Details related to attempts to utilize existing CCMTP housing resources accessible to FDDP Providers, first such as Master Leasing, SRN, CSH consultation…etc.
3. The Bridge Subsidy Administrator will determine if the overage will be permitted, in consultation with IDHS if necessary.
    a. Overage determinations are made on a case-by-case basis, based on the relevant FMR% and whether the request is for an initial application for the Bridge Subsidy or a Bridge Subsidy recipient annual recertification, .
    b. Overages will be denied if the requestor has **not** demonstrated they have applied to and received denials (or nonresponse after 7 days) from 2 units that are not over 100% FMR, and/or if the 4.10 Bridge Subsidy Waiver Request is incomplete.
    c. The Bridge Subsidy administrator and/or IDHS may require housing locators to submit documentation (such as a written communications from a care provider) showing that there

are no available alternatives to meet the participant's medical or disability-related needs in some cases, especially if a higher FMR overage is requested.

d. Housing locators are encouraged to negotiate with the landlord to get the rent down to 100% FMR. In some cases when the Bridge Subsidy Administrator and/or IDHS is denying an overage they will include the dollar amount of FMR in a denial, such that the housing locator may present this to the landlord to attempt to negotiate the requested rent down to 100% FMR. For annual recertifications where rent goes above 100% FMR, the Bridge Subsidy Administrator and/or IDHS may attempt to negotiate with the landlord to reduce the requested rent.
e. Overages will only be approved if no reasonable alternatives are available, and the rent overage is required to meet the tenant's preferences and medical or disability-related needs.
f. The proposed tenant must be made aware that any approved FMR overage may prevent them from obtaining permanent subsidy coverage for the requested unit and must be told that their obligation under the Bridge Subsidy is to obtain permanent housing assistance when it is available, even if that requires them to move.

4. Notwithstanding any calculation based on FMR above, Bridge Subsidy recipients will not be required to contribute more than 30% of their adjusted gross income (AGI) towards rent while they are receiving the Bridge Subsidy.

REVISION & APPROVAL HISTORY

Revision Number	Revision Date	Nature of Revision	Approved By
1	2/25/2021	New procedure	A. Johnson
2	9/9/2021	Revised limits on FMR and streamlined waiver processes	A. Johnson
3	5/23/2023	Updated to provide more examples of rationale, clarify approval criteria, and reflect FY24 procedures. Request form updated.	Valencia King
4	7/19/2024	Annual updates which include adding FDDP Participants to policy practice	T. Fuller
5	10/14/2024	Reviewed during FY 25 updates	V. King
6	1/2/2025	Added language that outlines the requirement to utilize alternative housing vouchers prior to the submission of the FMR overage request	M. Miller-Attang
7	8/22/2025	Removal of 'DMH' in reference to IDHS	M. Miller-Attang
8	10/1/2026	Clarified Bridge Subsidy FMR limit is 100% FMR, that FMR will be reviewed not only at initial move-in but also recertification, and outlined process for any requests for units above 100% FMR.	M. McCarthy