# **CoC/ESG Project Sample Emergency Transfer Plan for Survivors of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, Stalking and/or Human Trafficking**

## Information about Emergency Transfers

The Connecticut Balance of State (CT BOS) Continuum of Care (CoC) wants to make sure that people living in transitional housing, permanent supportive housing, and rapid re-housing projects are safe. This includes people who have experienced domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking. A federal law called the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA),1 gives people getting assistance from ESG/CoC transitional housing (TH), permanent supportive housing (PSH), rapid re-housing (RRH), and homelessness prevention projects who are survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking or human trafficking the right to request an emergency transfer to move to a different housing unit or project in certain circumstances. VAWA protection is available regardless of someone’s sex, gender identity, marital status or sexual orientation.

An Emergency Transfer Plan helps residents to move to a different housing unit if they need to for safety reasons. Each TH, PSH, RRH, and Homelessness Prevention project funded by CT BOS and/or the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) program must have an Emergency Transfer Plan. Providers may use this sample plan to help create their agencies’ Emergency Transfer Plan.

CT BOS is also committed to making sure that survivors understand their VAWA Emergency Transfer rights. CT BOS requires the projects it funds and Coordinated Access Networks (CANs), to:

1. Read this [Notice about VAWA Emergency Transfer Rights](https://www.ctbos.org/wp-content/uploads/ER-Transfer-Rights-Notice-v7.docx) and insert the information that is specific to their projects.
2. Give this notice to all households who are asking for help or already receiving it when they first apply, when they enter a CoC project, and at least once each year.
3. Take the time to go over this notice with the people who are asking for or getting services to help them know and understand their rights.

CT BOS projects and CANS must do these things for every applicant and project participant even if they are not known to be a survivor of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking or human trafficking.

## **Sample Emergency Transfer Plan for CoC/ESG Projects**

**Instructions:**

* Agencies receiving HUD CoC or ESG funds for Transitional Housing, Permanent Supportive Housing, Rapid Rehousing, and/or Homelessness Prevention projects must have a VAWA Emergency Transfer Plan.
* Providers may use this sample plan to help create their agencies’ Emergency Transfer Plan. Providers must insert information specific to their agencies into the fields highlighted in yellow in this sample.

### Emergency Transfer Plan Overview

This is the VAWA Emergency Transfer Plan for INSERT AGENCY NAME (referred to herein as “The Agency”). This plan applies to all projects that receive CoC and/or ESG funding. This plan covers: who is eligible for a VAWA emergency transfer; the documentation needed to request an emergency transfer; confidentiality protections; the process for emergency transfers; guidance on safety, security and referrals for safety planning and other services; record retention and reporting requirements; and requirements for notifying residents of their emergency transfer rights. This plan is based on a [model emergency transfer plan](https://www.hud.gov/sites/documents/5381.docx) published by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

### Eligibility for Emergency Transfers

A survivor of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking or human trafficking, residing in transitional housing, permanent supportive housing, or rapid rehousing is eligible for an emergency transfer, if they:

* Request an Emergency Transfer; and
* Reasonably believe that there is a threat of imminent harm from further violence if they remain in the same unit; or
* If a sexual assault occurred on the premises within the 90- day period preceding a request for an emergency transfer.

Eligibility for an Emergency Transfer is based solely on the need identified by the participant. Residents’ adherence to lease obligations, program expectations, or other program requirements does not impact their eligibility for an emergency transfer. The Agency may not consider mental health, perceived reliability of the requestor, gender, family composition or other factors.

### Emergency Transfer Request Documentation

To request an emergency transfer, the resident shall notify the contact person listed below**:**

# (INSERT CONTACT NAME, EMAIL, AND ADDRESS FOR EACH TRANSITIONL HOUSING, RAPID REHOUSING, AND PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING PROJECT)

If possible, the resident should submit the request in writing and include either:

1. A statement expressing that the resident reasonably believes that there is a threat of imminent harm from further violence if they were to remain in the same

transitional housing, permanent supportive housing, or rapid re-housing unit; OR

1. A statement that the resident was a sexual assault victim and that the sexual assault occurred on the premises during the 90-calendar-day period preceding the request for an emergency transfer.

Residents may use [Form HUD-5383](https://www.hud.gov/sites/documents/VAWA-APDIXD-EMERTRANSREQ.DOCX) to request an emergency transfer; however, they are not required to use this specific form. Residents can submit an emergency transfer request in whatever format is easiest for them. Residents who would like help putting the request into writing, can contact the person listed above. The person listed above will ensure that all emergency transfer requests, including those made verbally are documented in writing.

The Agency will provide reasonable accommodations to this policy for individuals with disabilities.

### Confidentiality

All staff of The Agency will keep confidential: any information that the resident submits in requesting an emergency transfer; and all information about the emergency transfer. Disclosures are only permitted if the resident gives written permission to release the information on a time limited basis, or disclosure of the information is required by law or required for use in an eviction proceeding or hearing regarding termination of assistance from the housing program. This includes but is not limited to keeping confidential the new location of the unit to which the resident is transferring from the person(s) that committed an act(s) of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking against the resident.

### Emergency Transfer Process

The person/people named above as the contact person for emergency transfer requests is/are responsible for ensuring that the request is processed and records are maintained in accordance with this plan.

Residents who qualify for an emergency transfer must be allowed to move to another unit in same project, if available. The Agency will act as quickly as possible to secure an internal emergency transfer (i.e., to move the resident subject to availability and safety of a unit within the same project where the person currently lives). Staff will make every effort to determine if such a unit is available and notify the requestor within one business day of receiving the emergency transfer request.

If the requestor reasonably believes a proposed transfer would not be safe, they may request a transfer to a different unit. A unit is defined as “safe” only when the survivor believes it is safe, and determination of whether or not a unit is “safe” may not be constrained by anyone else’s opinion about what is or is not safe. Participants cannot be required to accept a specific unit and can request an external transfer at any time.

If The Agency has no safe and available units in the same project where the resident currently resides, they will refer the resident to the local Coordinated Access Network (CAN), which will assist in identifying other housing projects that may have safe and available units to which the resident could move. Staff will make every effort to make such a referral within one business day of determining that no unit is available for an internal transfer.

The CAN shall ensure that the individual or family receives priority over all other applicants for transitional housing, permanent supportive housing and rapid rehousing projects provided that the individual or family meets all eligibility criteria required by federal, state, or county law or regulation or the terms of the source through which the project is funded. The individual or family shall retain their original homeless, DedicatedPLUS or chronically homeless status for the purposes of the transfer. The CAN may be unable to transfer a resident to a particular unit if they cannot establish the person’s eligibility for that unit. If a unit in a different project is available, the transferred resident must agree to abide by the terms and conditions that govern occupancy in the unit to which the transfer has occurred.

As necessary, CANs will work with other CANs in CT to facilitate an emergency transfer to a different CAN. CANs will also help participants who are unable to access a safe unit in Connecticut to work with CoCs in other states to secure an emergency transfer.

### Non-transferring Family Members

If the family separates in order to affect an emergency transfer, and the person vacating the unit was the person who qualified the family for assistance. The Agency will provide the remaining household members at least ninety calendar days to establish eligibility for the existing program, establish eligibility for another program, or find alternative housing. The period may be extended by 60 days but cannot be extended beyond the duration of the lease. In all cases, remaining household members are obligated to pay rent based on the usual program requirements.

### Safety and Security and Referral for Safety Planning and Other Services

Pending processing of the transfer and the actual transfer, The Agency will work with the resident to take all reasonable safety and security precautions, including, but not limited to providing linkages to providers who specialize in safety planning and reducing risks of ongoing abuse. The Agency will assist residents who would like to explore the availability of such services in contacting:

* CT Coalition Against Domestic Violence’s (CCADV) **Safe Connect hotline, which** is available 24 hours per day, 7 days per week by phone or text at 888-774-2900 or by chat at <https://ctsafeconnect.com>.
* The CT **Alliance to End Sexual Violence’s 24-Hour Toll-Free Hotline:** English: 1-888-999-5545 (Call or Text);Español: 1-888-568-8332
* For those who want **help from an agency outside of Connecticut**:
* National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-7233. If you have trouble hearing, you can call 1-800-787-3224 (TTY).
* Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network’s National (RAINN) Sexual Assault Hotline at 800-656- HOPE, or visit their online hotline at <https://ohl.rainn.org/online/>

### Record Retention & Reporting

The Agency will:

* Retain for a minimum of 5 years records for all emergency transfer requests and outcomes, including records for any emergency transfer requests referred to the CAN.
* Submit reports on emergency transfer requests and outcomes as directed by HUD and/or CT BOS
* Make available for review by HUD and/or CT BOS all records related to emergency transfer requests and outcomes, as requested.

### Notification of Emergency Transfer Rights

The Agency is committed to making sure that survivors understand their VAWA Emergency Transfer rights. As such, staff are required to:

1. Give this notice to all households who are asking for help or already receiving it when they first apply, when they enter a CoC project, and at least once each year.
2. Take the time to go over this notice with the people who are asking for or getting services to help them know and understand their rights.

Staff must do these things for every applicant and project participant even if they are not known to be a survivor of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking or human trafficking.