

Promising Practices used by RWHAP Recipients and Subrecipients to Streamline Eligibility

Organizational Structure and Staff Development

Promising Practice	Benefit to this Approach
Establish buy-in from leadership	Leadership buy-in is critical for developing cross-RWHAP relationships and for bridging the gap between high-level policy goals and real-world practices. Leaders are key decision-makers who can champion efficient, client-centered processes and secure necessary resources.
Institutionalize eligibility knowledge and practices	Formalizing eligibility policies in clear, shared documentation can ensure program knowledge remains stable even with staff turnover or technology updates. Creating an environment that leverages long-term staff as key sources of knowledge about the organization also helps to make sure that new policies accurately reflect how work gets done in the field.
Provide ongoing staff training and support	Training ensures that staff understand RWHAP requirements and can effectively navigate clients through the system. Cross training for case managers, eligibility staff, and service providers improves efficiency and reduces organizational knowledge loss during staff turnover. Recognizing staff for providing high-quality, person-centered interactions boosts morale and provides concrete examples of how streamlining eligibility makes a difference to clients.
Implement continuous improvement cycles	Monitoring and quality improvement efforts help flag real-time issues as they occur so that they can be addressed quickly. This ensures that systems are adaptive and focused on continuous, measurable improvements in service delivery.
Empower case managers in the field	In rural jurisdictions, decentralized approaches empower case managers to shift away from paperwork to increase time for direct client support such as care coordination and hands-on case management.

Interagency Collaboration and Communication

Promising Practice	Benefit to this Approach
Prioritize integrated planning among RWHAP Parts	Strong cross-agency collaboration can lead to significant improvements in eligibility determination and service coordination, with more efficient application processing and client tracking. RWHAP jurisdictions have met to create shared goals, identify service duplication, and align eligibility policies across programs.
Establish cross-agency learning collaboratives	Cross-agency initiatives create forums to share best practices, align policies, and strengthen interagency partnerships. Collaborative training lowers administrative burden and improves coordination among providers for more efficient eligibility determination and service linkage.
Cultivate trusting partnerships within the community	Relationship building and understanding different perspectives across RWHAP Parts is critical for centralizing eligibility. Building trust and working towards a shared vision drive system efficiency and ensure continuity. Furthermore, seeking out and integrating client perspectives promotes a positive and productive organizational environment.

Standardization of Eligibility Policies Across RWHAP Parts and Partner Agencies

Promising Practice	Benefit to this Approach
Standardize eligibility criteria across RWHAP Parts	Aligning income and residency criteria and documentation to determine eligibility establishes the foundation for a more effective and efficient system. When paired with a centralized data system or reciprocal eligibility, this can significantly reduce staff efforts to collect and verify documents that another agency has already approved.
Establish annual eligibility cycles on a specific date (e.g., client's birth month)	Moving to a 12-month eligibility confirmation cycle can reduce staff burden and help retain clients in care. Eligibility confirmation schedules based on clients' birth month help simplify reminders, with letters, calls, and pilot email notifications to prevent lapses in coverage. Note: While a promising practice, shifting to a 12-month cycle is not required by policy.
Provide options for self-attestation within eligibility cycles	Self-attestation for interim check-ins reduced administrative burden by allowing clients with unchanged income or residency to maintain eligibility without submitting duplicative documentation.

Client-centric Approaches that Reduce Burden for Clients and Staff

Promising Practice	Benefit to this Approach
Prioritize a client-centered system by integrating perspectives and feedback	Centering client experience in the design of eligibility processes can create a system that reduces burden, stigma, and barriers to care. Seeking out and integrating client insights and feedback can guide refinements to the process in ways that reduce confusion, while fostering trust and supporting retention.
Simplify proof of eligibility, such as accepting a single document for both residency and income	Using one document that can verify both residency and income makes the process faster and less intrusive for clients. Condensing multiple residency and insurance forms into a single agreement can increase workforce productivity by decreasing repetitive administrative tasks in turn, accelerating linkage to care by allowing staff to process applications faster.
Accept portable proof of eligibility	Simple, portable proof of RWHAP eligibility lessens the burden of managing multiple documents and makes it easy for clients to navigate multiple providers.
Provide rapid enrollment options during the eligibility assessment time period	A 30-day window of immediate access to medical services and medication based on HIV diagnosis accelerates linkage to care. Clients can be enrolled and connected to housing, food assistance, and medication while the remaining eligibility documents are gathered.* * Determining Client Eligibility and Payor of Last Resort in the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program Policy Clarification Notice (PCN) 21-02 as reference to eligibility and financial risk given the timing of eligibility confirmation.
Offer self-service client portals	Client portals increase satisfaction and autonomy by allowing clients to enter their own information, while reducing documentation burden.
Implement mobile-enabled, cloud-based platforms with digital signatures	Equipping case managers with mobile-enabled, cloud-based services helps reach clients in rural settings and facilitates rapid enrollment. Enabling electronic signature options for clients eases processing demands, allowing newly diagnosed clients to be connected quickly to support. Signature pads have received high praise from older patients and those with arthritis or low literacy who no longer have to navigate or manually sign multiple pages.
Automate tasks such as FPL calculation and eligibility expiration reminders	Automating tasks such as calculating FPL, generating reports, and sending reminders saves time and allows staff to shift focus to clinical and support roles. Digitally tracking and pushing reminders to clients and staff about upcoming eligibility deadlines helps prevent lapses in eligibility and care.

Unified Systems, Interoperability, and Data Sharing Advancements

Promising Practice	Benefit to this Approach
Implement Integrated Data Management Systems	Using integrated data management systems across sites allows clients to access all services seamlessly, which can increase administrative efficiency and clinical success. In some RWHAP jurisdictions, "one-state, one system" platforms share a single client profile across RWHAP Parts and subrecipients, preventing clients from resubmitting documents repeatedly. This has resulted in improved client retention, reduced client wait times, and administrative efficiency.
Establish external data bridges for real-time validation	Establishing technical links and protocols with external state systems (e.g., Medicaid, EHRs, HIV surveillance) enables real-time, automated eligibility confirmation, Payor of Last Resort (POLR) checks, and service coordination without requiring repeated client involvement.
Establish formal data-sharing agreements (DSAs) with partners	Standardized DSAs foster greater collaboration among RWHAP Parts, subrecipients, and external agencies. Formalized agreements improve accuracy, ensure data compliance, and increase timeliness of eligibility determinations.
Strengthen data-sharing agreements with Medicaid	Formalized partnerships between Medicaid and RWHAP Parts strengthen data-sharing capabilities, ensuring limited resources reach those most in need. These efforts have improved viral suppression, particularly in areas with well-coordinated HIV care and prevention services. Open communication between RWHAP and Medicaid staff fosters problem-solving and policy alignment.

Extended Reach and Accessibility of Eligibility Services to Clients

Promising Practice	Benefit to this Approach
Involve community helpers for client assistance	Frontline public health workers such as peer navigators and community health workers offer one-on-one support throughout the intake process, helping clients connect with medical case managers and navigate patient portals.
Deliver client-centered, relationship-based outreach and education	Community outreach can break down systemic and logistical barriers to care and facilitate seamless eligibility navigation and service linkage. Embedding community health workers (CHWs) and other allied health professionals into care teams provide tailored support for clients' needs, as CHWs often share similar backgrounds and experiences with clients.