HIV Housing and HOPWA in Focus: Welcome From OHH Director Amy Griffin

Amy Griffin, the new director for HUD's Office of HIV/AIDS Housing (OHH), lays out a few of her priorities.

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Dear Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS (HOPWA) Grantees, Project Sponsors, and Friends,

My name is Amy Griffin and I am excited and honored to introduce myself to you as the new Director for HUD's Office of HIV/AIDS Housing (OHH). I passionately believe our community, working at the intersection of HIV housing and health care, is both an essential intervention to provide stability for the people we serve and a vital component of the nation's strategy to end the HIV epidemic.

For me, the opportunity to step into the role of OHH Director represents the culmination of a 30 year career working to address the housing and care needs of people with HIV. For the past 10 years, I have worked in the Health Resources Services Administration's (HRSA) HIV/AIDS Bureau helping to implement HRSA's Ending the Epidemic (EHE) program as well the Ryan White HIV/AIDS program (RWHAP). Prior to that, I worked both as a housing technical assistance (TA) provider serving HOPWA recipients and as a TA provider serving publicly-funded HIV care and treatment agencies. I also have managed the HOPWA formula program for the grantee in Washington, DC. Because of these experiences, I strongly believe in the power of collaboration to affect positive change for individuals in need of HIV care and housing support services.

Across this country, I have seen the impact of our programs in community and know the strength of the HOPWA program comes from mission-focused people turning HOPWA funding into successful service delivery. My focus as I step into the role of Director is to leverage our community partners and support your ongoing efforts to meet the needs of people with HIV and their families. Here are a few of my priorities as I begin my tenure:

1. Hear from stakeholders. I understand that you as stakeholders know the best ways to implement HOPWA in community; and I am looking forward to learning from all of you. Last month over 1,000

HOPWA grantees, project sponsors, TA providers, and federal staff came together for the 2024 HOPWA Institute. This was an incredible opportunity to share information and hear directly from grantees and project sponsors. I want to continue efforts to meet and hear directly from you.

2. Leverage federal funding. Annually the HOPWA program puts out an eligibility estimateExit Disclaimer (PDF, 844KB) that shows there is not enough HOPWA funding to fully cover the housing and service needs of people with HIV and their families in this country. I know work has already been done to braid HOPWA and DOJ fundingExit Disclaimer, connect HOPWA programs with local Continuum of Care (CoC) programsExit Disclaimer (PDF, 253 KB) and engage other systems of funding to address specific populations such as people aging with HIVExit Disclaimer. I want to continue building on these efforts as a way to maximize the reach of the federal funding available to meet the needs of people with HIV.
3. Engage with federal partners and remove barriers for communities. OHH has shown its ability to work collaboratively with federal partners through joint letters such as the recent letter on HIV outbreaks released by HUD, CDC, and HRSA (PDF, 227KB). OHH has also made impressive contributions working alongside federal partners on the National HIV/AIDS Strategy (2022-2025) (PDF, 1.76 MB) and the accompanying Federal Implementation Plan (PDF, 706 KB). I want to continue to build and strengthen these federal relationships. I believe continued work at the federal level can remove barriers to service delivery in your communities.

I am committed to building on and working towards OHH's vision to elevate housing as an effective structural intervention in ending the HIV epidemic. I fully embrace and join HUD in saying we cannot end the HIV epidemic without ending homelessness and housing instability for people with HIV. I also understand that we are better working together as a HOPWA community, than any of us are working alone. As I settle into my new role as Director of OHH, I look forward to opportunities for us to connect and discuss ways in which we can continue our efforts to meet the housing needs of people with HIV and their families.

Respectfully,

Amy Griffin, MSW
Director, Office of HIV/AIDS Housing

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