

# Section 811: Supportive Housing for Persons with Disabilities Program

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**Administering Agency:** HUD's Office of Asset Management and Portfolio Oversight

**Year Started:** 1992 (prior to 1992, Section 811 was part of the Section 202 program)

**Number of Persons/Households Served:** The 811 Capital Advance program currently serves an estimated 31,249 households in 2,770 properties. Existing funding for the 811 Project Rental Assistance (PRA) program is expected to produce over 10,000 units.

**Population Targeted:** Persons ages 18–61 who are extremely or very low-income and have significant and long-term disabilities.

**Funding:** At this time, the FY24 budget is not finalized. There is a big gap between the amounts proposed by the House and the Senate. In addition, in October of 2023 HUD's Office of Multifamily Housing Programs announced \$212 million in funding opportunities to expand Section 811 programs as discussed below, and HUD has additional funds remaining from previous appropriations for the development of new Section 811 units.

**See Also:** For related information, reference the *Olmstead Implementation* section of this *Advocates' Guide*.

The federal Section 811 Supportive Housing for Persons with Disabilities program assists the lowest-income people with significant and long-term disabilities in living independently in the community by providing affordable housing linked with voluntary services and supports. Congress passed significant reforms to the Section 811 program in 2010 including the creation of the PRA program. The PRA program is intended to identify, stimulate, and support innovative state-level partnerships and strategies

to substantially increase integrated permanent supportive housing opportunities.

## HISTORY

Historically, the Section 811 program created new supportive housing units primarily through the development of group homes and independent living projects under regulations and guidelines developed in the early 1990s. Since that time, judicial decisions have affirmed important community integration mandates in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and national disability housing and services policies have evolved significantly to emphasize consumer choice, Medicaid-financed community-based services, and integrated housing opportunities. For many years, the Section 811 program did not keep pace with these improvements in disability policy. Demand for the program steadily declined, while the cost per unit from Section 811's capital-intensive model increased. In 2007, with fewer than 1,000 new units of Section 811 housing produced annually, national disability advocates began a successful three-year legislative campaign to reform and reinvigorate this important program. The Frank Melville Supportive Housing Investment Act of 2010, the Section 811 reform legislation signed into law by President Barack Obama in early 2011, honors the memory of Frank Melville, who was the first chair of the Melville Charitable Trust and a national leader in the supportive housing movement.

## PROGRAM SUMMARY

The Section 811 program includes several components, two of which currently receive HUD funding: Capital Advance/Project Rental Assistance Contract (PRAC), which includes a newer multifamily integrated housing option, and the PRA program.

**Section 811 Capital Advance/PRAC:** Only 501(c)(3) nonprofits are eligible to apply for the Section 811 Capital Advance/PRAC program. HUD provides funding for capital costs and for project rental assistance contracts that cover annual operating costs. HUD estimates there are currently 31,600 Section 811 Capital Advance/PRAC units. In 2020, after issuing the first Capital Advance/PRAC notice of funding availability (NOFA) since 2010, HUD announced \$54.7 million in awards to 15 nonprofit recipients. In October 2023, HUD issued a new notice (now called a notice of funding opportunity, or NOFO) for the Section 811 Capital Advance/PRAC program with funds from HUD FY21 and HUD FY22 appropriations. Highlights of this NOFO include:

- **Partnership:** Heightened focus on sustained partnerships between the applicant and key stakeholders to provide a foundation for implementing housing-related services and supports.
- **Design features:** Applicants will be evaluated on the extent to which their proposal incorporates universal design and visitability principles; enhances accessibility and access; and promotes health and wellness.
- **Readiness:** Applicants will be rated on the extent to which the non-Capital-Advance funding sources proposed for the development are already committed or have a high likelihood of being secured, and all proposals must provide evidence of site control.
- **Types of housing:** Eligible housing types are limited to integrated housing (units within a multifamily property), group homes, and condominiums. The number of units set aside for persons with disabilities within a condominium or multifamily property, including supportive housing for persons with disabilities or to which any occupancy preference for persons with disabilities applies, may not exceed 25% of the total number of dwelling units.

**Section 811 Project Rental Assistance:** Only state housing agencies are eligible to apply for the PRA program. The PRA program provides funds for project-based rental assistance where the capital is provided through other local, state, and/or federal programs; PRA funds cannot be used for capital.

Since May 2012, HUD has published three Section 811 PRA NOFAs. These NOFAs resulted in Cooperative Agreements for \$364 million with 30 states. Approximately 9,000 units are expected to be produced through these programs. States have demonstrated a high degree of interest in the PRA program; 43 states plus the District of Columbia submitted applications in response to the NOFAs.

In October 2023, HUD issued a new PRA NOFO with funds from HUD FY22 appropriations providing \$106 million to support new affordable housing units for persons with disabilities. Highlights of the NOFO include:

- **Partnership:** Applicants are expected to demonstrate effective and successful partnerships between state housing and state health and human service/Medicaid agencies to provide permanent housing with the availability of supportive services for extremely low-income persons with disabilities.
- **Integration:** The NOFO seeks applicants that intend to substantially increase the availability of integrated, community-based affordable housing with access to appropriate services for persons with disabilities.
- **Innovation:** Awardees are expected to develop innovative and replicable state-level strategies and approaches to providing housing with access to appropriate services for persons with disabilities and to create more efficient and effective uses of housing and health care resources.

For additional information, visit the [811 PRA program website](#).

## FUNDING

In October 2023, HUD published NOFOs announcing \$212 million in funding for the PRA the Capital Advance programs; \$106 million was made available for each of these two components of the Section 811 Supportive Housing for Persons with Disabilities program.

## FORECAST FOR 2024

The president's FY24 budget requests \$356 million for Housing for Persons with Disabilities, including \$207 million for PRAC, PRA and Project Assistance Contract renewals and amendments as well as \$148 million for 1,200 new Section 811 units under the Capital Advance and Project Rental Assistance programs. As of this writing, the House budget is at \$208 million and \$360 million in the Senate. There is no final budget number as of this writing.

In the "FY22 Appropriations Act," Congress authorized the budget-neutral conversion of Section 811 PRAC properties under the Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) program (see RAD program elsewhere in this *Advocates' Guide*) in order to support the preservation of existing Section 811 PRAC projects. HUD said that it will take some time to develop the policies governing these RAD conversions and to publish implementation guidance; a final Implementation Notice has not been issued yet.

## TIPS FOR LOCAL SUCCESS

Advocates in states that have not yet received Section 811 PRA funds should work with state officials to support the implementation of this innovative model, educating state leaders, local agencies, and organizations on the new PRA option to encourage a successful application for funds in future rounds. At the state level, activities should focus on housing, Medicaid, and health and human service agencies. Nonprofit and for-profit developers that frequently use federal Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) and HOME Investment Partnerships program funds should also be made aware of this resource.

The [811 PRA website](#) provides videos and stories

from tenants in Louisiana, Maryland, Washington State, and Massachusetts that can be used to educate stakeholders, including developers and property managers, about the program.

## WHAT TO SAY TO LEGISLATORS

Advocates are encouraged to contact their members of Congress with the message that people with disabilities continue to be the poorest people in the nation. The Technical Assistance Collaborative publication *Priced Out* describes how over four million non-elderly adults with significant and long-term disabilities have Supplemental Security Income levels equal to only 20% of area median income (AMI) and cannot afford housing in the community without federal housing assistance. Because of this housing crisis, many of the most vulnerable people with disabilities are homeless or live unnecessarily in costly nursing homes or seriously substandard facilities that may violate the ADA. The Section 811 PRA program can help the government reach its goals of ending homelessness and minimizing the number of persons living in costly institutions.

Affordable housing advocates are encouraged to support the administration's full budget request for the PRA program. These funds will provide states with the flexibility to create new and more cost-effective permanent supportive housing options to help highly vulnerable people with disabilities live successfully in the community with supports, while reducing reliance on expensive and unnecessarily restrictive settings.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

Technical Assistance Collaborative, 617-266-5657, [www.tacinc.org](http://www.tacinc.org).