Katrina Aid Today

A National Case Management Consortium

Re-Opening Case Management Cases:

A Step-by-Step Guide for Reassessing Returning Clients

Purpose: To inform agency decision-making processes and related policies for re-opening previously closed KAT cases. This guidance allows user to follow along with the "Decision Tree for Re-Opening Cases" and is supported by the separate document "Questions and Answers regarding the Re-Opening and Reassessment of Cases."

Background: Determining whether or not to re-open a closed KAT case presents challenges and ethical dilemmas. On the one hand, we are seeking to move clients through disaster recovery CM to self-sufficiency, or alternatively to another disaster recovery CM organization as timely as possible. On the other hand, we recognize that sometimes new information and/or new resources surface for both agency and client so as to prompt renewed services.

Whether a client was previously opened in your agency or another agency, the client's situation must be completely re-assessed to ensure that the client still meets the eligibility criteria for Katrina Aid Today case management services before opening them as a new or returning client. Before re-opening the client's case, ask the question, "How does the provision of this service or resource move the client towards recovery?"

Keep in mind that reasons to not re-open the case may include:

- ⇒ The client does not meet KAT eligibility requirements and/or the client's need is not disaster recovery related
- ⇒ The client is requesting a one-time service provision and does not want to receive case management services
- ⇒ Client did not take an active role in his/her/their recovery planning process and as such, continued services cannot be justified.

Some of the reasons a case might be re-opened includes:

- ⇒ The "sending" agency lacks capacity to provide case management services
- ⇒ The "sending" agency is no longer providing case management services (i.e. program closure)
- ⇒ The "sending" case manager has exhausted all available resources for the client and would prefer to transfer the client's case to an agency that is better suited to meet the disaster related needs.

A priority system may need to be utilized to determine how to assign these reopened cases, in order to effectively manage case manager workload and time. The Decision Tree offers some categories that could be utilized to prioritize cases, with priority level 1 representing the most urgent cases and Priority Level 4 representing cases with less urgency.

Step-by-Step Guide Referencing the "Decision Tree for Re-Opening Cases"

From the "Agency Re-Open" Tab

Step 1: Client requests KAT agency to re-open Case

Step 2: Has the Client previously accessed KAT case management from your agency?

- If yes, proceed to **Step 3**.
- If no, proceed to **"Agency Transfer Re-Open" Tab** (see p.4 of this document)

Step 3: Does the client still meet KAT eligibility, according to the following requirements?

⇒ Applicant has authorized release of confidential information for Organization, CAN, and FEMA.
⇒ Applicant meets program requirement for Hurricane Katrina disaster-related impact.
⇒ Applicant meets program requirement for US Citizen, Lawful Permanent Resident, Alien Authorized to Work
⇒ Applicant meets program requirement for financial need.
⇒ Applicant is not receiving case management services from any other KAT Disaster Recovery Organization *confirmed*

- If yes, proceed to **Step 4**.
- If no, proceed to **Step 3a**.

Step 3a: Do not re-open the case. Provide information and referral to the client as appropriate. Document referral information in "Referrals Provided" section of the client's record in CAN and document the reassessment of the returning client in the narrative section.

Step 4: Is the client currently eligible for DHAP? Refer to KAT Guidance #21, "HUD: Disaster Housing Assistance Program: Case Management Guidance."

- If yes, proceed to **Step 4a**.
- If no, proceed to **Step 5**.

Step 4a: Refer to DHAP implementing agency. Document the DHAP referral in the narrative section of the client's record in CAN.

Step 5: Does agency have capacity to case manage the client requesting that their case be re-opened?

- If yes, proceed to **Step 6**.
- If no, proceed to **Step 5a and b**.

Step 5a: Refer to another KAT affiliate or another case management agency. Reference to the "Question and Answer" section, Question #1 of this guidance for making contact with the "receiving" case manager for a "consultation call." Is the "receiving agency using CAN?

- If yes, proceed **to Step 5b**.
- If no, leave the case as "closed" and document the transfer referral in the narrative section of the client record in CAN.

Step 5b: Leave the case marked as "open" in CAN and reassign to the "receiving" case manager.

Step 6: Review of the reason that the client's case was initially closed. Consider the following:

Step 6a: Priority Level 1 *Lack of Resources*. Sometimes a client's case is closed when no additional resources are available in a community; however, if/when a new resource presents itself in the client's community, re-opening the client's case to help them attain the needed service may help the client achieve recovery. This is not to say that a client in want of a financial resource should be re-opened since Katrina Aid Today does not re-open cases exclusively for financial resources *(see above under "Some of the reasons a closed case may not be re-opened").*

Step 6b: Priority Level 2 *Relocation* or *Case transferred out of the Consortium network area.* When a client relocates to another area and opts out of continued case management, the case should be closed. However:

- If the client seeks case management services from a KAT agency in their new area of residence **AND**
- The "sending" case manager, after consultation, agrees to transfer the client's case **AND**
- The re-assessment process determines that the need is disaster recovery related **THEN**
- Although the case has already been closed, a transfer may be appropriate.

Step 6c: Priority Level 3 *Client Withdrew Request for Services / Lost Contact* – When a client's case was closed due to "Client Withdrew Request for Services" and/or "Lost Contact", the case manager and supervisor should assess the client's willingness to re-engage and participate in the recovery planning process as a piece of the re-assessment process.

Step 6d: Priority Level 4 *Primary Needs Met and/or Recovery Plan* Achieved – When a client's case was closed for "achieve their recovery plan" and/or "primary needs met," yet is returning for additional services, the situation must be thoroughly assessed to determine why, after the case closed successfully, the client's disaster recovery needs are returning and how to address these issues as a piece of the re-assessment process.

Step 7: The agency should make a determination based on the reassessment phase if the case should be reopened. Consider issues such as "Was the case closed prematurely?" or "Is the Client willing to be case managed?" Is the case re-opened?

- If yes, proceed to **Step 7a**.
- If no, proceed to **Step 7b**.

Step 7a: Follow intake procedures, including completion of FEMA and CAN releases of information, update client information in client file (paper) and in CAN, reassess and proceed with case management.

Step 7b: Do not re-open the case. Provide information and referral to the client as appropriate. Document referral information in "Referrals Provided" section of the client's record in CAN and document the reassessment of the returning client in the narrative section.

From the "Agency Transfer Re-Open Tab"

Step 8: Is the former agency now closed? Find out by calling the former agency.

- If yes, proceed to **Step 3** in the **"Agency Re-Open" Tab**.
- If no, proceed to **Step 9**.

Step 9: Does the former agency working with the client use CAN? Find out by searching for the client in CAN.

- If yes, refer the client back to the previous agency and document in the narrative section of the client's CAN record.
- If no, proceed to **Step 10**.

Step 10: Will the former agency accept the client to re-open the case? Find out by asking the agency when you call them to confirm they are still operating.

- If yes, refer the client back to the previous agency and document in the narrative section of the client's CAN record.
- If no, proceed to **Step 11**.

Step 11: What is the reason for the agency not to re-open the case? Consult with the agency.

- If the agency has no capacity, the client was non-compliant or if there is another reason, proceed to **Step 12.**

Step 12: The agency should review the case. Does the agency continue with re-open?

Step 12a. If yes, continue with **Step 3** in the **"Agency Re-Open" Tab**.

Step 12b. If no, decline to re-open the case. Provide information and referral to the client as appropriate. Document referral information in "Referrals Provided" section of the client's record in CAN and document the reassessment of the returning client in the narrative section.