
SWAP HOTEL

HANDBOOK



Welcome! Adams County, Broomfield County, and Almost Home (AH) are so excited that you have decided to partner with us to help save the lives of people experiencing homelessness. Here is an informational packet that will go over SWAP and all that the program entails. First, we'll get into the basics of the program and the Almost Home Team you will be working with during SWAP season. SWAP (Severe Weather Activation Program) is a collaboration between Almost Home, Adams County, Broomfield County, and hotels that provide vacant rooms for people who are literally homeless when the weather is at dangerous temperatures. SWAP activates when it is at or below 32F (wet), 20F (wet or dry), or in consecutive days of extreme heat. The next section will go over SWAP Activations and all that will follow until the check-out date. The rest of the handbook will go over specific components of SWAP and the policies and procedures you can expect. This handbook is intended to be a resource for you and your team. You will be provided a hard copy of this handbook to keep at the front desk and we ask that you keep it accessible to staff for reference

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Memorandum of Understanding

Severe Weather Action Program (SWAP) and Hotel Partners

This Memorandum of Understanding outlines the partnership agreement between the Severe Weather Activation Program and Partner Hotels concerning sheltering individuals and families during severe weather conditions. This activation is initiated for weather that poses a threat to the well-being and/or lives of people sleeping or living outdoors in Adams and Broomfield Counties.

SWAP Background

SWAP stands for Severe Weather Activation Program. This plan is initiated for weather that poses a threat to the well-being and/or lives of people sleeping or living outdoors. There are currently several cold weather activation plans across the Denver metro region. Prior to January 2020, unsheltered households in Adams and Broomfield Counties did not have any resources within the county to seek emergency shelter during periods of inclement weather.

The SWAP Program is designed to provide supportive services, re-housing assistance and a warm, safe space to sleep during periods of inclement weather. Without these services, individuals and families would be living in places not meant for human habitation and would be otherwise exposed to the elements and risking their overall safety and wellbeing. SWAP successfully rehuses families and individuals into permanent housing, reunites families and individuals with natural supports and provides supportive case management services to each household. The partner hotels are essential to ensuring that SWAP has the resources to provide emergency, respite shelter.

As a partner hotel, your engagement in the program is essential to provide unsheltered households a safe, warm, and dry place to stay when emergency shelter is not available. The SWAP program is designed to be a survival program for unsheltered households during periods of inclement weather year-round:

- 32 degrees and wet or 20 degrees and dry
- Wet refers to precipitation actively falling. Dry refers to weather conditions with no precipitation.
- Excessive Heat issued at the Significant level by the National Weather Service
- During periods of inclement weather, SWAP will activate, and eligible clients will be provided with a hotel voucher as available.

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Core Partners vs. Overflow Partners

Almost Home has established two tiers of hotel partnerships for the SWAP cold weather season: Core Partner Hotels and Overflow Partner Hotels.

Core Partner Hotels are defined as hotels who agree to provide a minimum number of rooms per activation. Core Partners will still be contacted by Almost Home on the morning of each activation to confirm the total number of hotel rooms being reserved for that SWAP activation, but will not provide less than the agreed upon amount. Core Partners are provided a Resident Assistant (RA) and are required to maintain an RA on site for the duration of the cold weather season. Please see Resident Assistant section below for more information.

Overflow Partner Hotels are defined as hotels who have active MOUs signed with SWAP but do not commit to providing a minimum number of rooms, or whose minimum number of rooms is less than 10. Overflow Partners will be contacted during SWAP activations only when Almost Home determines additional hotel capacity is needed. Overflow Partner Hotels are not provided a Resident Assistant (RA) unless the hotel donates a room to lodge the RA for the duration of the cold weather season.

SWAP Voucher Process

As a hotel partner, you will receive a call from the SWAP team the morning of an activation to confirm room availability. In addition, an activation email will be sent prior to 10:00 AM from Almost Home, Inc. via email subscription list to inform you that SWAP is activated and the duration of the activation. The program conducts program intakes Monday through Thursday only.

SWAP clients will each engage in an intake and assessment with SWAP staff and once approved for the voucher, the client will be issued an electronic voucher using a web-based app (the SWAPP at swapp-1.herokuapp.com/) indicating the names, dates of birth, and photos of those in the household, dates voucher is active, and voucher number. Each SWAP participant consents to engage in the program and agrees to follow all program and hotel rules and policies.

Following the intake and approval, the SWAP staff will inform you of the names and voucher numbers for that activation online via the SWAPP. The online voucher serves as the SWAP participant's hotel room reservation; the SWAPP profile serves as the SWAP participant's formal identification.

By partnering with SWAP, partner hotels agree to accept room reservations made via the SWAPP and to utilize the SWAPP to verify SWAP vouchers and check in SWAP guests. Partner hotels agree to accept the photo and information attached to the SWAPP electronic voucher profile as a substitute for government-issued IDs. Partner hotels agree to have at least one SWAPP login assigned to their hotel. Partner hotels agree to have key front desk staff trained in the use of the SWAPP by a member of the SWAP team.

SWAP Voucher Agreement

Partner hotels agree to receive hotel vouchers from Almost Home and its partner agencies during SWAP Activation via the SWAPP. Hotels cannot extend any voucher without the approval from Almost Home, Inc. Clients do not have the right or ability to extend their own voucher without securing their own payment as SWAP can only pay for hotel stays for the duration of the activation. SWAP will not pay for any invoices that cannot be connected to a valid SWAP voucher and activation.

SWAP Program Agreements

This Memorandum of Understanding will be accompanied by a SWAP Hotel Handbook. Partner hotels agree to sign and abide by all policies and procedures written in the SWAP Hotel Handbook. This section will highlight key agreements that are further elaborated in the Handbook.

Trauma-Informed Expectations:

Almost Home as an organization understands that trauma affects our participants and thus uses a trauma informed approach in all aspects of our programming, including clients' stays at hotels during SWAP. We ask that all hotel partners abide by the following principles in all interactions with SWAP participants.

Safety Ensuring physical and emotional safety.

Choice Individual has choice and control.

Collaboration Making decisions with the individual and sharing power.

Trustworthiness Respectful and professional boundaries are maintained.

Empowerment Prioritize empowerment.

Confidentiality:

Almost Home expects hotel partners to maintain strict confidentiality standards regarding SWAP participants' personal information. Hotel staff are under no circumstances authorized to share information about SWAP participants, unless served with a formal warrant issued by the courts. This information includes, but is not limited to, information about a SWAP participant's whereabouts, services they have or have not received, dates of stay at the hotel, red flag status, or personally identifying information like name or date of birth.

Red Flags:

Hotel partners reserve the right to refuse or remove SWAP clients from the property. At intake, each client has agreed to respect and abide by the standard rules of the hotel. Should any incidents occur while a SWAP participant is at the hotel, please inform the SWAP staff immediately.

SWAP participants are patrons of your hotels and you have the right to ban (or red flag) any SWAP client from your property. Please see the Red Flag section of the SWAP Hotel Handbook for more information about red flags.

Discrimination:

Hotels must comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the Civil Right Act of 1964. SWAP participants are entitled to equal treatment under the law and should be held to the same policies as any hotel guest.

Fiscal Agreement

The agreed upon room rate is \$_____ per night without tax. Almost Home, Inc. is a valid 501(c)(3) organization and is tax exempt. This is a flat rate inclusive of all fees, charges, and damages. Almost Home will not fund incidental costs beyond the agreed upon flat rate.

Almost Home will pay for all rooms reserved in the SWAPP at the above rate, including for SWAP guests who no show. Almost Home will not pay for rooms that have been voided in the SWAPP.

Below are the steps for monthly payment:

1. Almost Home will send each hotel a monthly voucher report for the previous month by close of business on the 5th day of the month. The voucher report will contain a full list of vouchers reserved at your hotel, a total count of nights reserved, and a multiplication by the pre-negotiated flat rate agreed to in the MOU on file. If the 5th day of the month falls on a weekend or holiday, the report will be sent by end of day the next business day.
2. Review and sign the voucher report's cover page to approve that month's payment amount.
3. Return signed cover page to Almost Home by the 15th of the month for the previous month. This signed cover page will serve as the monthly invoice.
4. To dispute the information contained in the voucher report or the total payment amount, you must send Almost Home a list of the disputed voucher numbers, corresponding folio or invoice number, guest name(s), and dates of stay with an explanation of the discrepancies. Disputes must be submitted to Almost Home by the 15th of the month to be considered.
5. Almost Home will cut and issue checks within a net 30 days from receipt of approved voucher report cover page. You may work with the Housing Services Coordinator to schedule pick up or mail delivery.

Invoices or requests for payment received after the 15th of the month for the month prior will not be approved and will not be paid.

Pet Policy

(Insert hotel's pet policy here, if applicable)

Core Hotel Partner Section (if applicable)

- _____ (initial here) I agree to provide SWAP a minimum of _____ hotel rooms during any given SWAP activation.
- _____ (initial here) I agree to have a Resident Assistant reside at this hotel from November 1, 2023 to March 31st, 2024.
- _____ (initial here) I agree to a monthly rate of \$_____ for the Resident Assistant's room only.
- _____ (initial here) I understand that this is a contract and will provide Almost Home at least 30 days' notice if the hotel wishes to terminate the agreement before the end of the cold weather season.

Disclaimer

If you cannot agree to the above requirements, we will need to discontinue your involvement in SWAP to ensure that we can continue to effectively implement the program and save lives. Please inform the SWAP team immediately if you believe you will experience any challenges meeting the above agreement.

Meet The Team



Jessica Fiedler

Executive Director



Delaney Coe

Deputy Director

Negotiates and updates all agreements with hotel. Manages policy decisions.
dcoe@almosthomeonline.org



Amber Wright

Finance Director

Completes all payments to hotels. This director handles any questions about checks and payment.
awright@almosthomeonline.org



Elizabeth Sustaita

Program Manager

Manages all program-level staff below, please direct concerns about staff to this manager.

esustaita@almosthomeonline.org



Breann Riley

Housing Services Coordinator

Manages all administrative tasks including hotel reservations of SWAP activations, provides support with RA program, and completes invoicing.

briley@almosthomeonline.org



Kristina Owen

Housing Navigator & SWAP Lead (Adams County)

Outreaches to onboard new hotels for SWAP and maintains hotel relationships. Manages all client related issues including red flags and appeals

kowen@almosthomeonline.org



Nicole Criner

Housing Navigator (Broomfield Lead)

Oversees all client related issues for Broomfield and coordinates outreach and sheltering efforts in Broomfield.

ncriner@almosthomeonline.org

Additional Housing Navigators – Assists with SWAP intakes and help with check out dates at hotels.

Michaelena Lee

Seth Dosa

Municipality Partners

Thornton

Northglenn

Unincorporated Adams

Commerce City

Westminster

City and County of Broomfield

SWAP Activations

During the winter months, Almost Home will monitor weather daily and determine if weather conditions meet activation criteria. Once weather is determined to meet activation criteria, AH will update partnering organizations, hotels, and clients. At that point Almost Home will ask hotels to notify us of how many hotel rooms they have available to give us for that activation period. Almost Home will update the SWAPP accordingly. Then we will update all community partners with the number of rooms available and coordinate their distribution to SWAP participants.

On the first initial day of SWAP activation, AH and community partners will conduct intakes with SWAP participants to get them connected with hotel rooms and explain the rules of the program. Participants then check in at hotels like any regular guest and stay at the hotel for the remainder of the activation. Core Hotel Partners will have a Resident Assistant to support the check in process (please see Resident Assistant section for more information).

The Almost Home SWAP team may extend the activation if weather continues to meet activation criteria. AH will notify hotels of extensions immediately and all vouchers will be updated in the SWAPP to show the new check out date.

Check outs will be supported by Resident Assistants at Core Partner Hotels. If the total number of days that the SWAP participants were checked into the hotel exceeded 7 days at any given SWAP activation, Almost Home will coordinate teams to help all hotels with check outs.

Core Partner vs. Overflow

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On Call Number

On Call Number: (720) 248 5900

Almost Home provides after-hours support to partner hotels with incidents regarding SWAP clients with our on-call number.

Hotels may use the on-call number for the main purpose of SWAPP concerns or modifications, but are not limited to this. For example, if a SWAP participant arrives at hotel after hours and their voucher does not match or does not have guest on voucher, AH on call staff can verify or update voucher to match.

For all emergencies, please call 911 and follow your hotel's policy for emergency situations. For all other SWAP inquiries or concerns, please follow the Almost Home directory and appropriate staff will respond during business hours.

Communication with SWAP Participants

Almost Home as an organization understands that trauma affects our participants and thus uses a trauma informed approach in all aspects of our programming, including clients' stays at hotels during SWAP. We ask that all hotel partners abide by the following principles in all interactions with SWAP participants.

Safety Ensuring physical and emotional safety.

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Collaboration Making decisions with the individual and sharing power.

Trustworthiness Respectful and professional boundaries are maintained.

Empowerment Prioritize empowerment.

Scenario: A woman comes into the hotel for check in and is greeted by one of the hotel front desk staff. After the check in is completed the helpful front desk staff goes to help the woman with her bags and picks up a bag. The woman goes to grab the bag back and starts to yell, 'Do not touch my things.'

Why do you think this woman would be upset by this?

This might be a trauma response to the woman having her items stolen in the past.

What could the front desk staff do differently to avoid this situation?

The staff could ask the woman if she needs help before leaving their desk.

Click below if you would like to learn more about this powerful approach with the clients that you will soon be working with.

<http://www.bcmhsus.ca/health-professionals/clinical-professional-resources/trauma-informed-practice>

Current Laws

ADA Laws

Hotels, hotels, inns and other places of lodging must comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. The ADA requires that accessible rooms be “dispersed among the various classes of guest rooms” and hotels shall provide people with disabilities “choices of types of guest rooms, number of beds, and other amenities comparable to the choices provided to other guests.” In determining if an adequate range of choice is afforded to disabled guests, the regulation advises that hotels consider “room size, bed size, cost, view, bathroom fixtures such as hot tubs and spas, smoking and nonsmoking, and the number of rooms provided,” among other things.

In the event that a hotel cannot achieve complete dispersion of ADA accessible rooms across the entire range of rooms and amenities, the law says that “guest rooms shall be dispersed in the following priority: guest room type, number of beds, and amenities.” This means that **accessible rooms must first be dispersed among the various room types** (i.e. standard, deluxe, concierge floor, suite, etc.) before they are dispersed according to number of beds, followed by amenities.

The ADA requires the Department of Justice to provide technical assistance to businesses, State and local governments, and individuals regarding the law. For more information you may call the ADA Information Line at 800-514-0301.

<https://wheelchairtravel.org/hotels/ada-design-requirements/>

Discrimination

SWAP participants are entitled to be held to the same policies and procedures as any hotel guest. Title 42 of the U. S. Code, Chapter 21, Subchapter II (Public Accommodations) makes prohibited discrimination under the Civil Rights Act of 1964 applicable to "any inn, hotel, hotel, or other establishment which provides lodging to [people experiencing homelessness]."

<https://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?path=/prelim@title42/chapter21&edition=prelim#:~:text=SUBCHAPTER%20II%E2%80%94PUBLIC%20ACCOMMODATIONS&text=Prohibition%20against%20discrimination%20or%20segregation,a%20State%20or%20State%20agency>

Searching Rooms

All hotel guests, including SWAP participants, are entitled to a reasonable right to privacy. Right [to privacy] includes the guest’s entitlement to enjoy the room without any obstruction, unwanted visitors and hotel staff interruption. Hotel room privacy shall be maintained by respecting the guest’s intimacy and personal time. In the landmark judgment of Donoghue vs Stevenson (1932, HL ER 562), the Court had stated that duty to respect guest room privacy implies that the guest must feel safe in the hotel (...) Respecting room privacy suggests that there should be no third party intrusion in the peaceful enjoyment of the hotel room by the guest.

SWAPP – The SWAP App

SWAP has created a completely electronic system for all users to streamline the voucher process. Our online system is called SWAPP. This app allows users (AH and community partners) to complete intakes with important reservation information attached and directly send the information to hotels for easier check in. This system is meant to give essential information and protect our clients at the same time. The information that the hotels will receive is as follows:

- Voucher Number
- Hotel Name
- Guest's Full Name
- Guest's Date of Birth
- Photo of Guest(s)
 - Only form of identification needed, please see ID Agreement in Agreement Section
- Check In Date
- Check Out Date

SWAPP will be set up by the Adams County IT team. You will receive an invite to your email when your account is set up. If hotels have any questions about the SWAPP, please contact the SWAP Lead.

Resident Assistant (RA) Program

The SWAP Resident Assistant (RA) Program provides an on-site and available connection between Almost Home, Core Partner Hotels, SWAP participants, and SWAP intake sites and partner agencies. The purpose of this role is to strengthen and streamline communication between all parties and provide additional support to SWAP guests and hotels who partner with the SWAP program.

The SWAP RA will reside in a hotel room at the Partner Hotel's building for the duration of the cold weather season, typically beginning in November and ending in April in order to provide consistency to both the RA and the hotel staff.

Resident Assistant Selection Process

SWAP RA's will be selected through a referral, application, and interview process. Applicants will be required to complete an application and submit it to Almost Home, along with signing the Resident Assistant Participant Agreement. All applications must be accompanied by a referral application from an Almost Home employee or one of Almost Home's Adams or Broomfield County Partners. The referrer will be asked to describe why the applicant would be a good fit for the program and what areas in which they may need additional training and support. The Almost Home SWAP team will review all RA applications and match appropriate candidates with a Core Hotel Partner. The Hotel Partner will then have the opportunity to review their application materials and interview the candidate before approving a Resident Assistant. Almost Home will continue to provide new candidates until an appropriate fit for both parties is found.

Program Objectives

- Increase staffing support during high-volume times at the hotel (i.e. check ins/outs).
- Provide hotel staff an on-site point of contact for all SWAP-related concerns throughout the entire cold weather season.
- Offer additional support, mediation, resources and referrals to SWAP guests to help every guest be successful in the program.
- Increase SWAP guests' adherence to hotel rules and policies.

Resident Assistant Responsibilities

- Serve as the main point of contact between Almost Home and hotels during activation days, including check in and check out dates.
- Meet with participants at hotel when they arrive during the check-in period to review program rules and have each participant re-sign the program agreement.
- Provide daily, pre-scheduled "office hours" on site at hotel during activations for participants to drop-in and ask questions, provide feedback and communicate concerns to Almost Home's SWAP team, and to connect participants with available external resources.
- Periodically check in on program participants to ensure adherence to program rules and to refer individuals and families to resources to meet their basic needs.
- Respond promptly to phone calls from intake sites and voucher recipients during pre-designated hours on activation days.
- As a fellow SWAP participant, follow all SWAP program guidelines and practice trauma-informed and de-escalation techniques in the event of any sort of volatile situation with other participants.
- Abstain from the use of non-prescription drugs and alcohol.
- Submit weekly report to Almost Home's SWAP team.
- Coordinate as necessary with hotel to mediate guest concerns, if and when situations arise, building professional working relationship with hotel staff and reporting all concerns to Almost Home SWAP team.
- Maintain ongoing coordination with Almost Home's SWAP team.
- Coordinate as necessary with partner agencies and volunteers on participant-related issues and to facilitate the dropping off of food, supplies and gift certificates.
- Serve as main point of contact for clean-up volunteers on SWAP check-out dates, ensuring volunteers have completed training, coordinating clean up tasks with hotel staff, and signing off on volunteer hours completed.
- Engage in re-housing case management with Almost Home Housing Navigators to work toward self-sufficiency throughout the season with the goal of lease up after activation season concludes.
- Maintain strict confidentiality policy, ensuring all SWAP participant information is kept private.

Parameters of Resident Assistant Role

This position is for the duration of the SWAP activation season during the winter of 2023-2024 starting November 1, 2023 and ending March 31, 2024.

RA lodging does not include room service, valet/laundry services, pet deposit/fees, long distance telephone calls, parking, high-speed Internet charges, restaurant fees, or movies.

The RA is NOT authorized to enter a SWAP participant's room. If RA determines there is a threat to someone's health or safety, they will be directed to immediately contact hotel staff or 911.

This is a trauma-informed, liaison, peer-and-partner-information-sharing and connection position, not a decision-making and enforcement position. This position does NOT entail counseling, therapy, case management, decision-making as to whether a participant should or should not retain SWAP privileges, or enforcement of program rules. The RA can certainly make recommendations based on observations, but should a guest need to be removed, or informed of their removal, that task will be performed by hotel and/or Almost Home staff.

Almost Home's Responsibilities

- Process RA applications and match RA's with Hotel Partners.
- Provide RA with a cell phone and email address to be used for SWAP communication in relation to their role.
- Field and address all Hotel Partner concerns as communicated to RA. RA is not responsible for making program changes or decisions.
- Develop programmatic solutions to address problematic trends as identified by Hotel Partners and RA.
- Provide weekly mandatory group supervision of all RA's.
- Mediate and address any concerns that arise regarding RA.
- Continue serving as the main point of contact for all SWAP decisions. Almost Home remains the SWAP Program Operator responsible for case managing SWAP participants, making decisions regarding SWAP client participation in the program, and enforcing program rules.

Partner Hotel Agreement

- Partner Hotel agrees to provide a consistent room at a pre-negotiated rate for the Resident Assistant to stay in for the duration of the severe weather season (November 1, 2023 to March 31, 2024).
- Partner Hotel will utilize only the work cell phone and work email assigned to the RA for ongoing communication with RA. Partner Hotel understands that RA will only respond to their work cell phone and/or email during their working hours.
- Partner Hotel will set up a consistent check-in time with RA to occur daily when SWAP is active (ie when SWAP guests are currently staying at the hotel). Partner Hotel will communicate updates and concerns to RA during the designated meeting time to be relayed and addressed by Almost Home staff.

- Partner Hotel will maintain decision-making and enforcement authority over removal of guests from the hotel.
- Partner Hotel understands that RA's are not allowed to enter guest rooms and will not request this of the RA.
- Partner Hotel agrees to keep the room number and personal information of the RA confidential from other guests.
- Partner Hotel agrees to designate a specific area for RA to hold "office hours" to meet with SWAP guests daily when SWAP is active.
- Partner Hotel will immediately communicate any concerns with RA to Almost Home SWAP staff so concerns can be addressed in a timely manner.
- Partner Hotel agrees to limit RA responsibilities to those listed above in the "Resident Assistant Responsibilities" section. If Partner Hotel would like to add any responsibilities to the RA job description, Hotel must submit these responsibilities to Almost Home SWAP staff for approval and re-sign a new agreement with RA before implementing the new expectations.
- Partner Hotel understands that this is a contract and will provide Almost Home at least 30 days notice if Hotel wishes to terminate the agreement before the end of the current cold weather season.

Fiscal Agreement

Almost Home will pay a discounted weekly rate for Resident Assistants as agreed to in the MOU. Payments will be included in monthly check.

Red Flags

Our red flag system is a way for hotels to communicate with Almost Home when SWAP participants break a rule, and the hotel will no longer allow those individuals to stay at the hotel.

These red flags must be communicated with the SWAP Lead within 24 hours of the incident. Timely reports of red flags ensure banned guests do not receive a voucher to the same hotel during the next SWAP activation.

When communicating red flags to the SWAP Lead, please note:

1. The red flagged guest's full name
2. Details about the incident
3. Any photos or documentation of the incident.

An incident report will be recorded in the SWAPP to ensure that this client is no longer issued SWAP vouchers to the hotel. The following items are rules that, if broken, could qualify for a red flag.

- smoking on hotel property
- property damages
 - minor: trash, stains, etc.
 - substantial: graffiti, burning items, defecation, etc.

- soliciting or engaging with illegal business (including sex work)
- theft
- threats of any type (verbal, physical or sexual) assault of another guest or employee
- verbal, physical, or sexual assault of another guest or employee
- engaging in the manufacturing selling purchasing, or use of illegal substances
- public intoxication
- complaints from other guests
- hosting additional guests not listed on SWAP voucher
- fraud (using false identity, selling the room, etc)
- violating hotel policies already in place for all hotel guests.

Red Flag Levels

Depending on the offense, the client will get one to two warnings before they are completely banned from SWAP. This the warning system put in place for the rules that are broken:

Immediate Ban from SWAP Program – threats of any type (verbal, physical or sexual) assault of another guest or employee verbal, physical, or sexual assault of another guest or employee, excessive property damage, forgery/fraud

One Warning - smoking or drug use in the room

Two Warnings - unapproved guests, minor damage to hotel property, violating hotel policy, and all other rules above

Red Flag Appeals

A red flag appeal is a formal inquiry process for a SWAP participant with a red flag who would like to return to the hotel from which they've been banned. The client will work with a case manager to explain their situation and changes since the red flag in writing to Almost Home's SWAP Appeal Committee. Once this committee reviews and approves the red flag appeal request it will then be sent to the appropriate hotels for their final approval. This process is normally completed during the summer and fall for past SWAP seasons only. However, in extreme cases, a red flag appeal may be submitted during the wintertime for a ban from the previous season.

Summer SWAP

When the national weather calls for an extreme weather condition in the summertime, Almost Home has activated SWAP when there is funding available. Summer SWAP looks different for each hotel and Almost Home will establish separate processes with each hotel individually. The SWAP team will reach out to hotel teams to establish Summer SWAP MOUs as needed.

Events

Almost Home likes to show our appreciation to our community and hotel partners, so we like to host two yearly gatherings. These gatherings are meant to celebrate everything we accomplish and recognize all the hard work everyone puts into the SWAP season. The two meetings are the SWAP Kickoff, which is to start off every SWAP season (around September or October) and the SWAP Summit (usually in May), which serves as a debrief directly after every SWAP season. Hotel partners are required to have at least one representative at each SWAP event biannually. Please see below for more details about each gathering:

Annual SWAP Kickoff

- New program updates and policy refreshers
- Meet new staff, community partners, hotels, etc.
- Practice and workshopping

Annual SWAP Summit

- Networking with SWAP partners and service providers
- Opportunities to provide feedback and problem solve

Payment

How and when hotels are paid are very important to Almost Home. We appreciate all that the hotels do for this program and our clients. To ensure that payments are made quickly and correctly, we have implemented a streamlined payment process.

The invoicing process is completed monthly for the previous month. For example, payment for the month of December (1st – 31st) will be determined in the beginning of January and checks for December payment will be issued around the end of January or beginning of February.

Next are steps to follow for monthly invoicing:

1. Almost Home will send each hotel a monthly voucher report for the previous month by close of business on the 5th day of the month. The voucher report will contain a full list of vouchers reserved at your hotel, a total count of nights reserved, and a multiplication by the pre-negotiated flat rate agreed to in the MOU on file. If the 5th day of the month falls on a weekend or holiday, the report will be sent by end of day the next business day.
2. Review and sign the voucher report's cover page to approve that month's payment amount.
3. Return signed cover page to Almost Home by the 15th of the month for the previous month. This signed cover page will serve as the monthly invoice.
4. To dispute the information contained in the voucher report or the total payment amount, you must send Almost Home a list of the disputed voucher numbers, corresponding folio or invoice number, guest name(s), and dates of stay with an explanation of the discrepancies. Disputes must be submitted to Almost Home by the 15th of the month to be considered.
5. Almost Home will cut and issue checks within a net 30 days from receipt of approved voucher report cover page. You may work with the Housing Services Coordinator to schedule pick up or mail delivery.

Invoices or requests for payment received after the 15th of the month for the month prior will not be approved and will not be paid.

If there are questions about when checks will be sent out, please reach out to the Finance Director.

On behalf of the entire SWAP network, we want to thank you for being a SWAP partner and for taking the time to read this handbook. Almost Home's team is committed to supporting you for a successful SWAP season and will be available answer questions and problem solve along the way. Please do not hesitate to reach out to us as a resource. We look forward to a great year!"





Handbook Acknowledgment

Partner hotels agree to all agreements and following laws/information provided in this SWAP Hotel Handbook.

An online and updated version of this orientation is available on our website at

Date:

Hotel Manager Signature