



CHANGEWELLPROJECT
PARTNERING TO STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY SYSTEMS

LANDLORD ENGAGEMENT GUIDE

Strategies for homeless services
systems and providers

November 3, 2021

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Change Well Project would like to acknowledge Population Change Institute, which fertilized and nourished the seed that would eventually become Change Well Project. We created the Landlord Engagement Guide during that incubation period, and we would like to extend our gratitude and heartfelt thanks to the Population Change Institute Team for their support.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

TO START, we must acknowledge the incredible work done by the Employment and Social Development Department of Canada who developed the excellent “Landlord Engagement Toolkit: A Guide to Working with Landlords in Housing First Programs”. Their Toolkit has been the inspiration for the development of our guide and we are indebted to the hard work and detailed approach to helping programs improve their landlord engagement work. While writing this guide we often found that we could not improve on their work so we have borrowed from and given credit to the Landlord Engagement Toolkit when appropriate.

In addition, US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has been producing a seemingly never-ending set of short and targeted briefs on various aspects of landlord engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic. We have included links to these resources.

We also must thank the many communities and nonprofits who have developed strong programs with innovative approaches. We are happy to provide some examples of their work complete with links. In these challenging times, we all know that adapting the work of others to fit local needs is the greatest form of compliment. You will find links or actual versions of many of these in the Resources section of this guide.

Lastly, we are inspired by the hard, creative, and hopeful work done by case managers, housing navigators, housing locators, outreach teams and other people in our communities across the country who are working tirelessly everyday to link our most vulnerable neighbors to housing and helping them remain stable. If we are successful in making your work just a little bit easier through this resource, we will feel we accomplished our goals.



USE OF THIS GUIDE

Before you begin working on your landlord engagement plan, it is important to assess what your community housing needs are. How many people in your homeless service system will be housed this year? Of that population, what types of housing do they need (apartments, studios, mobile homes, etc.)? How many 1-bedroom units, 2-bedroom units, etc.? Asking these questions can help you identify your housing unit goals and can provide a clear vision for staff about what types of units they need to recruit. Once your community has a unit goal identified, you can then move forward with developing the strategies that would work best to meet that goal.

This guide is meant as a tool to help your community develop creative ways to access rental units. As you learn about various strategies, we encourage you to experiment to see what works best for your community. You will discover that landlords and property owners may like one approach more than others,

so it is important to track the impact of the different strategies you implement. How many units did each type of landlord incentive bring in? Was risk mitigation an effective recruitment tool? How many new landlords did we recruit with additional staff capacity? These types of questions can help your community to decide where to invest more resources in order to access more units.

The guide begins by focusing on the conversations and decisions that need to be made at a system level to determine how housing programs will approach landlords in your community. As you move through the sections, the guide offers more direct suggestions for implementing landlord engagement strategies. Remember, the goal is not to implement all of the landlord engagement strategies outlined. The goal is to use what strategies work best for your community.

INTRODUCTION

Housing programs play an integral role in connecting two parties that need each other: people looking for rental housing and people who rent housing. As connectors, housing programs must understand both the needs of their program participants as well as the needs of the landlords and property managers. Systems need to be strategic in how they engage landlords and practitioners must know how to balance their role as advocates with maintaining access to units.

People renting property value two things above all else: getting rent paid on time to cover their expenses and keeping their property in good condition so it can continue to rent. In order to protect their investment and meet these needs, property owners usually screen out households that carry a higher risk for nonpayment and damage to units. Housing programs offer a unique assurance for landlords that rent will be paid on time with financial assistance and households will be supported with services to uphold

the lease. In addition, housing programs can offer further support to landlords through various incentives, repair funds, and eviction avoidance. With these and other tools, high-risk households can gain access to units and stabilize in housing.

Housing programs and homeless service systems must rethink how we engage property owners to access units. In the past, programs started new searches with each household looking for housing, and case managers for each program competed to find units for their caseloads. This approach creates a bottleneck in our systems as each household looks for a unit.

A systemic approach is needed to move households quickly into housing. Rather than looking for units household-by-household, systems need to assess the total unit needs of the people experiencing homelessness in their communities and develop a plan to meet target unit numbers before all households

are identified by case managers. Rather than appealing to the heartstrings of landlords, conversations with landlords and property managers need to center on the business opportunity rental assistance provides and how many units they want to dedicate to the housing program now and in the future as units turnover. In order to implement a more strategic approach, staff who have sales experience or landlord engagement skills need to be given the time and training to hone their pitch for landlords rather than assuming all case managers can engage landlords on top of their current job duties and that they are all good at landlord engagement.

Communities will not be able to end homelessness for households in their shelters and streets without accessing free-market units; so, landlords must be on the team with us. This guide will help your community develop a plan to get them on your team and provide practical tips for the staff who will implement the plan.

GOALS

Housing programs play an integral role in connecting two parties that need each other: people looking for rental housing and people who rent housing. As connectors, housing programs must understand both the needs of their program participants as well as the needs of the landlords and property managers in their communities. One goal of this guide is to provide you with quick and easy access to information, while also offering best practices, promising practices and examples of tools that have been used in other communities.

As you learn about various strategies, we encourage you to experiment to see what works best for your community. You will discover that landlords and property owners may like one approach more than others so it is important to track the impact of the different strategies you implement.

- How many units did each type of landlord incentive bring in?
- Was risk mitigation an effective recruitment tool?
- How many new landlords did we recruit with additional staff capacity?

These types of questions can help your community decide where to invest more resources in order to access more units.

The goal is not to implement all of the landlord engagement strategies outlined here, but rather to identify those strategies that will work best for your community.

The Underlying Philosophies of this Guide

1. Landlords have a need for renters and we can meet those needs.
2. It is a business proposition for the landlords
3. Recruit units in bulk, not on a household-by-household basis
4. Landlord incentives are an exchange — we need something in return
5. Treat landlords like your 2nd clients
6. Retention of both landlords and participants housing is our key goal

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01

**COMMUNITY-WIDE
SYSTEMS WORK**

GETTING STARTED

HOUSING PROGRAMS AND HOMELESS SERVICE SYSTEMS MUST RETHINK HOW WE ENGAGE PROPERTY OWNERS TO ACCESS RENTAL UNITS.

A systemic approach is needed to move households quickly into housing. Rather than looking for units household-by-household, housing program administrators must assess the total unit needs for people experiencing homelessness in their community and develop a plan to meet that specific need. Rather than appealing to the heart strings of landlords, conversations with landlords and property

managers need to center on the business opportunities rental assistance provides and how many units they want to dedicate to the housing program now and in the future as units turn over. In order to implement a more strategic approach, staff who have sales experience or landlord engagement skills need to be given the time and training to hone their pitch for landlords rather than assuming all case managers can engage landlords on top of their current job duties and that they are all good at landlord engagement. Engaging landlords and maintaining those relationships should be seen as a set of unique skills that requires dedicated staff. Best practices have shown that we should let case managers do what they do best—consider hiring staff with a different skill set to support landlord engagement work.



PLANNING THE WORK

Ending homelessness in your county, Continuum of Care, or community will require support and action from all sectors. It is not simply the responsibility of community-based organizations that serve people experiencing homelessness or the local or regional governments. It will require the input and work of all stakeholders. This section will explore ways to build a collaborative approach and build your network.

There are two primary planning activities needed to develop or improve a housing location and landlord engagement focus: developing a plan and establishing a community advisory group. Both should be based on a collaborative approach so that all stakeholders are represented in each of those efforts.

CREATE A COMMUNITY PLANNING GROUP

There are a number of key partners in your Continuum of Care or other local network that should be part of developing your system-wide landlord engagement strategy. Each of the organizations working to house people experiencing homelessness must be represented in these important discussions. Consider other county systems leaders and elected leaders that are part of the larger community ecosystem serving individuals and families. What about the school system? Are

there social workers who track children experiencing homelessness? When was the last time you engaged with them with the purpose of building more access to rental units?

Besides service providers, it is also a good idea to have local housing authorities involved in this effort. Many of them have been working to engage landlords longer than many of the service providers. Honoring their work while also engaging them in this community-wide issue is critical. People and organizations are always more committed to implementing plans in which they have input and a chance to make sure their points of view are contained in the approach. When agencies work together, they are also able to combine and maximize resources and eliminate redundancies. When agencies coordinate with one another, they are able to provide landlords with consistent, professional and sustainable service.

Now is also the time to engage landlords and property management professionals or firms in your efforts. The sooner you can partner with a couple of key landlords, the better your work will be in recruiting more.

Let us not forget to consider the voices of the people with lived experience and BIPOC communities. We want to ensure that any plan we develop will create the results that stakeholders can support.

Finally, make sure that you get the input of the people who are doing the support services work directly with participants. Even though they may not have time to participate in your planning process, ensure that you incorporate time to get their input and feedback on your plans. Focus groups and surveys can be valuable tools to gather their insights.

COMMUNITY PLANNING

A landlord engagement plan should be developed by people who are responsible for making policy and funding decisions and include representatives of program staff working to house participants. Be as inclusive as you can be when thinking about developing this committee while recognizing that a huge group becomes difficult to manage. Start this work by talking with a few key partners to discuss who will manage this planning committee (call meetings, provide minutes, remind people of attendance and commitments, etc.) and how to determine planning committee participants and a timeline for the process.

Possible Stakeholders for a Community Planning Group

- Representatives of housing programs and homeless services organizations
- Continuum of Care leadership
- Community representatives that can provide an equity lens
- Landlords and/or property managers
- Elected officials
- Tribal Organizations
- Key champions from the philanthropic community
- Local housing authority
- Key school district staff who are aware of homelessness in their system
- County staff from various key departments
- People with lived experience
- Chamber of Commerce
- Key landlord associations



Think Inclusion

How early in the planning process do you want to include landlords? Consider this: is your planning committee going to go smoothly and be efficient and effective because you are used to working together?

Or, is there a history of less than positive relationships between stakeholders and clear competition that will need to be overcome? If the latter is true, better to sow the seeds of unity before bringing in our primary target stakeholders.

**REMEMBER**

There are multiple ways to get input from various people and organizations. If people are not able to commit to joining a planning committee, ask if they would be willing to reply to surveys or participate in focus groups. Focus groups are always a very good way to get important information from your participants and people with lived experience. Another option is for people to participate in discussions of a specific topic in which they have expertise.

Best Practices in Planning

Question Driven Planning Model

1. Identify the questions that need to be addressed
2. Prioritize those that need to be addressed immediately or within the next few months
3. Develop goals and action steps to answer the questions
4. Assign responsibility and time frames to achieve the goals and action steps

Identify the strategic questions that need to be addressed

The start of any successful planning process is to begin by identifying the questions that you want to address. These could include:

1. What are the reasons for developing a long-term plan?

It is important to have a system-wide approach that stakeholders can support. It is also important to lay out clear accountabilities and responsibilities for plan implementation.

2. Who is responsible for implementing the plan?

Whether an existing body takes on facilitation of this group or a landlord engagement advisory body is established, an individual or organization must be designated as the accountable entity responsible for implementation, ensuring that progress is measured, and that the plan is updated as circumstances change.

3. What is your planning approach?

Do you have internal planning expertise? Do any of your partners have staff or funding to hire a neutral process facilitator that will manage the process and ensure that the planning group meets established deadlines?

4. What is the scope of the plan? Planning time period or timeline?**5. Who is involved in planning? Directly?**

As listed above in recruiting key partners, how will you ensure that all points of view are represented in the planning body, including groups that may not have been included in prior planning efforts? Will you use focus groups and/or surveys? See the section on this approach further in the guide.

6. What data does the planning body need to consider? How can that data be accessed?**7. What other questions do you have that are specific to your community?**

Some of these questions should be answered while you are thinking about pulling the group together. Others should be discussed with the full group once you've begun your work together.

IDENTIFYING YOUR DATA NEEDS

Understanding and assessing relevant data are key to developing an effective landlord engagement plan. For this housing work, there are two areas of data to pull from:

1. Homeless Systems Data
2. Housing Market Data

After you have listed all of the possible data you might need, agree on a short list and gather it. Once you have examined the initial short list of data, assess if it is sufficient to begin the work of setting a housing goal and focusing your landlord engagement work. You can always go back for more information if and when you need it.

Homeless Systems Data

- Number of households that need housing by type and size
- Inflow: how many households become homeless each month
- Inventory—what units do we currently have access to
- Need and housing listed in prior years
- Equity Lens—who has the greatest need for housing and where do they want to be

Housing Market Data

- Number of available units and locations
- Types of units (number of bedrooms and housing types)
- Property Class Types (A-D)
- Percentage of renters that did not pay rent during the first week of the month?
- Number / % of evictions in a year
- Vacancy rates
- What tenant screening report do local landlords use?

Next Steps

1. Know your data. Is it accurate?
2. What other data is needed to complete the picture?
3. How will you track progress?



ASSESSING HOW MUCH DATA IS ENOUGH

As you will see by what is provided here, there is almost a never-ending amount of data we can access to try to assess our community market and our need for units. **REMEMBER:** We are in a crisis. We have hundreds of people we need to find housing for and many new financial resources to spend on those resources. It is important to not let the perfect become the enemy of the good.

DETERMINING A HOUSING GOAL

Once you have collected the most recent and relevant community data, use this to establish targets for each housing type. Remember that a broad array of housing types should be considered to provide a sufficient number of options for people in need of housing:

- 1 bedroom
- multiple bedrooms
- single rooms
- shared housing, etc.

Simple Ways to Identify a Goal

1. Start with what you were able to use last year (broken down by types of units, etc.)
2. Look at the number of people enrolled in each of your programs that you need to house and their needs
3. Detail how many vouchers you have to fill (Rapid rehousing (RRH), Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH), Housing Choice Vouchers (HCV), Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHV), Mainstream Vouchers)



TRACKING PROGRESS TOWARDS YOUR HOUSING GOAL

It is important to begin early testing of different strategies, such as incentives, risk mitigation funds, or community leaders calling for landlord support for the work.

Whenever you test a strategy, make sure that you take the time to assess how it is working. Which incentives seemed to resonate with landlords, and which can we let go of?

Do you have a whiz at Excel who can create a tool to track all new units and landlords in real time? If none of the service providers have this capacity, try out your community partners: they may have staff with strong skills in this area.

What do you need to track? Consider these data elements:

- Number of units acquired
- Number of units acquired by number of bedrooms
- Number of units acquired in various areas of your community
- Number of acquired shared housing opportunities
- Which incentives were used with these
- How many new landlords brought on board
- How quickly were newly acquired units leased up
- Who contacted them
- Result of the contact
- If landlord agreed to participate:
 - Number of units committed
 - Address of units
 - Rent amount per unit
 - Type of housing per unit
 - Number of bedrooms per unit
 - Incentive amounts accepted
 - Documentation
 - Screening criteria landlord is willing to be flexible with.
- Comments/feedback from contact

Think about how to track this data in a way that will encourage the staff working to house participants and keep them informed of your progress. Can you develop a data dashboard? Can you share regular community announcements of success? Would someone donate a billboard on which to track your progress to keep the community engaged? Be creative.

The community should receive regular updates on how many units have been recruited to date and how many are left to reach the housing goal. In addition, leadership needs to look at trends to see if the current landlord incentives offered are having a good return on investment in yielding the number and types of units needed to reach the goal.

LANDLORD INCENTIVES – TOOLS TO HELP US MEET OUR GOALS

There are many types of landlord incentives that have been devised and used by communities around the country. Recently, federal funding has been expanded to allow using funds for these kinds of tools.

Incentives Include:

- Risk Mitigation Funds
- Housing Support Services
- Signing Bonuses
- Holding Fees
- Security Deposits
- Repair Costs
- Uplift Repairs
- Eviction Prevention

When developing your plan for utilizing incentives it is important that you consider the following:

- What guidance do you need to develop about how and when to use them?
- What documentation will you require?
- How will you avoid competition in your community with landlords asking for increased incentives?
- Who is authorized to offer and approve incentives?
- What other incentives might help you towards your housing goal?



RISK MITIGATION FUND

Description	An insurance program where money is provided to landlords or contractors to cover damage on units during and after occupancy of tenants
Participant Barriers Addressed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor rental history • Criminal background check • Eviction history
Pros	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covers damage over deposit amount • Enables landlords to reduce screening • Can cover a large number of household
Cons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to have large pot of money that you set aside • Goal is to not spend the money (this can be difficult to understand)

HOUSING SUPPORT SERVICES

Description	Services offered to participants in housing programs to assist with stabilizing in housing and meeting the requirements of the lease.
Participant Barriers Addressed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor rental history • Criminal background check • Eviction history • Potential household issues that interfere with the lease • Low Income
Pros	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides a person for the landlord to call for assistance with a household • Provides another party who keeps an eye on the unit upkeep • Supports households to uphold the lease
Cons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implies that a person cannot maintain dwelling on their own • May lead to discrimination if landlord knows why services are offered

SIGNING BONUS / MOVE-IN FEE / HOLDING FEE FUND

Description	Financial incentives offered to landlords at lease signing or lease renewal in exchange for taking high barrier households, holding units, and/or dealing with the additional paperwork needed for the program. These incentives are outside of a security deposit.
Participant Barriers Addressed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor rental history • Criminal background check • Eviction history • Potential household issues that interfere with the lease • Low Income
Pros	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Money goes directly to landlord to compensate for time to complete inspection, hold unit, and finalize paperwork
Cons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to document agreement so no accusations of bribery • May create a barrier to other housing programs in the community who cannot offer similar incentives

DOUBLE SECURITY DEPOSIT

Description	An amount of money that a renter pays when beginning to rent property that can be used to pay for any damage that the renter causes to the property. Programs can provide extra months of security deposits to reduce risks. Unused security deposits are returned to the renter. In California, this is limited to 2 times the monthly rent.
Participant Barriers Addressed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor rental history • Criminal background check • Low Income • Eviction History
Pros	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adds risk protection for landlord in case of apartment damage • If unit does not sustain damage, money reverts to the household for next move
Cons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landlord controls process of whether deposit is used or not • Is not an immediate pay off for the landlord– still asks them to take a risk

UNIT UPFIT REPAIRS

Description	Financial reimbursement offered by housing programs to cover the costs of repairs to the unit to meet inspection standards prior to tenancy. Often, programs leverage these funds by asking the landlord to pay towards some of the repairs or partnering with another agency to cover the full costs.
Participant Barriers Addressed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of housing • Inspections • Overall maintenance of the unit
Pros	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improves quality of housing in the community • Allows for unit to be used by other housing programs in the future • Supports smaller landlords who may need help maintaining units
Cons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community needs to decide what level of investment they want to make per unit • Unit may be off the market for a longer period of time

REPAIR COSTS

Description	Financial reimbursement offered by housing programs to cover the repair of damage to a unit either during or after tenancy that exceed the security deposit.
Participant Barriers Addressed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor rental history • Criminal background check • Eviction history
Pros	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covers damage over deposit amount • Enables landlords to reduce screening • Helps to maintain good relationships with landlords
Cons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to ensure that there are not too many documentation hurdles to make a claim

EVICTIION PREVENTION

<p>Description</p>	<p>Housing support services that assist a household at risk of eviction with:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Relocating to another unit before eviction filed 2. Additional prevention financial assistance to pay back rent
<p>Participant Barriers Addressed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor rental history • Eviction history
<p>Pros</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saves the landlord the time and cost of an eviction • Prevents a household from getting an eviction history
<p>Cons</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to be able to move household quickly to another unit • Need to ensure your program can provide prevention funding to households who “graduate” from rental assistance in case housing is jeopardized in the future



While you may not have any of these incentives in place, consider exploring current or potential funding sources.

Incentives should be utilized in exchange for something that the landlord is going to provide, these are incentives in exchange for something that the landlord is going to provide to you, your program, or your participant, such as:

- No application fee
- No rental history check
- No eviction history check
- No income screening
- No/Reduced/Lenient criminal background screen
- Setting units aside for your program
- First access to turnover units



GET CREATIVE!

If your strategy is not working, change the approach or address common barriers such as excessive documentation. Remember to gather feedback from staff and landlords on a regular basis.

GATHERING LANDLORD INPUT AND PARTICIPATION

Gathering feedback about strengths, challenges, and opportunities, as well as ways to increase landlord involvement, can be very helpful in shaping your goals, actions, and program approaches.

Timing and methodology is important to consider when reaching out to landlords. Many communities have developed a survey for landlords as a quick way to gather data. This method can help to identify landlord needs, stability of rental prices, and their experience working with voucher programs. It can also be a good way to increase engagement.

Potential topics for a landlord survey:

- The types of properties that exist in the market
- How many landlords are small, medium, or large (not helpful unless 100% of market returns survey)
- Experience leasing to participant population
- Landlord concerns about leasing to the participant population
- Their opinions of potential incentives that might be offered
- Information or resources that landlords may want
- Concerns about working with the support services agencies
- Remember to collect demographic data as a part of the survey (# of units, what part of town, etc.)

Tips for Developing a Survey

- Select appropriate question forms
- Make items clear
- Avoid questions
- Target your questions to the audience who can answer them
- Questions should be relevant
- Short items are best
- Avoid negatively worded items
- Avoid biased items and terms

ALSO CONSIDER...

- *Monitor your response rate (>25% is good but check representativeness)*
- *Use follow-up reminders*
- *Provide a progress monitor*
- *Offer to share select results with respondents*
- *Keep it short (less than 15 minutes to complete)*

FOCUS GROUPS

The purpose of the focus group should be defined up front and communicated to the participants. For example, you might recruit landlords to learn more about how they are typically connecting with programs and what struggles they are encountering, or you may want participants' input and for them to share their honest and open thoughts with you.

The ideal size for a focus group is 8-10 participants. A focus group generally lasts 45-90 minutes. A moderator facilitates the discussion and a notetaker captures the comments and responses of the participants.

While focus groups are structured around a set of pre-determined questions, the discussion is intended to be free flowing. Ideally participant comments will stimulate and influence the thinking of others to share their own feedback. Some people even find themselves changing their thoughts and opinions during the group.

Focus Groups involve three types of questions:

1. Engagement questions: introduce participants to each other and to make them comfortable with your topic of discussion
2. Exploration questions: get to the meat of the discussion
3. Exit questions: check to see if anything was missed in the discussion



RESOURCE LINK

- [LL Engagement - Sample Survey & Focus Group Questions](#)

CREATING A LANDLORD ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Many communities have found that creating a landlord advisory committee to maintain contact with and seek feedback from landlords in the community is a useful part of their community planning efforts.

These committees don't have to be elaborate. They can be established with the following goals:

- To maintain contact with a positive group of landlords
- To assist with outreach to new landlords to join in the partnership
- To get general feedback
- To get specific feedback about proposed policies, procedures, incentives, and new programs (like a Risk Mitigation Fund)

It is good practice to consider the frequency, length and scope of meetings with input from existing landlord partners.



SHARED AVAILABLE UNIT DATABASE

Creating a shared Available Unit Database is key to managing the needs of many participants that are searching for available units.

It is important to get agreement amongst all the service providers and their direct service staff about what to track and how to track it. It is also important to decide who “owns” or “manages” the database and ensures the information is accurate, up to date, and readily available.

The database should provide an accessible way for case managers and housing navigators to identify the type of unit available, when the unit is being viewed and when the unit has been leased.

Basic information should include:

- Address of unit
- Rent amount per unit
- Type of housing
- Number of bedrooms and bathrooms
- Landlord name
- Handicap accessible (Y/N)
- Types of subsidies accepted by the property
- Landlord screening criteria
- Flexibilities on screening criteria
- On hold to apply
- When leased up
- Near transportation



RESOURCE LINKS

- [Unit availability Spreadsheet \(KTHA\)](#)



ESTABLISH OPERATIONAL POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND PROTOCOLS



SYSTEM APPROACH:

In a system-wide approach to landlord engagement, all programs operating within your community should agree to minimum standards associated with all aspects of the work of landlord engagement. Landlords often complain that service providers are inconsistent and offer different levels of support to their tenants. Creating shared community standards so that there is uniform treatment of participants and landlords can address these concerns and demonstrate how serious you are about your partnership. It is often the Continuum of Care that takes the lead on developing these policies, protocols and procedures and gaining system-wide buy in.



PROGRAM APPROACH:

Sometimes in our programs, we develop ways of doing things but never commit those practices to writing and do what it takes to ensure that everyone is following the practices we have developed. Even if your community has not yet tackled a system-wide approach to policies and procedures related to working with landlords, it is important that each program establish clear, written policies, protocols and procedures that can ensure all your staff understand and operate in a consistent, equitable, transparent and efficient manner. Make sure that your policies and procedures are accessible for all involved stakeholders, including tenants, landlords and all members of your staff.

Important Policies and procedures

- Case management program elements including frequency of home visits, format of housing stabilization plans, record-keeping (including HMIS data entry requirements), operationalization of Housing First, Trauma-Informed Care, and Harm Reduction, etc. Policies for resolving problems, handling emergencies, and on-call procedure
- Clearly defined procedures for the housing search process, the move-in process and for stabilization services (including funding requirements, staff involvement in the processes and timing.)
- Content and responsibilities for landlord and tenant education
- Grievance procedures for participants and landlords
- Conflict resolution and mediation procedures
- Discharge from the program
- Eviction avoidance
- Responsibility and payment options for damages to units
- Procedures for housing inspections
- Policies for consent and release of information
- Translation services usage
- Legal Services providers and when to engage them
- Fair Housing and anti-discrimination protections

LANDLORD CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS



System Approach:

To successfully engage landlords, it is crucial that we understand their business needs and establish clear expectations for any potential partnership. In many communities, there are multiple programs vying for the attention of the same landlords. Agreeing to a specific and clearly stated set of customer service standards for the entire system allows us to broadcast our commitments to the landlords and property managers.

Developing these standards should be a process that includes all providers, leadership, and direct service staff. In addition, we should seek out input from landlords and property managers to ensure that we are hitting the items that are important to them.

Standard topics could include:

- Statement about agency paying their portion of the rent on time
- What and/or how agencies will monitor participant rental payments
- Conflict resolution
- Response to landlord or property manager concerns
- Handling participant/tenant concerns
- Mediation
- Response time to calls and/or emails from landlords and property managers
- Establishment of a 24-hour landlord call-in number
- Emergency response protocols
- Eviction avoidance (including moving a participant/tenant to another location)
- Dealing with damage



Program Approach:

Until your community has developed an agreed upon set of customer service standards, each agency should develop policies and procedures that embrace this approach.



RESOURCE LINKS

- [LASHA Customer Service Supports for Landlords and Property Managers](#)
- [Landlord Services Polices - Boston](#)



UNIFORM STEPS IN THE HOUSING PROCESS



System Approach:

There are so many actions that need to take place during the process to assist a participant in finding housing that it can be difficult for staff to keep track of them. Housing Authorities have their processes for Housing Choice Vouchers, Low Income Tax Credit Properties have their processes, “Mom and Pop” landlords have a process and large property management firms have their own. At the same time, landlords and property managers quickly tire of different processes from each agency with whom they are dealing. From the point of view of the participant, this can be very confusing and even discouraging. From the landlord’s perspective this contributes to reluctance to creating a partnership with us.

Developing a uniform approach to the housing search and lease up process can be an improvement for everyone involved. In addition, developing a universal application packet may take work from many stakeholders but can result in a more efficient housing process.

If you cannot agree on a uniform process or shared documents, put together a checklist or “cheat sheet” for staff to use that lays out the work flow and the needed documents, checks, etc. in the appropriate order.



RESOURCE LINKS

- [Universal Landlord Packet \(LAHSA\)](#)



Program Approach:

Until your community has successfully tackled the system-wide approach, it is still extremely important to define the process that case managers, housing navigators, housing locators and participants will have to follow to successfully complete a housing search, lease-signing, and move-in.

We can start this work by engaging the staff in a mapping process where all steps are identified, the order in which those steps should occur, the timing of those steps, and when to engage your participants in this process. There are two main goals to taking on this work: 1: a more empowering and less confusing process for the participant, and 2: clarity and efficiency in the work for staff.

Areas that should be mapped out include:

- Required personal documentation for each type of housing provider (ID, Social Security Card, some require birth certificates, proof of income, bank statements, etc.) and whether there are any “work-a-rounds” or flexibilities such as self-certifications, etc.
- Timing—are there limits on how long a housing provider will allow this process to take? Many housing authorities have time-limits on how long a participant can search for housing before requesting an extension. How are extensions requested?
- Need for funds (application fees, security deposits, first and last month’s rent, storage fees, moving fees, arrearages, etc.) and the process for securing those funds in accordance with the timelines.
- Completing the application
- Obtaining letters of reference for the participant
- When, where and how the staff accompany the participant to meetings with the landlords or property managers
- Obtaining furniture and household items
- Turning on utilities (paying arrears)
- Getting the keys



RESOURCE LINKS

- [Housing Facilitation Checklist \(LAHSA\)](#)

Evaluating Your Programs

It is an important part of your landlord engagement strategies to seek out their input on what could be improved and what is going well. Letting landlords know that you want to hear from them is another way to show you respect their business needs.

There are multiple ways to conduct such an evaluation:

- Focus groups of landlords
- Satisfaction surveys
- One-on-one interviews
- Phone interviews

Along with the level of satisfaction of your landlord partners, what information would be useful? Consider an annual evaluation looking at a number of data points about your program and your hard work:

- Number of landlords involved in renting to people
- Number of units overall and number of units by landlord
- Number of new landlords during the time period
- Number of visits with landlords
- Number of outreach visits including landlord associations, etc.
- Number of unit visits attended by staff
- Number of home visits (weekly or otherwise) between staff and participants
- Length of time to get someone housed
- Number of after hours calls
- Number of evictions and reasons
- Number of times participants were re-housed

Participants: Your Other Customer

Do you do annual satisfaction surveys of your participants? If you do, are you including questions about the housing location process and the help

of case managers? Participants also appreciate their feedback being considered in the program. You can use similar methods as are used to get information from landlords.

Results

After you conduct any type of evaluation, you should share the results with your landlords and even highlight them on your website so that the community can see that you take evaluation seriously.



RESOURCE LINKS

- [Sample Landlord Engagement Survey and Focus Group Sample Questions](#)

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Why does developing a strong workforce matter?

Building a strong and effective homeless services workforce is critical to ending homelessness. Creating training programs and other learning opportunities that invest and support in staff development will:

- Increase staff engagement and morale
- Increase skill development
- Increase retention and continuity of care in housing programs
- Prevent burnout

Additionally, having a workforce strategy and training plan will allow an organization to identify the roles needed for the program and help staff be more successful in their roles. Recruiting and hiring staff from diverse backgrounds that integrate individuals with lived expertise and individuals with formal education creates a diverse and well-rounded team to better serve your participants

HIRING AND TRAINING STAFF FOR HOUSING PROGRAMS

When developing the staffing structure for housing programs, it is considered effective practice to separate the housing and support services roles. Separating these roles provides:

- Staff with ability to put their best skills to work.
- A healthy work environment that is collaborative versus competitive.
- Manageable workloads and clearer expectations.
- More time for case management staff to build trust and a stronger relationship with the participant.
- Focus on delivering effective services for both the landlords and participants.

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES: ONE POSSIBLE MODEL

Housing Locators

Housing Locators identify affordable housing opportunities, develop, obtain, and maintain relationships with landlords and rental properties and provide ongoing landlord retention services.

- Conduct outreach and marketing for new landlords
- Create housing stock/inventory by identifying available units
- Manage landlord incentives
- Serve as primary point of contact for landlord
- Be the liaison between landlord, housing authority (if applicable), case management team, and participant
- Address issues related to maintenance, health, safety, housing quality standards, rental payments, etc.
- Unit inspections (pre & post housing)
- Maintain proactive communication with landlords/property managers
- Assess damages and arrange for repairs
- Educate landlords and clients on landlord/tenant rights

Housing Navigators

Housing staff serve as the liaison between the landlords, tenants, housing authorities (when applicable) and respond to the landlord's concerns.

- Assess the participants' needs and wants and the must have's vs. the negotiables
- Assist participants with getting "document ready" including putting together letters of reference, perhaps a letter from the participant about any past history challenges, etc.
- Develop housing search plan and budget with participant (check to see if case managers are doing this)
- Housing search in collaboration with the Housing Locator (if there is such a position)
- Attend unit/apartment viewings with participants
- Explain lease requirements
- Ensure unit/apartment is furnished
- Eviction prevention services
- Educate tenants on tenant rights, responsibilities and how to be a good tenant

Clinical Team/Case Manager

Case managers and other support staff focus on supporting the tenant and addressing their concerns and barriers.

- Identify participants' needs and wants
- Develop individual housing stability plan and budget with participant
- Assist participant to get "document ready" (collaborate with Housing Navigators about who does what)
- Assist participants with addressing other barriers (health, financial, employment, behavioral health, etc.)
- Assist participant with securing and/or increasing income (once housed) including mainstream benefits
- Advocate for participant/tenant
- Assist participant with coordinating care and linkage to community resources
- Provide tenant support during housing related issues
- Assist participant with transitioning into permanent housing and provide supportive services to improve participant's overall housing stability

Communication is Critical

The housing and support services teams need to work closely together and communicate frequently. Creating a regularly scheduled meeting, such as “Housing Rounds,” or “Case Conferencing” to address participant and landlord needs and concerns helps to build collaboration, strengthen communication, and identify interventions to help participants prepare, secure, and maintain their housing placement. These meetings are also instrumental in providing opportunities for sharing, clarification of roles, and cross-training.

DEVELOP MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR TRAINING

Establishing a learning-environment involves developing a formal on-boarding process and training program for staff. Training can be delivered through several methods, such as in-house sessions (in-person or self-guided), on-the-job training, workshops, webinars, conferences or online methods.

**RESOURCE LINKS**

See Training Resources

- [Corporation for Supportive Housing \(CSH\)](#)
- [C4 Interventions](#)
- [National Alliance to End Homelessness](#)
- [US Interagency Council on Homelessness](#)
- [US Housing and Urban Development Department](#)



Recommendations on how to create minimum training standards

Recommendation 1: Review current federal, state, and local regulations and contractual requirements. It is important that staff are provided education and training around core guiding principles influencing the homeless services system, roles and responsibilities, evidence-based practices, program standards, and policies and procedures related to their work. It is critical that equity-based and culturally sensitive training be incorporated throughout your training program.

Recommendation 2: Review program staff roles and job descriptions. Understanding and identifying the core skills and competencies needed to perform each job area of the team will help inform what skill areas are essential for each role and what training is needed to help staff develop or enhance these skill areas.

Recommendation 3: Conduct a staff survey to identify areas of support and training needed. It is always helpful to obtain staff feedback when developing training programs. This data can help identify key topic areas and other support needed to help staff feel more prepared to perform their duties.

Once the core training topics have been identified, develop the purpose and overview for each training program, learning objectives for each session, and methods of instruction. To be effective, training programs and staff development opportunities should be implemented across all staffing levels of the organization, which ensures consistent messaging around an organization's mission, standards of care, and other core practices.

Sample training topics:

- Best Practices: Housing First, Trauma Informed Care, Harm Reduction, Strength-based case management
- Outreach
- Progressive assistance
- Motivational Interviewing
- Cultural humility and systemic racism
- De-escalation techniques
- Landlord Engagement & Retention Strategies
- Housing Retention & Tenancy Supportive Services
- Fair housing and local eviction process

Additionally, specialized training should be provided when working with the following sub-populations:

- Domestic Violence survivors
- Human Trafficking
- Transitional Age youth
- Older Adults
- People with disabilities
- Veterans
- Families
- Justice-impacted people



02

**IMPLEMENTATION
STRATEGIES**

LANDLORD RECRUITMENT

In order to end homelessness, we need affordable housing options for our participants. Over the past few years, many communities are experiencing housing markets with low vacancy rates and higher costs, which makes it extremely challenging to develop a sufficient rental housing inventory.

Recruiting landlords and developing strong partnerships is pivotal to the success of providing housing options for our participants. The following section provides a few strategies to help you address challenges and identify solutions when building relationships with landlords, creating housing stock, and promoting housing stability.

STRATEGY 1: UNDERSTANDING LANDLORDS' CONCERNS AND MOTIVATIONS

Remember landlords are operating a business. Landlords “screen people out” to protect their investments. There is no way to predict who will be a “good tenant” and who will be a “difficult tenant”. Part of the housing staff’s role is to “screen people in” and help landlords say “yes” to housing our participants. Housing program staff need to first understand the landlord’s priorities, business needs, and motivation in order to negotiate and secure housing for their participants.

The following are examples of landlord concerns searching for good tenants:

- How will the tenant pay rent consistently and on-time?
- Where will the rent come from and is it a reliable source?
- Distrust of rental assistance programs and payments
- Tenant's poor credit
- Will the tenant respect and care for the building and unit?
- Guest management issues
- Will the tenant respect other tenants?
- Turnover and empty units?
- Evictions and unexpected costs
- Property damage
- Stereotypes of people in our programs

Eventually, your participating landlords may even begin to hold units for you.



RESOURCE LINKS

- [Landlord Engagement During COVID \(HUD\)](#)
- [Landlord Engagement: Rent Connect in Miami Dade County \(HUD\)](#)
- [HCV Landlord Outreach Events Flyer \(HUD\)](#)

Where can I identify potential landlords?

- Existing relationships within your organization (i.e. volunteers, board members, partner organizations)
- “Warm Hits”-landlords who have worked with other housing programs
- Landlord Associations or Property Management Companies
- Public Housing Authority lists
- Referrals from program participants
- Real estate agencies, developers, and investors
- Faith-based organizations
- Rental notices online or in newspapers
- Social media campaigns
- Cold calls and pounding the pavement

Tips for Working and Engaging with Landlords

1. Approach landlords in a way that builds their trust
2. Don't limit yourself to only one type of landlords
3. Be strategic about your tenant matching and screen participants to fit the requirements of specific landlords
4. Remain neutral and practice patience when dealing with conflicts or challenging situations
5. Develop a marketing strategy
6. Develop a landlord committee or advisory group that can help build your program in a way that will be attractive to other landlords

STRATEGY 2: DEVELOPING A MARKETING PLAN

The second strategy for landlord recruitment is to develop a marketing plan with elements such as:

- Dedicated staff with effective sales pitches
- Brochures or flyers
- Social media campaigns
- Billboards
- Ads in trade magazines or websites
- Press conferences

Develop a Community-wide Marketing Campaign

A good approach to marketing is to bring all your providers together and collaborate on one campaign. Assessing a myriad of different non-profit agencies can be daunting and frustrating to landlords. Leave a space to put a sticker for your organization with your contact info

Dedicated housing navigators and/or housing locators

Having dedicated housing staff that specialize in landlord recruitment can help increase permanent housing placements. Many programs have found that hiring former property managers or former realtors to do these jobs is worth the investment.

The following is a five-step framework to help housing staff develop an effective sales pitch:

Step 1: Questions to Consider

- Who is your target audience?
- What can the landlords expect from you and or your program?
- What are your expectations of the landlord?
- What funds do you have to support the participants and landlords?
- What are your organization’s previous successes and accomplishments?
- What promises/guarantees can you make? (don’t over sell!)
- What type of case management and supportive services do participants receive from your program? How will those be helpful to the landlord?

Step 2: Benefits & Selling Points

- Guaranteed rental payments, deposits, and other incentives when available
- Reduction in vacancies by encouraging long-term tenants
- Tenant education on obligations of tenancy and other responsibilities
- Regular home visits by program staff
- Staff liaison to communication and trouble-shooting
- Screening and “matching” of tenants
- Eviction mitigation and prevention
- Rehousing of tenants if needed
- Designated point of contact for crisis management support or if problems arise
- 24-hour phone line to call for assistance

Step 3: Communication Points

Being open and genuine in your communication helps lay the groundwork to gain the landlord’s trust and willingness to work with you. Make sure you take time to maintain consistent communication throughout the relationship and always be responsive to questions or concerns. Here are three possible approaches that may be successful for you:

1. STATISTICAL APPROACH: Ask what their current rate of eviction is. Explain that, as a landlord, they are already taking risks with nearly all tenants, but when they rent to participants in your program, there will be a team to reduce risks and offer them support. *Example Statistic:* If they tell you that they lose 15% of their tenants due to eviction, counter with your success rates: *91% of our tenants who are housed remain in their unit for at least 1 year. (Be sure you actually know your statistics. . . never make something up!)*

2. TESTIMONIAL APPROACH: Highlight success stories. You can get creative when implementing this approach. You can use videos or “spotlight” stories with true (anonymous) stories of participants and how their lives have been transformed as they have experienced housing stability because of your program. You might also share stories of landlords who were initially skeptical, but decided to collaborate with your program and had positive experiences of renting to program participants.

3. FREE ADVERTISING APPROACH: As you begin to develop your landlord relationships, you will learn about some of the screening criteria they use to fill their units. Some landlords may have units that are harder to fill, or have high turnover or vacancy rates. You can explain that your program has access to a pool of potential tenants who are carefully screened, which will help them fill their units and reduce vacancy rates. The bigger sell is to highlight that they will save time and money usually associated with searching for a “good tenant” and advertising a vacant unit.

Step 4: Develop Profession-Looking Marketing Materials

Design professional marketing materials about your services and organization that housing staff can distribute to landlords. Better still, join together with the other homeless service providers in your community and create one shared, consistent set of marketing tools that can be personalized with your organization's contact information. Many landlords complain about how many different organizations they are asked to deal with and find it confusing when different programs offer different information or supports. If your community can agree on some basic common supports for landlords and participants, you will likely have more success.

There are several examples of different marketing materials and tools that include, but are not limited to the following:

- Organization and program-specific brochures and pamphlets
- Information fact sheets
- Letters describing the program and services
- Business cards
- Quarterly and/or annual reports from the organization
- Organizational website and social media links
- Promotional videos
- Community newsletters
- Testimonial letters from other landlord partners

Step 5: Stick to it and Don't Give Up!

The most important step is to be persistent and don't give up! Remain patient, reachable, and solution-focused throughout the process.

It takes time and practice to build relationships with landlords. Even if the landlord says "no", continue to nurture the relationship. Similar to working with participants, it takes time to develop trust and partnerships.



STRATEGY 3: EDUCATING LANDLORDS

Another key component to building relationships with landlords includes providing them with helpful and relevant information.

Housing staff can provide this information through frequent interactions and referrals to appropriate assistance (e.g. landlord/tenant laws, how to screen tenants, changes in state, local and federal law related to landlord-tenant issues, repair programs for smaller businesses, etc.).

Helpful topics to consider for landlords

1. How to pass housing authority unit inspections
2. Completing request for tenancy packets
3. Safety planning
4. Community incentive programs
5. Property standards and building codes
6. Tenant Rights and Obligations and Landlord Rights and Responsibilities
7. Myths and realities of mental illness, substance use, and homelessness
8. Available rental assistance programs for those who are behind in their rent.
9. Organizational services for landlords and tenants
10. Partnership roles and responsibilities



STRATEGY 4: CLARIFYING ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Defining roles and responsibilities of all partners is also a critical part of landlord education. When developing relationships, it is very helpful to review the key roles of your staff. Providing this information helps to strengthen the communication, clarifies expectations, and helps build positive relationships.

Examples of Roles & Responsibilities	
Landlord	Housing Staff & Case Managers
Participate in meetings with housing staff Lease agreement Rent collection Repairs and ongoing maintenance Assist in addressing tenant issues Notification of non-payment to tenants and housing programs Conflict resolution	Meetings Responsible for implementing supportive services/housing case management Home visits Communication with landlords Budgeting Housekeeping tips Crisis planning and conflict resolution Eviction prevention

STRATEGY 5: DEVELOPING CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS FOR WORKING WITH LANDLORDS

Today, a growing number of communities are bringing their homelessness services agencies together to develop a common set of Customer Service Standards. These standards provide: less confusion for landlords, more equity in the way participants are assisted in their journey to housing stabilization, and better partnerships with landlords. Think about this: If everyone in the community agreed to return landlords' calls in 48 hours wouldn't this make the landlords happier? Beyond that, what if everyone agreed to visit the participants in person no less than once a month and communicated that commitment to landlords? Strategies like these can be extremely effective in building landlords' trust in housing programs.

Maintaining Privacy and Confidentiality

REMINDER: It is important to only disclose the necessary information about your participant without jeopardizing their confidentiality and privacy. It is better to share more generalized information about the people your program serves. For example: "our program serves individuals who struggle with stable housing."

You should always have a discussion with your participant about what information should and should not be shared with the landlord---either by you or the tenant. Some tenants are so excited about their new home and their feelings of success they may get carried away with telling stories of their "former lives". This may not always be the best approach, depending on the landlord.

Fair Housing Violations (reasons to seek legal advice)

"The Fair Housing Act protects people from discrimination when they are renting or buying a home, getting a mortgage, seeking housing assistance, or engaging in other housing-related activities."

Housing staff should never act as attorneys, but it is important to learn about tenant and landlord rights, fair housing laws, and to have a solid

understanding of the eviction process in your community. Your participants are depending on you to be the source of this information and it is an important part of your role. Many misunderstandings of the eviction laws have resulted in people actually being "self-evicted". When they are scared of losing their housing and they get their first notice of a lease violation, many people just move out wrongly believing that they have been evicted. Housing staff should be well-trained in both local law and how to work with your local legal services organization.

Housing staff should also be prepared to make referrals to their local legal services agency if they believe that the tenant has a legal issue that needs to be addressed. **In California, it is now illegal for landlords to refuse to rent to someone who is having their rent payments supported by government or agency programs (like Housing Choice Vouchers or Rapid Re-Housing Assistance).**

Many landlords do not know about this update to state law.

PLEASE NOTE: *Housing staff should not be trying to explain the law to landlords. A better approach is to ask your local legal services office to provide you with written information on landlord and tenant rights.*



RESOURCE LINKS

- [LASHA Customer Service Supports for Landlords and Property Managers](#)
- [Landlord Services Polices - Boston](#)
- [Source of Income Discrimination FAQ \(CA DFEH\)](#)

Examples of potential Fair Housing Violations

1. Background check violations
2. Refusing to rent to a tenant with a rental subsidy under the Fair Employment and Housing Act (California SB329 and SB222)
3. Not accommodating a disabled applicant or resident appropriately
4. Treating people differently based on race, age, family status, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity.
5. Not handling disputes between residents (i.e. sexual harassment claims, discrimination)



STRATEGY 6: MAINTAINING RELATIONSHIPS

Both the community system and individual agencies that are a part of the system have a role to play in developing and maintaining positive relationships with landlords. Our support for landlords is just as important as our support for the tenants living in their units.

Start with Communication

In surveys with landlords around the country in both high rent/low vacancy communities and rural areas, landlords and property managers report what motivates them most to work with our programs and our participants is the support staff to whom they can turn whenever there is a need.

Landlords and property managers have hundreds of tenants who cause problems and must be evicted in spite of the fact that they are employed or are not coming to the unit from homelessness. The difference between dealing with those problematic tenants and our participants is you, as part of the system that has been created to quickly respond to the landlord or property managers' needs.

Effective two-way communication can build trust and confidence in the program and /or the system. Open, consistent communication is critical to intervening early when problems arise.

Effective communication between the landlord and the program should adhere to the following key principles:

- All communication should be purposeful--- don't waste the landlords' time.
- Never divulge confidential information about a tenant.
- You can reassure the landlord or property manager that you are or have responded to the concern
- Document all communications and share meeting notes with all parties

Communication Tips

- Always provide landlords with a single point of contact and a back up for when that person is out sick or away from the office.
- Establish regular checks-ins with the landlord or property manager. Pick a day of the month (check in by the 8th of every month). This way you'll know if everything is OK with the rent.
- When making home visits to your participant, stop by and say hello and check-in with the landlord in person. This keeps communication open and assures the landlord that the tenant is receiving the support that was promised.
- Provide after hours support 24/7 with a number to call. Ensure that this is a direct point of contact that can offer quick, solutions-focused assistance.
- Do not set up a call in number that refers the caller to another agency or takes a message and cannot respond in the moment. This may aggravate an already tense situation.

NOTE: *As with any relationship, when someone is angry or hurt the interaction can be very difficult. Don't avoid this-- this is an opportunity to put your excellent case management skills to work.*

- *Meet with the landlord or call them back as soon as possible*
- *Allow them to vent*
- *Validate their frustrations ("I hear you and this is what we can do to address the problem.")*

Be Responsive to the Landlords

Remember that you also serve as the landlord's support system.

Be clear, concise, and put in writing exactly what the landlord can expect from your system and/or program. They need to have a cheat sheet that reminds them of exactly what they can expect, from whom, and how quickly it will be delivered. Landlords and property managers are business people, making it essential that you guarantee a response to any raised concerns within one or two business days.

While you are there as support, sometimes the resolution needs outside assistance. Explore what mediation services are available within your community and make sure you have a relationship developed with them so that you can call on them for help when needed. If there are not any such organizations, the system or program might want to invest in mediation training for a sub-set of staff who can serve in that role.

PREPARING PARTICIPANTS FOR HOUSING MOVE

The beginning of the work in connecting with landlords is to ensure that your participants (future tenants) are prepared for the process of identifying, applying for and moving into housing. This section is broken down into the various steps that are involved in this preparation.

Get to know the participants and their wants, and needs and desires. Choosing a place to live is a momentous decision for many. It is fraught with all kinds of worries based on past experiences, from being able to "make it work this time" and conflict between what they "want" or "need" to what is "possible" in the current housing market. It is important to work with a deep connection to and understanding of the stress overload and trauma that our participants bring into this process. The best way to do this is by moving slowly but methodically through all the steps of preparing for new housing.

As we have learned, the impact of stress and trauma on people can often make it impossible to make decisions, to remember things, to

follow through on plans, and to put their best foot forward. Our job is to help overcome these very real barriers that can slow down or even stop the process of finding housing. That may often mean that you will be playing a much more active role at this stage of the work with the participants.

Case managers or housing navigators need to learn how much your participant can actually handle at this stressful time. We do this by giving little checks. One possible check is to give the participant a short and simple document to fill out about their wants and needs in their new housing. If they are not able to complete this in a few days, you will know that you have to assist them in clarifying these important issues.

While we want to work toward empowerment of our participants, it is important to understand your participant's strengths and backstory (as much as you can encourage them to share).

STRATEGY 1: RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF YOUR LANDLORDS

We all know that everyone likes to be recognized and thanked. Let landlords know that you recognize their support for your participants' success and they are appreciated. There are numerous ways to do this including:

- Cards, boxes of candy, home made cookies, delivered to the staff when you are making a home visit
- A framed certificate of appreciation or a plaque: one signed by the Mayor would be particularly special
- Thank you notes signed by staff and participants
- A landlord spotlight in your newsletter, website, email or annual report
- A landlord of the year award presented at your organization's annual meeting.
- Invitations to your annual meetings, or fundraising events so they can learn more about your organization
- Treating a landlord or property manager to coffee
- What else can you think of?

STRATEGY 2: UNDERSTANDING A PARTICIPANT'S NEEDS

In working to understand a participant's housing needs, start with an easy conversation that goes into their housing history including what they liked and didn't like, what made it difficult or unsuccessful, and what they found that made housing work previously. You don't necessarily need a form for this, but be sure to take notes. Your job is to encourage their choices, while at the same time being their reality checker. Be careful not to squash someone's dreams, but help them understand the current situation. This may mean taking them to the

area they have identified as their target neighborhood and showing them firsthand how expensive it is. Remember, participant choice is a fundamental principle of Housing First. Participants should have housing options available to them and should choose the unit that is the best fit for them. Giving participants the choice in housing promotes pride of ownership and increases the chance of a successful long-term tenancy. At the same time, the choice is not without limits. Many excellent housing support staff have helped a participant to understand that while they want the best now - they may need to accept incremental steps toward their goal: With a successful year of housing now, more doors are open to them in other places.

The factors we want to consider include:

- Do they have their required documents?
- What can they afford?
- Where do they want to live?
- Are there transportation needs?
- Proximity to certain services (hospital? VA?)
- Are there neighborhood needs/concerns (want to stay out of a certain neighborhood because of past challenges)
- Are there people issues? (want to stay out of range of certain people)
- Size of unit
- Near child care? Near schools?
- Special accommodations
- Pets
- Ideal vs Acceptable; Negotiable vs Non Negotiable

REMEMBER: *This is not the last place they will live. This new unit is going to help them get back on their feet with housing, and help them establish themselves as a good tenant so that they can move into a place they prefer in the future. Help them think of this as a stepping-stone.*

Effective Practice: Tenant Screening Reports

Landlords are concerned about 2 things: getting the rent on time and ensuring the unit is maintained. To help them choose tenants that have high potential to meet these two concerns, they often use Tenant Screening Reports to assess applicants for tenancy.

While having these reports will not always guarantee that landlords rent to a tenant that won't "cause problems", it is a tool they have to assist them. Therefore, we strongly recommend that your agency subscribe to a tenant screening service that is similar to the one used by landlords in your area. By doing so, you and your participant will know exactly what the landlord is going to see when they assess the application for a unit. These reports will provide information about credit history, evictions, criminal background and prior residences.

It is important that you get permission from the participant before requesting this report. Your explanation about why you are doing this is key: "We want to apply for units where we know in advance you have a good chance of being accepted. There is no sense in beating our heads against a closed door based on something in your record we didn't anticipate."

Knowing what is in a person's background makes it easier to find the right landlords. Sometimes we know landlords who will overlook criminal histories older than 5 years; other times we know landlords who will not accept any one with a sexual offense background; some landlords don't care about past evictions. All of this knowledge about the landlords in our community make it easier to "match" participants with landlords who are most likely to say yes despite certain challenges

in their background. This makes for a lot less stressful searching process. Review the report with the participant to ensure its accuracy. These reports can be helpful in identifying mistakes in your participant's history (credit, criminal, eviction). When looking at the information found on these reports, you may find youthful offender convictions that should have been cleared from their record when they turned 18. You may find that they didn't have as many evictions as they thought they did (due to lack of understanding of the eviction process). You may even find evidence of identity theft or fraud that will get in the way of successfully applying for housing. If you find any of these, make sure that you immediately get in touch with your local legal services organization to assist with clearing up these errors.

KEY NOTE: While we refer to "matching tenants to landlords" it should go without saying that the decision as to where to live is completely the decision of the participant. Our job is to help them understand what is possible under the current circumstances.

**RESOURCE LINKS**

- [Housing Barrier Checklist](#)
- [Apartment Comparison Checklist \(NAEH\)](#)
- [Tenant Screening Report Sample](#)

Document Readiness

There are a number of documents that a person needs when they apply for housing. Make sure you have secured all of these before you start the process of looking for housing. These usually include: Photo ID (for all members of the family or birth certificates for children); proof of income that explains how the rent will be paid (bank statements, checks stubs, SSDI statement, TANF statement, and statement from a housing provider if they are in a RRH housing or other housing program).

It is also a good idea to fill out at least one housing application as “practice”. There may be questions that require some work to find the answers (such as former addresses or past work sites, etc.). Help participants be completely ready to easily fill out a housing application.

Budget

It’s important to help participants develop a consistent method to guide their spending. One method is showing participants how to set specified amounts of money aside for certain costs each month to provide a simple way of tracking expenses. Part of the reason we do this is to help the participant understand the range of possibilities. Start with a basic budget that merely notes income sources and required expenditures (such as food, rent, utilities, ongoing medical bills, payments for past debts, child care, child support, garnishments, etc.). Once the person has settled into their new housing you can have a more extensive conversation about how to keep the housing affordable for them by doing a real budget that accounts for everything they spend money on.

Housing Portfolio

A helpful activity is to compile a housing portfolio to contain needed documents as well as reference letters that speak to the character of your participant. It could also contain items such as:

- References
- Letter from the program
- All required documents
- Sample completed application
- Copy of photo ID
- Income docs
- Proof of rental assistance

NOTE: *This is not the time to start talking about how they spend too much on cigarettes or beer or eating out. This is a stressful time for everyone and most people will not be open to this kind of discussion now. Save this until you have a deeper relationship and they are firmly housed.*

Looking at Units

Staff should assist the participant in viewing units that are in range based on location, budget, size of unit and screening barriers. Keep some basic tips in mind. It doesn't help to show a person a one-bedroom unit if it is completely out of range financially. Someone with a very low income may need to look for rooms to rent or Single Room Occupancies (SROs) or even sharing a unit with another person.

Virtual tours of units are an extremely efficient way to take a first look at units and rule out those that don't work for whatever reason. Even if the participant is leery of looking at videos and pictures, take them through the process—it may be better than they are expecting. When you have narrowed down to a couple of possible units, assess whether your participant is able to make a decision without seeing it in person, or if they need to go in person before deciding. The number of people who are comfortable with an electronic viewing may pleasantly surprise you. The program staff should be prepared to handle the transportation for viewings and to go along. Remember, stress and trauma can really get in the way of making a good first impression.

Move Quickly

Once you have seen a couple of units that would be acceptable to the participant, move quickly to apply. This shows why you want to have all the documents ready including the Housing portfolio and a pre-filled out a sample application in advance.

Prepare the Participant for Rejection

It is important that they understand the intense competition that exists in many of our communities. Just because you are a perfect fit doesn't mean you will get the first unit you apply for. Reassure them that you will be with them through every twist and turn in this housing search process.

Submit the application in person with a staff person accompanying the participant. Make sure you have the application fee ready to go with the application.

NOTE: *If you are using a Tenant Screening Report, include a written explanation of any errors or items that you and the participant feel need explaining. Landlords will likely appreciate this extra effort.*



STRATEGY 3: PLANNING FOR A SMOOTH AND SUCCESSFUL HOUSING TRANSITION

As noted above, preparing participants for the housing search and unit selection is critical to supporting their journey to securing a home and transitioning as smoothly as possible into permanent housing. Setting participants up for success should be a key priority throughout the housing process. This section provides key recommendations to help ensure participants are supported during the three phases of the move-in process.



Phase 1: Before Move-in

During Phase 1, participants are actively searching for housing and working towards securing a home. Program staff are working with participants to identify a unit that meets their needs and address other resource needs to prepare participants for their move-in day. It is important that programs provide participants with ongoing housing education and support about the entire move-in process and provide life skills training to help them feel prepared for what is next. Additionally, establishing ongoing participant housing education and life skills training reduces potential short and long term problems that could ultimately jeopardize your participant's housing.

OTHER ITEMS TO CONSIDER:

- Have you checked on the utilities? Are there any past arrearages that must be resolved before the tenant can move in?
- Do they have furniture (at least the basics)?
- Do the appliances work? Do they need appliances?
- Do they have items for basic living: sheets, towels, blankets, shower curtain, soap, toothpaste and brush, shampoo, cutlery, plates, cups, glasses, simple pots and pans?

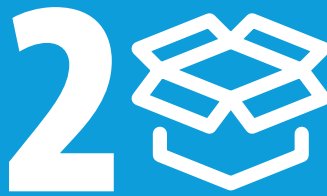
Examples of Education & Life Skills Training

- Housing focused support/self-help groups facilitated by staff and/or peers
- Tenant Housing Workshops
- Tenant/Renters Guides (program specific)
- Life skills such as housekeeping, cooking, laundry grocery shopping, budgeting
- Move-in package for participants or Housing Orientations
- Worksheets for program staff and participants to complete

BEFORE MOVE-IN



MOVE-IN DAY



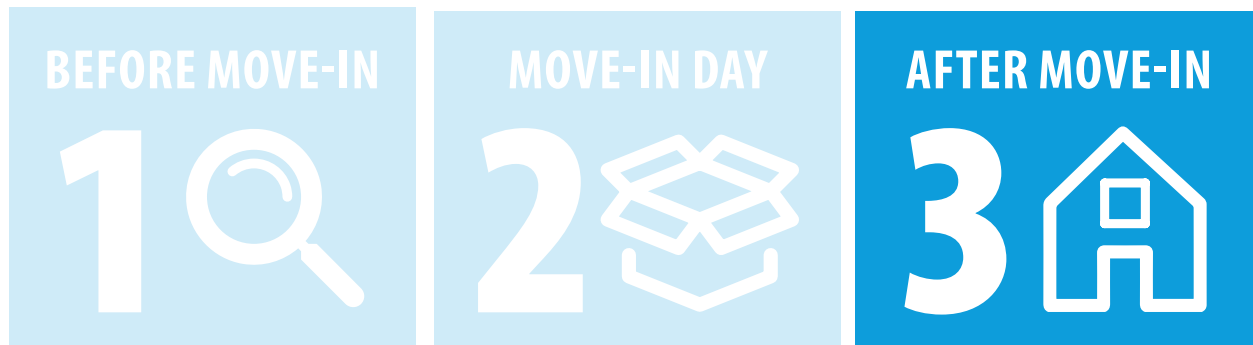
AFTER MOVE-IN



Phase 2: Move-in day

During Phase 2, participants have signed their lease, received keys and secured their new home. Program staff support participants by helping them conduct a move-in status inspection, tour the home to make sure everything is working properly. With the participants, walk around the building to find things such as mailboxes, trash bins, recycle containers, and tenant amenities, such as outdoor common areas. Lastly, it is also important to meet with the landlord and participant to support the development of the new relationship.

DON'T FORGET TO GET THE UTILITIES TURNED ON



Phase 3: After Move-in and Tenancy Support Services

During Phase 3, participants are adjusting and getting more settled into their new home. This can often be the most stressful time for participants, especially if they have been living outside for a long time. It is extremely important that housing programs incorporate Tenancy Support Services, a key component to help participants stabilize in their new home, and community. Examples of tenancy support services include:

1. Home visits
2. Home and community based life skills coaching
3. Budgeting
4. Education on being a good neighbor and tenant
5. Eviction prevention
6. Solid linkages to community resources and other quality of life enrichment services (mental health, healthcare, employment etc.).

During this time period, you may need to spend more time with the participant until they make the adjustment. Daily or every other day visits are not unusual. Think about what the tenant may be worrying about:

- Where do I get food?
- How do I use these appliances?
- What if I lose my key?



RESOURCE LINKS

- [CSET Tulare Co. Client Retention Meeting Process](#)
- [CSET Tulare County Client Retention Meeting Chart](#)
- [Creating Reasonable Housing Stability Plan \(VA-SSVF\)](#)

HOUSING & TENANCY SUPPORTIVE SERVICES DURING THE 3 PHASES

Before Move-in

- Coaching on meeting with landlords
- Education about roles and responsibilities of tenant, landlord, and program staff
- Review the lease agreement
- Identifying challenges/barriers to maintaining housing and develop a plan in the beginning
- Apply for move-in funding assistance (if applicable)
- Apply for furniture assistance

Move-in Day

- Coordinate move-in and setting up home
- Develop home and fire safety plan (locking doors/windows, turning off appliances, repair request process, etc.)
- Tour neighborhood
- Identify appliance needs and make sure to attain them
- Make sure the utilities are working
- Do the unit walk through and check condition . . . put in file and give a copy to the landlord

After Move-in

- Assist participants manage visitors and guests, if needed
- Home Visits
- Life Skills (budgeting, housekeeping, laundry, grocery shopping, cooking, etc.)
- Review basic DIY (changing light bulbs, minor plumbing issues, etc)
- Review tips to being a good tenant and neighbor
- Managing visitors/guests
- Teach conflict resolutions skills and effective communication tips
- Crisis planning
- Eviction prevention education

Effective Practice: Neighborhood Tour

In those very early days after move-in, take your tenant for a tour of the neighborhood. Can you show them the food pantry or the clothes closet to get used clothing? What about the laundromat?

Where is it and how much money does it take to use a washer and dryer? If they are going to need to use public transportation to get around, are they familiar with the routes in their new neighborhood?

If not, offer to take them on a bus tour and show how to find the routes and actually ride with them to someplace they may be regularly going (like work, or the VA, or a doctor's office).

REMINDER:

Entering into a person's home is an intimate setting and some participants may feel uncomfortable about having program staff in their home. A home can be a very personal and private place and provides a place of security. It is important to remember that you are a guest and ask permission to enter the home. Always be respectful of the participant's requests while you are visiting their home.

STRATEGY 4: PREPARING FOR HOME VISITS

Home visits are recognized as a very effective practice when participants transition into permanent housing. Home visits provide program staff the opportunity to learn more about participant's needs, barriers and strengths that could ultimately impact their housing status. As a result, program staff are able to respond more quickly by problem-solving to identify solutions and reduce the loss of housing. It is important that participants are informed that home visits are a part of the program and understand the purpose and frequency of the visits. Home visits should always be scheduled and program staff should avoid pop-up or surprise visits (except emergencies). It is recommended that housing programs develop protocols around home visit requirements that include, but are not limited to frequency of home visits, role and responsibilities, safety, services to provide, and to increase participant's housing stability.

Benefits of Home Visits

- Helps build a participant's experience of home as a place of autonomy and choice
- Opportunity to partner with participants and shift power dynamics
- Opportunity to learn more about participant's service needs and goals
- Participants can feel a sense of pride and ownership
- Continuous engagement and relationship building
- Provides continuity of support
- Opportunity to assess and address potential threats
- Opportunity to provide in-vivo (in place) services and skill building support (cooking, housekeeping, bud getting, etc.)
- Opportunity to learn about interests and hobbies
- Opportunity to learn how the participant is adjusting and doing in their home (greeting, speech, clothing, alertness, mood, concerning behavioral changes)

Tips for Successful Home Visits

- Ask participants if they are ready for a home visit. It may take time for participants to be comfortable with having you in their home. Provide alternatives until they are ready. (You could meet outside, on the play ground, or at a nearby library or McDonalds)
- Explain the purpose for home visits, expectations, frequency, and if other team members will be joining the visit.
- Always schedule home visits and call to confirm appointments.
- Knock before entering and ask permission to go into the home.
- Ask participants to provide a tour of their home. Do not just walk around like an inspector.
- Assess for safety (are there unexpected visitors, presence of dangerous objects, participant's level of comfort, etc.).
- Tell a team member or supervisor (check agency protocol) when you are going on home visits, where you are going, and when you will return to the office.
- Leave if the participant does not want a home visit or becomes threatening.
- Be aware of surroundings in the neighborhood and home.
- Ask participants if they have an animal or visitors in the home prior to visit.
- Be observant, not intrusive.
- Always remember you are a guest.
- Learn about the community and bring community resources.
- Create a "red flag" list for program staff to determine any safety and/or critical incidents that may require a clinical intervention or an emergency response.

STRATEGY 5: PROVIDING ON-GOING SUPPORT SERVICES

Supportive Services are one of the touchstones of our work assisting people to stabilize in their new housing. Participant's need for our support will very likely ebb and flow. A few weeks may go by where there is literally nothing going on and the participant feels no need to see you. Then, all of a sudden there is a crisis and you are needed for a great deal of time to help work through it. This is to be expected.

Effective Practice: Progressive Assistance

We design our services to go with the flow of need and work. In Progressive Assistance both the financial assistance and support services should flex depending on the needs of the participant. We may start out paying 100% of the rent until they have developed some income, then we can (with consultation) increase their portion of the rent. They may be moving along just fine with just occasional check-ins from their case manager, but a new crisis could occur at any time. At that point, we increase our visits to provide support and trouble-shooting. Remember, when people live on very low incomes, any unfortunate situation can change their stability: car breaks down; business where they work is sold or closes; missed work because the children were sick and lost pay. Our work is to help support them and connect to their resiliency. Keep an eye open for those ups and downs.

Even if the tenant has gained income and is paying 100% of the rent themselves, that does not necessarily mean that they don't need your support. Test out how long to space your visits and increase your visits if you find you have pulled back too far.



Provide appropriate support for the tenants

- One of the most important supports we can provide to landlords is to provide adequate and needed supports for the participant.
- Home visits are critical. Seeing participants in their environment and teaching them how to fix issues right then and there is the most effective form of learning.
- See retention services.

STRATEGY 6: TROUBLE SHOOTING

Working with people to support their housing stability can be an up and down experience for both the participants and the staff. In addition, participants have experienced trauma and stress overload due to their homelessness, poverty and often, systemic racism (along with a whole host of other traumatic experiences they may have had). As a result, we do our support work with an eye open to possible set backs, new crises, and being prepared to change course to respond to whatever is needed.

Some common issues that may occur:

- Inability to pay the rent
- Unresponsive landlords
- Disruptive or hostile neighbors or landlords
- Unresolved unit maintenance issues
- Problems created by guests and/or family members
- Health crisis
- Children issues
- Sudden loss of job
- And so many more

A REMINDER: As we do everyday, we have to be prepared to respond with compassion, lack of judgment and cultural humility. It might be challenging to not jump into action when you learn of an issue that needs a response. But take a deep breath and start by asking, “How can I help?”

- Should we talk to the landlord?
- Do we need to involve Legal Services?
- Is there just a communication issue that needs mediation?
- Are stereotypes at play that require some education?
- Is there a lack of information that needs to be addressed?

It is important to actively engage with the appropriate parties. We want them to feel heard and be actively involved in resolving the situation.

BE PREPARED: You will likely have some strategies in your toolkit. If you don’t, reach out to your colleagues, supervisor and team to see what they might suggest. If the situation is new to you, it is likely something that has been experienced by another on your team.

Establish an Early Warning System with Participants

Ask the participant how they can recognize if they are unwell. Come to an agreement of what they will do, or who they will call, if they identify these signs.

Ask the participant how other people can recognize if they are unwell. Encourage the participant to give their landlord or a neighbor permission to call a case manager directly if they see any of these signs, or anything else that is worrisome.

Effective Practice: Commit to Repairing Damages

If your system or program has not already developed a Risk Mitigation Program, it is important to figure out how you are going to address damages that cost beyond what the security deposit will cover. Making a commitment and having a process to compensate landlords for damages is critical to maintaining your relationship with them.

Programs should be proactive about repairs damages. We are not talking about the everyday things that go wrong with a unit that the landlord is responsible for like fixing leaking faucets or the HVAC system.

If during a home visit you notice that there is some minor damage, sometimes you can arrange for it to be repaired without even involving the landlords. Many programs have volunteers with specific skills to assist with this kind of work.

Make sure you involve the participant in the process of addressing damages as a learning opportunity for them.

Handling potential evictions

If one of your participants has gotten into enough of a challenge that they may be facing eviction, it is imperative that you get in touch with the landlord or property manager and try to resolve the situation in the best way possible. Our job is to keep people housed, whatever it takes. Find out what the landlord has tried and see if you can reason with your participant about whatever is causing the problem.

Consider these actions:

1. Quickly set up a face-to-face meeting between the case manager, tenant, landlord and other housing staff involved in the situation. Try to work out a mutually agreeable plan to resolve the issue and if that is not possible, work on a plan for the tenant to move out.
 - Draft a fair agreement signed by the landlord and tenant
 - Try to avoid a formal eviction. It will be best for everyone if the participant can be re-housed without an eviction. The tenant doesn't need another barrier added to their background and the landlord doesn't need to spend thousands of dollars.
2. Help the tenant to move their belongings, put them in storage and search for a new place to stay. Reassure the tenant that you and the program will still be there to support them.
3. Clean the unit, remove all belongings and make repairs.
4. Meet with the landlord to discuss the situation and allow them to vent. Show them that you care about their business needs and try to preserve the relationship.
5. Offer to move a new participant into the unit to make sure rental payments continue. If the landlord accepts, carefully screen the new tenant. If the landlord declines, stay in touch and rebuild the relationship.

03

LINKS



RESOURCES

[Supportive Services](#) [Tenant Protections](#) [Housing Search Preparations](#) [Landlord Incentives](#)

Supportive Services

- [Housing First Checklist \(USICH\)](#)
- [Preliminary Budget](#)
- [What Does My Lease Say \(NAEH\)](#)
- [Housing First Assessment Tool \(HUD\)](#)
- [CSET Tulare County Retention Meeting Process](#)
- [CSET Tulare County Rental Property Emergency Maintenance Form](#)
- [CSET Tulare County Client Retention Meeting Chart](#)
- [Creating a Reasonable Housing Stability Plan \(VA-SSVF\)](#)
- [Evidence Based Service Delivery \(HUD\)](#)
- [Supportive Services - Home Visits Best Practices \(Washington Co. OR\)](#)
- [Remote Case Management in RRH in COVID-19 \(LAHSA\)](#)

Tenant Protections

- [Tenant Guidance: Rental Repayment Plans \(HUD\)](#)
- [Sample Repayment Plan \(MN Housing Authority\)](#)
- [Strategies For Renter Protection \(HUD\)](#)
- [Source of Income Discrimination FAQ \(CA DFEH\)](#)
- [Fair Housing and Criminal Background \(HUD\)](#)
- [California Fair Housing Laws](#)
- [Strategies for Eviction Prevention \(HUD\)](#)



RESOURCES - CONTINUED

[Supportive Services](#) [Tenant Protections](#) [Housing Search Preparations](#) [Landlord Incentives](#)

Housing Search Preparations

- [3rd Party Authorization Letter \(Lease Up-LA\)](#)
- [Housing Barrier Checklist](#)
- [Housing Facilitation Checklist \(LAHSA\)](#)
- [Apartment Comparison Checklist \(NAEH\)](#)
- [Shared Housing \(HUD\)](#)
- [Shared Housing Brochure \(Lease-Up LA\)](#)
- [Roommate Matching Questionnaire \(Lease-Up LA\)](#)
- [Shared Housing Living Agreement \(Lease Up LA\)](#)
- [Housing Search Plan - Sample](#)
- [Unit Availability Spreadsheet \(KTHA\)](#)
- [LASHA Universal Landlord Packet](#)
- [Housing Assessment Form \(LEASE UP-LA\)](#)
- [Background Check Form \(Lease Up-LA\)](#)
- [Tenant Screening Report - Sample](#)

Landlords Incentives

- [The Planning Council Memorandum of Understanding for Insurance Pool Funds Sample \(Norfolk, VA\)](#)
- [Risk Reduction Fund Claim Form \(WA\)](#)
- [USICH Risk Mitigation Funds Community Profiles](#)
- [Landlord Sign-On Bonuses \(HOM, Phoenix, AZ\)](#)
- [San Gabriel Valley Landlord Incentives](#)
- [Good Samaritan Shelter Landlord Incentives](#)
- [Housing Navigator Tool](#)



HOUSING NAVIGATOR

HOUSING NAVIGATOR

As communities approach this work, finding available units and a variety of types of housing can be challenging. This Housing Navigator was developed to provide users with easy access to information about available housing options in their communities. Case managers and housing navigators can use this tool to help them develop their shared available unit database. It also can be a valuable tool that case managers, housing navigators, housing locators, and participants have to successfully complete a housing search, lease-signing, and move-in.

The Housing Navigator has several different features. Access explanations of various types of affordable housing by hovering over the resources in the sources column. Click on the blue links to navigate to different websites where you can search for housing by zip code. If you need more information about different housing programs, search the HUD Exchange at www.hudexchange.info.

Go to the Housing Navigator here.





REFERENCES

- Apartment Comparison Checklist (NAEH)
- C4 Interventions
- CSET Tulare Co. Client Retention Meeting Chart
- CSET Tulare Co. Client Retention Meeting Process
- Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH)
- Creating Reasonable Housing Stability Plan (VA-SSVF)
- HCV Landlord Outreach Events Flyer (HUD)
- HUD Housing Navigator
- Housing Barrier Checklist
- Housing Facilitation Checklist (LAHSA)
- Housing Search Preparations: 3rd Party Authorization Letter (Lease Up-LA)
- Housing Search Preparations: Apartment Comparison Checklist (NAEH)
- Housing Search Preparations: Background Check Form (Lease Up-LA)
- Housing Search Preparations: Housing Assessment Form (LEASE UP-LA)
- Housing Search Preparations: Housing Barrier Checklist
- Housing Search Preparations: Housing Facilitation Checklist (LAHSA)
- Housing Search Preparations: Housing Search Plan - Sample
- Housing Search Preparations: LASHA Universal Landlord Packet
- Housing Search Preparations: Roommate Matching Questionnaire (Lease-Up LA)
- Housing Search Preparations: Shared Housing (HUD)
- Housing Search Preparations: Shared Housing Brochure (Lease-Up LA)
- Housing Search Preparations: Shared Housing Living Agreement (Lease Up LA)
- Housing Search Preparations: Tenant Screening Report - Sample
- Housing Search Preparations: Unit Availability Spreadsheet (KTHA)
- LASHA Customer Service Supports for Landlords and Property Managers
- LASHA Customer Service Supports for Landlords and Property Managers
- Landlord Engagement - Sample Survey & Focus Group Questions
- Landlord Engagement During COVID (HUD)
- Landlord Engagement: Rent Connect in Miami Dade County (HUD)
- Landlord Incentives: Good Samaritan Shelter
- Landlord Incentives: Housing Navigator Tool
- Landlord Incentives: Landlord Sign-On Bonuses (HOM, Phoenix, AZ)
- Landlord Incentives: Risk Reduction Fund Claim Form (WA)



REFERENCES - *CONTINUED*

- Landlord Incentives: San Gabriel Valley Landlord Incentives
- Landlord Incentives: The Planning Council Memorandum of Understanding for Insurance Pool Funds Sample (Norfolk, VA)
- Landlord Incentives: hUSICH Risk Mitigation Funds Community Profiles
- Landlord Services Policies - Boston
- Sample Landlord Engagement Survey and Focus Group Sample Questions
- Source of Income Discrimination FAQ (CA DEFEH)
- Supportive Services - CSET Tulare County Rental Property Emergency Maintenance Form
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- Tenant Protections: Fair Housing and Criminal Background (HUD)
- Tenant Protections: Sample Repayment Plan (MN Housing Authority)
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- Tenant Protections: Strategies For Renter Protection (HUD)
- Tenant Protections: Strategies for Eviction Prevention (HUD)
- Tenant Protections: Tenant Guidance: Rental Repayment Plans (HUD)
- Tenant Screening Report Sample
- Tips for Developing effective training programs
- US Housing and Urban Development Department
- US Interagency Council on Homelessness
- Unit availability Spreadsheet (KTHA)
- Universal Landlord Packet (LAHSA)