

Office Hours: Permanent Housing Placement National Challenge to House 38,000 Veterans

VHA Homeless Programs Office – October 14, 2022

Equity-led Housing Surges: Considerations and Guidance

Key Components of a Successful Housing Surge

- Housing surges are concentrated, community effort to equitably house a large number of ppl in a short time frame.
- They include:
 - Target population
 - Political will + strong coordination
 - Targeted public/ private program funding
 - Pool of housing units + strong landlord relationships
 - Strong housing navigation + services
 - Strong partnerships for supportive services; including veterans with lived experiences
- A lead project manager is needed to oversee and run the surge.

Approaches to Lead a Housing Surge with Equity

- The surge Leadership Team can adopt a Racial Equity Statement of Intent to formally commit to leading the work with racial equity.
- Create a leadership priority across all policies and procedures to lead this effort with equity and implement the following steps to operationalize:
 - Set aside 4-5 seats for people who have experienced homelessness on the leadership body. Ensure that the people selected are reflective of the identities of the populations served.
 - Set aside time weekly to ensure:
 - Members who do not identify as having lived experiences and expertise are trained on power-sharing, liberated gatekeeping, and leading with the voices of those most impacted.
 - Members with lived experience are provided with the tools; background, level-setting, and debriefing space, when needed, to be successful.
 - Move to a consensus decision-making model to reduce power dynamics.
 - Disaggregate all surge performance data by race, ethnicity, gender, and other intersectional factors to determine disparities to address with targeted strategies.

Prewrite to Organize A Housing Surge

- Convene partners
- Identify resources
- Define housing surge parameters
- Unit pool and landlord relationships
- Expedite and streamline rehousing processes

- Track outcomes

Lessons Learned

- Communities have thrived in work that is clear, concrete, discrete, and ad hoc/time-limited.
 - Quickly created an infrastructure to rehouse people quickly.
- Short, sprinted goals have helped focus capacity during the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - Some communities kept setting sprint goals after their initial surge was over.
- Viewing surge performance data with a racial equity lens shows where to course correct.
 - In some areas, questions about disabling conditions and high service needs led to overall lower scores for people who identified as Black or Latinx.
- Housing surges need dedicated capacity to lead and implement.
 - Some used existing staff. This worked but stretched capacity.
 - Some leveraged technical assistance staff to stand up leadership and working group structures because of stretched capacity.

Resources

- [Honolulu Housing Fair Video](#)
- [Planning a Housing Surge to Accelerate Rehousing Efforts in Response to COVID-19](#)
- [5 Tips to Approaching Rehousing with Racial Equity](#)
- [Rehousing Activation and Racial Equity Part 1: Equity as the Foundation](#)
- [Engaging Individuals with Lived Expertise](#)