Housing Navigation for GPD Case Managers
Session 2 - September 21, 2022

Recording:
https://us06web.zoom.us/rec/play/2SXCCtTkEm0u6vW6JhuS4p-Bb_xbzZGq3dfd9ZV6Hml6srqgJ3ycz8EwOhDsmLj6ywxZhEzTr5Zh2_b_AB9apch9-9i0Z7va?continueMode=true&x_zm_rtaid=6wG_S4fMQO4VB5zG6sFFg.1669744170329.419be373aa05fc2a142aa3584179229f&x_zm_rhtaid=824
Session 1
• Leading with Equity
• Tenant Screening Barriers
• Housing Retention Barriers

Session 2
• Housing Navigation
• Landlord Recruitment
• Housing Stabilization Case Management
Housing Navigation
Housing Barrier Recap

• Identify Tenant Screening Barriers that may cause a landlord to refuse to rent to a Veteran
  • Review credit report and Tenant Screening reports that local landlords use
  • Talk with Veteran about reasons for previous housing loss

• Identify Housing Retention Barriers that may increase the Veteran’s risk of losing housing
  • Patterns that have contributed to previous loss of housing (ex. non-payment of rent, lease violations)
  • Prepare the Veteran for successful housing tenancy (ex. budgeting, review the lease, conflict management skills)
  • Identify housing that will support stable housing (ex. close to resources, far from problem people)
# Initial Housing Search Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Don’t assume...</th>
<th>Help...</th>
<th>Consider...</th>
<th>Match...</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>● Households will substantially increase their incomes (unless they have zero income!)</td>
<td>● Households focus on specific screening and retention barriers while coordinating other services as needed</td>
<td>● Shared housing as an option</td>
<td>● Clients with housing options from partner landlords-- unless they want to do their own housing search (and then monitor to see how it’s going)</td>
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<td>● Veterans will find a unit at 30% of their income</td>
<td>● Veterans understand the reasonable choices they have given market conditions</td>
<td>● Which Veterans will need longer term service or subsidy support</td>
<td>● Veterans with other community resources (VA or mainstream)</td>
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<td>● Veterans can’t sustain housing due to challenges they face that are true of other private market renters</td>
<td>● Veteran with housing search based on preferences and realistic goals</td>
<td>● How you communicate needs with partners</td>
<td>● How you can begin to frame your landlord outreach</td>
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Securing Housing
• Look for housing that can be maintained after project exit
• Help people find housing that will give them access to things they need (neighborhood amenities, transportation, employment, etc.)

Landlord Relationships
• Relationships with landlords will give you access to more housing units
• Actively recruit and retain landlord partners
Housing Search and Navigation Starting Points

Housing Navigation IS...

- Working on a 1:1 basis with Veterans conducting a housing search - taking them to units, negotiating with landlords on their behalf, spending multiple hours a week finding a unit w/each client if needed.

- Deep understanding of inspection requirements, and fair housing and local tenancy laws.

- Ensuring Veterans desires, choices and needs are front and center in the housing search.

- Addressing bias and discrimination – when it occurs - to ensure all Veterans have equitable access to housing options.

- Support for Veterans after they move into housing - respond promptly to landlord calls if capacity exists for basic troubleshooting or other referrals.
Housing Navigation IS NOT...

- Printing Craigslist ads and having clients cold call landlords for units.
- Sending clients into the community to find housing without support.
- Ignoring screening barriers with no plan to negotiate through them.
- Dictating which unit a Veteran must go to in order to retain their housing supports.
Landlord Outreach & Recruitment
Why Do You Need Landlord Partners?

• Some Veterans will be screened out of a permanent housing unit after landlords review their application and find past issues with evictions, credit or other tenant screening barriers

• Access to better housing choices will be severely limited

• Clients’ only choices may be bad, low-standard housing

• The tighter the housing market, the harder it will be to exit homelessness

• GPD partnerships offer landlords less risk so your clients become more attractive tenants
Landlord Outreach and Recruitment

• Proactive relationship building with partners and landlords in the community.
• Ongoing dialogue and support to housing owners to cultivate new or existing relationships.
• Full awareness of Veteran screening barriers and which landlords are willing to negotiate around them.
• Ongoing search for different unit types, styles and locations.
Building Landlord Partnerships

• Your project has a good landlord outreach strategy
• Your project seeks to access incentives for landlord partners where needed

**AND**

• Your program knows landlord concerns and needs, and responds accordingly
• Your program creates a Win-Win for landlords and clients via tenant and landlord supports
Understand Your Landlords

- Use/build community/agency database to log Landlord unit types and amounts.

- Track landlord housing placements and denials in a disaggregated fashion so as to monitor for any disparities that need to be addressed.

- Identify landlords known to be flexible with evictions, criminal histories, pets or other tenant screening barriers.

- Identify landlords willing to be flexible with rent/utilities in exchange for program support and services.

- Survey landlords to understand the market conditions for tenants, nature of building and neighborhoods, and other “soft” information.

- Make sure you are coordinating with other providers to avoid landlord confusion, fatigue or other issues.
Important Partners and Expertise in the Community

- Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF)
- Local Continuum of Care (CoC)
- Public Housing Authority (PHA)
- Community-Based Peer Support Services
- Veterans Services Organizations (VSO)
- Local Board of Realtors and Apartment Association
- State or Local Government
- Local philanthropic entities, Chamber of Commerce and other key business leaders
- Housing Rights Advocates

Many partners received large amounts of COVID relief funds for housing which could be utilized for landlord incentives!
Creativity in Landlord Recruitment

- In addition to traditional landlord outreach, identify new landlords or resources by tapping into other groups/resources:
  - Faith-based communities
  - Veteran Advocacy Groups
  - Fair Housing Groups
  - Realtor Boards
  - Chamber of Commerce
  - City Development Departments
  - Check small neighborhood newspapers
  - NAACP and/or other Advocacy groups for Disadvantaged Populations
  - YM/YWCA
  - Other ideas?
Important to consider different landlord needs, limitations and lenses when discussing program or matching Veterans

Different situations may require a nuanced approach
  - Property owners with large properties/ portfolios
  - Owners who primarily use a Management Company to operate housing units
  - Single property owners with landlord living on site
  - Property owners with a few multi-family units throughout a community
Landlords with Different Needs

• Consider creating a survey to send out to potential landlords to help identify these needs and limitations.

• Explore opportunities to provide direct educational opportunities to landlords to help increase comfort with low barrier housing. Examples:
  • VA 101 (demonstrating the robust services available for Veterans!)
  • Mental Health First Aid
  • Housing First 101
And Remember...

As advertised... ...in reality
Housing Support After Move-in for Veterans and Landlords
Promoting Veteran Autonomy and Skills

- Ensure the Veteran remains the “driver” of their own housing situation, including when working with their landlord.

- Consideration for Veterans with significant disabilities or housing challenges that may require more proactive approach.

- Teach/coach the Veteran in how to manage tenancy issues, questions or needs instead of solely relying on case manager for supports.

- Ensure Veterans are fully versed in their lease obligations and prepared to assume those obligations at program exit.
Promoting Veteran Autonomy and Skills

- Consistent use of engagement strategies before and during tenancy:
  - Motivational Interviewing
  - Harm Reduction
  - Education on available resources

- Problem-solving concrete steps with Veteran to disrupt cycles of behaviors which create risk to tenancy. Examples:
  - Social Security Payee/VA Fiduciary discussed from a harm-reduction lens
  - Pre-pay several months of rental portion if Veteran receives a lump sum of money
  - Temporary respite options when there needs to be a ‘cooling off’ period
Landlord Support and Recognition

• With community providers or as a program, develop written standards for responding to landlord calls about vacant units or concerns about a Veteran.

• Check-in with landlords partners to maintain relationships

• Understand where tenants/landlords can turn if housing loss becomes apparent

• Recognize landlords as partners at organization events and in organization communications.

• Use social media and other low cost tools to promote landlord partnerships and recognize partners
GPD Case Management And Housing Stability
GPD Case Management Grants

• Case management services that grantees can provide include but are not limited to:
  • Home visits to monitor housing stability
  • Providing/coordinating educational activities
  • Meal planning
  • Tenant responsibilities
  • Use of public transportation
  • Referrals to needed services, such as mental health, substance use disorder, medical and employment services
  • Financial management
  • Development of natural supports
Case Manager Role

Unit identification/location

Gather financial documents with household for landlord or any rental assistance program assisting Veteran

Assist with completion of paperwork to lease up unit
- Role could be to gather signatures
- Assist with follow-up on outstanding items
- Act as a liaison to landlord to help participant complete steps to secure unit

Prepare for move-in including helping to get utilities turned on, securing furniture and household essentials, and planning for move
What can we guarantee to landlords in terms of Housing Placement services?

- One point person to call for questions/issues
- Case manager attendance at all interviews
- Timeframes for responses (i.e. 1-2 business days)
- Move-in costs covered
- Others?
Ensure household understands the lease they are signing for the unit and their responsibilities
Questions?