

# **Shared Housing and Co-Housing**

*2019 Federal Permanent Housing Conference*

# ***Agenda***

- What is Shared Housing/Co-housing
- Why We Need to Think About Shared Housing
- Shared Housing and Rent Subsidies
- Matching Roommates
- Working with Landlords



# ***Welcome – Activity***

- Show of hands – please raise your hand if you are:
  - SSVF Grantee Staff/admin
  - HVRP Staff
  - HUD-VASH Staff/admin
  - Public Housing Authority (PHA)
  - CoC



# ***What is Shared Housing?***

Two or more people who live in one permanent rental housing unit, sharing costs



# ***What is Shared Housing?***

Basically ... It's roommates!



# ***Who can participate in Shared Housing***

- Anyone who wants or is willing to have a roommate
- Who's that?
  - Eligible for the program
  - Wants to participate in shared housing
  - May have roommates that are not enrolled in a program (private market)
- There is no definitive list of who will “succeed” at shared housing



# ***Why Shared Housing?***

- Overall benefits
  - Increased Access to Diverse Housing Market with Desirable and Affordable Housing Options
  - Reduced Housing Cost Burden
  - Reduced Living Expenses
  - Increased Budget Control and Personal Savings
- Psychosocial Benefits
  - Increased Social Networks and Decreased Isolation
  - Sustain Independent Housing Longer
  - Help with Community Integration
  - Increased Problem Solving Skills



# ***Why Shared Housing?***

- Limitations on Shared Housing
  - Roommate Conflicts
    - Some roommate living situations will be short
  - Landlord Issues
    - May not want to provide separate leases
    - May not want rent from multiple people/organizations
  - Case Manager Involvement
    - Some roommate situations may take considerable case management time and follow-up
  - City, County, State Regulations
    - Local laws may not allow shared housing as defined by federal programs





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PATH-LA  
Director of Housing Partnerships





# Shared Housing at PATH

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PATH

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# Who is PATH?

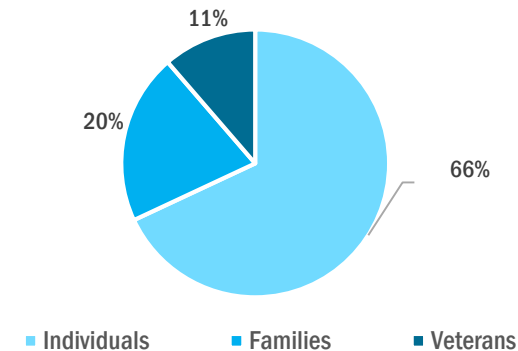
- PATH is a statewide organization, in California, dedicated to ending homelessness for individuals, families, and communities.
- In 2018, PATH served 10% of California's population experiencing homelessness

## Making It Home By the Numbers\* \*2013-2018

**8,500+**  
PEOPLE HOUSED

**140+**  
CITIES SERVED IN CALIFORNIA

CLIENTS SERVED





# Housing Partnerships Program

- Housing Provider Support and Unit Acquisition Department
- Provide support to community partners with housing resources, tenant and landlord disputes, and best practices for housing
  - Website with live, available, and regularly updated units
- Provide 24 hour support to landlords, and connections to incentive and risk mitigation programs

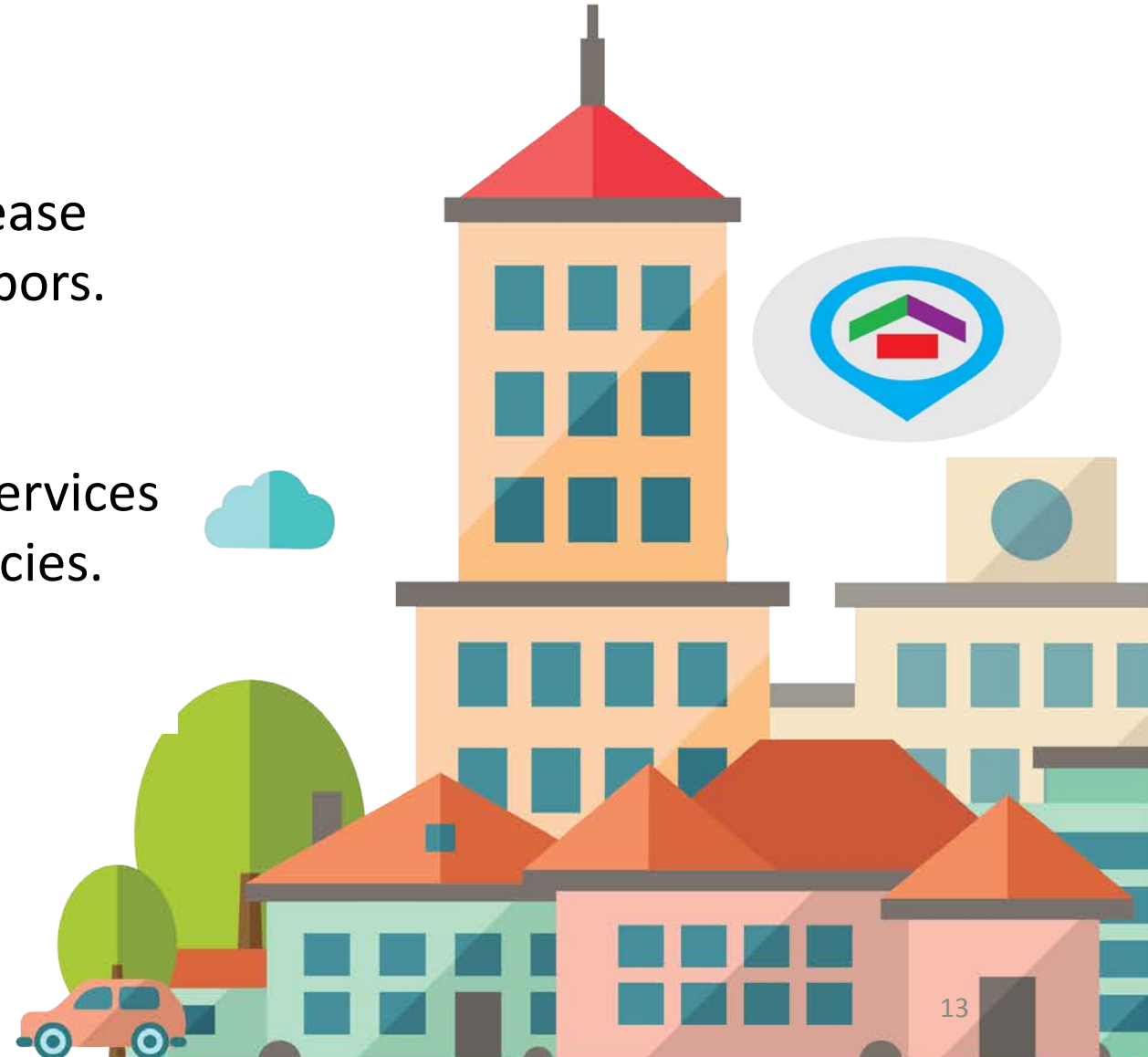


# What is LeaseUp Los Angeles?



LeaseUp LA, is an initiative of PATH,  
to engage and support landlords to increase  
access to housing for our homeless neighbors.

This is a joint effort of PATH, LA Homeless Services  
Authority (LAHSA), and Community Agencies.





# Opportunities

## **Work with your Community Partners!**

PATH worked with local Public Housing Authorities to identify owners in their portfolio with larger units that were unable to be leased to Section 8 voucher holder.



# Shared Housing for Landlords

**Landlords with 2+ bedroom units or houses work with trained staff who assist with converting the house or unit.**

- **Advantages for Property Owners**

- Fewer tenants in the unit (3BR Voucher = 5 tenants; 3 BR Roommate= 3 Tenants)
- More income (with rent and utilities included, monthly income can be higher than renting on the open market)
- Peace of Mind: Case Management + Incentives
- Lease-Up Incentives

- **Standardized Rent and Utility Analysis Worksheet**

- Rent Comparisons to determine rent per room
  - Full house divided by the number of bedrooms
  - Consideration for larger rooms or rooms with private bathroom
- Utilize Housing Authority Utility Allowance or up to \$100 per room for all utilities, including internet and cable



# Rent Determinations

**HUD FMR or Rent Comps** – Run comps of same size units within a geographic range to identify a fair rent. Divide by number of bedrooms.

-Use for non-Section 8 subsidized programs

**Voucher Payment Standards** – Use VPS for number of bedroom size. Divide by number of rooms.

-Use for Section 8 subsidized programs





# Rent Determination Example

4 bedroom, 2 bath house. Owner open to Rapid Rehousing and Section 8.

RRH Rent Comps = \$3234  
\$800/month per room

4 Bedroom VPS = \$2641  
\$660/month per room



## Rent Analysis Worksheet

Housing Unit Information		
Street Address:	Apt #:	
City/State:	Zip Code:	
Building Type: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> House <input type="checkbox"/> Duplex <input type="checkbox"/> Apt <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mobile <input type="checkbox"/> Town House		
Approximate Unit Square Footage:	Number of Bedrooms:	Number of Bathrooms:
Year Constructed:	Number of units on property:	

Owner Information	
Name of Legal Owner:	Owner Telephone:
Owner Address:	

Unit Amenities		
Property Amenities (Select all that apply)		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stove/Range/Oven	<input type="checkbox"/> Parking-Carport	<input type="checkbox"/> Washer/dryer
<input type="checkbox"/> Refrigerator	<input type="checkbox"/> Parking-Garage	<input type="checkbox"/> W/D hook-ups
<input type="checkbox"/> Microwave	<input type="checkbox"/> Parking-Street	<input type="checkbox"/> Rec Room
<input type="checkbox"/> Garbage Disposal	<input type="checkbox"/> Private Yard	<input type="checkbox"/> Gym/Exercise Equipment
<input type="checkbox"/> Ceiling Fan	<input type="checkbox"/> Gated Community	<input type="checkbox"/> Playground
<input type="checkbox"/> On-Site Laundry	<input type="checkbox"/> Cable Ready	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:
	<input type="checkbox"/> Pool/Spa	

## Market Rent Determination

(using [rent-o-meter.com](http://rent-o-meter.com) or Voucher Payment Standards)

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ (Average Market Rent Amount)  
Divided by \_\_\_\_\_ (# of rooms)  
Equals \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Rent Amount per room

OR

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Room 1, \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Room 2, \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Room 3, \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Room



# What Happened



Moved in 1 RRH and 3 Section 8 tenants. All Transitional Age Youth from 2 different agencies.

RRH rent = \$850/mo. Section 8 rent = \$660/mo.

Total to Owner = \$2830



POWERED BY  
**PATH**  
MAKING IT HOME

# Roommate Matching

- Standardized form used to match potential roommates
- Match with roommate preferences in mind (with staff assistance)
  - Gender, substance use tolerance, cleanliness tolerance, noise tolerance
- Roommate Contract
- Separate Leases
  - Utilities included
- Staff trained in conflict resolution and mediation services





# The Truth of It All

## Current Challenges

- Timeliness of roommate matches
- More shared housing than studio or one bedroom units available
- Property owners wanting to charge more than market rent for Shared Housing

## Past Challenges

- Case manager buy in
- Participant buy in
- Lack of education and coordinated materials
- Agencies outbidding each other for units

# QUESTIONS



# ***Shared Housing Must Have ...***

- Client Choice
- A Habitability/Housing Quality Review (depending on your funder)
- Separate Services/Assistance
- Roommate Agreements (if asked for)

## ***It is helpful if they have...***

- Separate Leases
- Separate Security Deposits



# ***Shared Housing Must Have ...***

- Client Choice



# ***Shared Housing Should Have ...***

- Separate Leases
  - Required by some programs
    - Especially for TBRA
- Ensures:
  - Each roommate has equal tenancy rights
  - One roommate is not responsible for other roommate's rent, even if they move out





# ***Shared Housing Must Have ...***

- A Habitability/Housing Quality Review
  - HQS or Habitability depending on your funder
  - Only need one per unit, even if more than one roommate has a housing subsidy
    - Need to do the one that is more stringent (HQS if required)



# ***Shared Housing Might Have ...***

- Roommate Agreements (if they want to!)
  - Not everyone wants/needs a formal agreement
  - Verbal agreements are good too
  - Agreements should cover roommate expectations for all roommates
  - Case managers can facilitate a conversation around expectations and an agreement
  - Nice to start without one and then if there is trouble, use a written one as a place to do problem-solving.



# ***Case Scenarios***

Meet your client!



# ***Matching Roommates***

- Possibly the most important aspect of shared housing
- May happen organically, may need to match two people who don't know each other
- Most successful when roommates choose each other
- Case managers should help guide clients to make the best choice for them, but case managers should NOT choose roommates for clients



# ***Matching Roommates***

## What Makes a Good Match?



# ***What Makes a Good Match?***

## **Things to consider:**

- Sleep Schedules
- Work Schedules
- Cleaning Tendencies
- Chores Expectations
  - Settling Disputes
- Preferred Environment



# Case Scenarios

Let's match some roommates!



# ***What happens next?***

- **Keeping a good situation going**
  - Follow-up
    - Check in on a regular basis
    - Talk to client, as well as landlord
    - If you have permission from the client, speak with the roommate(s)





# ***Shared Housing and Rent Subsidies***

- Very few changes to rent subsidy calculation
- Knowing the rules and regulations will help you know if the unit is allowable under your program
  - Is the unit's rent reasonable?
  - Does it meet the PHA's payment standard?



# ***Shared Housing and Rent Subsidies***

- **Determining Rental Subsidies and Contributions**
  - Use a tool!
    - Rent Analysis Worksheet
  - Remember to document everything!
  - Each client receiving a subsidy must have:
    - A separate lease
    - A separate security deposit
    - Documentation of how much each roommate is receiving as a subsidy (if applicable)
    - Documentation of an appropriate inspection (if required)
    - Roommate Agreement (if requested)



# ***Shared Housing without a Rent Subsidy***

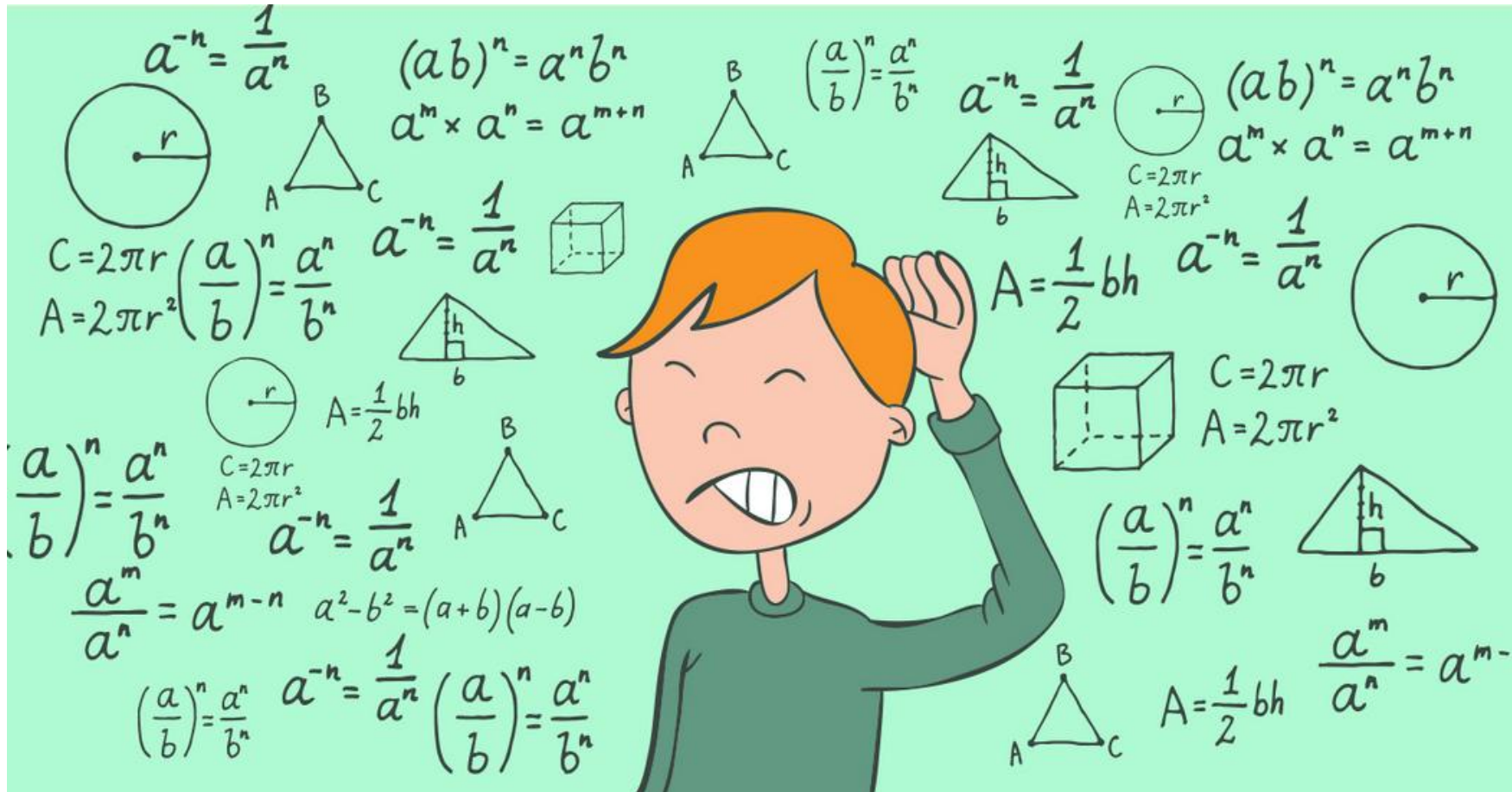
- Many clients receive services or TFA without receiving a rental subsidy
- They can still participate in shared housing!

Shared Housing does not require receiving a housing subsidy like rental assistance or a voucher



# Case Scenarios

Let's figure out the rent for our roommates!



# ***Which Landlords Work Best?***

- Have large units or single homes/properties to rent
- Have previously worked with your program
- Willing to do separate leases for each roommate



# ***Engaging Landlords***

How do you keep landlords engaged?



# ***Landlord Benefits***

Shared housing allows landlords to:

- Fill larger units faster
- Handle tenant issues separately
- Work with case managers to resolve conflicts early



# Supporting Landlords

## Landlords and Case Management

- Know what your case managers can provide
  - Monthly check-ins?
- Do not say you will check in and then not do it
- Provide contact information for case manager/housing navigator
- Decide if program will provide a new resident if a roommate leaves



**CASE MANAGEMENT**





# ***When the Roommate Leaves***

**Work with the landlord ahead of time to answer these questions:**

- Who is responsible for replacing the roommate?
- Does your program allow vacancy payments?
- Were there issues with the remaining roommate(s) that the case manager needs to follow-up on?



# Case Scenario

Oh no!  
It's not working out!  
What are our next  
steps?





# Questions?



# Let's Recap

- Shared Housing can be:
  - A great housing opportunity
  - Very beneficial to clients and landlords
- Matching roommates is nuanced, but very doable
- Landlords can start filling larger units early
- Programs can help fill units if situations do not work out

*Most importantly, this is just ONE tool in your large toolbox!*

