

Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Webinar

Landlord Partnerships & Creative Housing Coordination

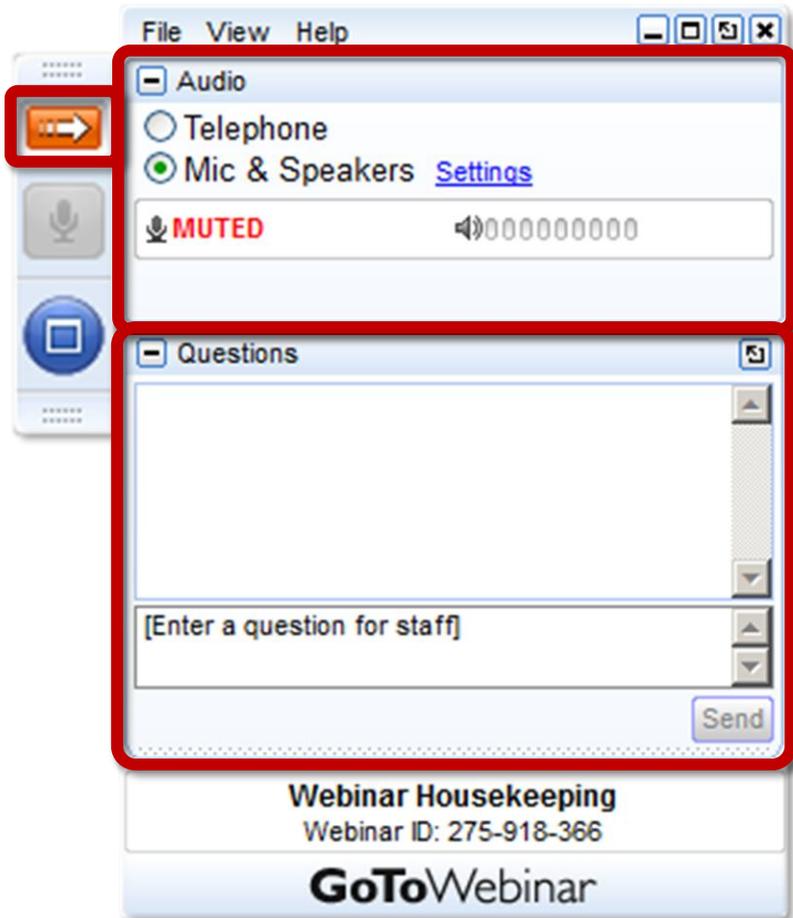
May 3rd 2017 at 2:30 EDT

Audio: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/recording/9052543496735020803>

Webinar Format

- Webinar will last approximately 90 minutes
- Participants' phone connections are “muted” due to the high number of callers
 - **Questions can be submitted during the webinar using the Q&A function**
- Questions can also be submitted anytime to SSVF@va.gov

Questions



Your Questions

Submit questions and comments via the Questions panel

Presenters & Agenda

- **Welcome & Introductions**

- Tamara Wright, SSVF Regional Coordinator
- Objective: To host a peer-to-peer educational webinar for SSVF grantees and learn about promising practices in the field.

- **Topic: Landlord Partnerships & Creative Housing Coordination**

- Elisha Harig-Blaine, *Principal Housing Associate (Veterans and Special Needs)*, National League of Cities
- Bree Williams, *Director of Community Housing*, Ending Community Homelessness Coalition (Austin, Texas)
- Brad Bridwell, *Director of National Operations*, Cloudbreak Communities / Cantwell-Anderson, Inc.
- Ashley Mann-McLellan, *Associate*, Technical Assistance Collaborative

Getting Started

- **Landlord Engagement 101 via Vets@Home Toolkit**
 - Build CoC Housing Team and Identify Housing Champions
 - Proactively reach out to landlords using staff such as landlord outreach specialists or other housing specialists
 - Assess Landlords
 - Get to know their perspective, learn about their needs and concerns
 - Offer incentives to address concerns (Ex. Landlord mitigation fund and point of contact available to the landlord). Don't wait for a crisis to happen before developing an action plan. Be proactive in reaching out to check in on those who have been housed.
 - Build trust by being responsive and accountable
 - Highlight key reasons the partnership with your agency is mutually beneficial. Be specific about the services to be provided, ensuring expectations are clear.
 - Engage your Public Housing Authority, Apartment Associations, and Realtors
 - Coordinate housing opportunities
 - Pursue creative partnerships for unmet needs
 - Non profit housing, Veteran Service Organizations, Veteran Preference
- *Source: <https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/Vets-at-Home-Connect-to-Permanent-Housing-Toolkit.pdf>

Words to Inspire



*“Alone we can do
so little; together
we can do so
much.”
—Helen Keller*

NLC's Landlord Engagement Work

Elisha Harig-Blaine

*Principal Housing Associate
(Veterans & Special Needs)*

Founded in 1924

***Dedicated to helping city
leaders build better
communities.***

**19,000 cities, towns, and
villages**

>1,700 direct members

**49 state municipal
leagues**

**(not Hawaii...only one
city)**



How did NLC begin working on landlord engagement?



- **A lead partner with federal agencies on Mayors Challenge to End Veteran Homelessness.**
- **Recruit and retain local leader participation in Mayors Challenge.**
- **2015: 10 regional forums to educate local leaders and stakeholders on the Mayors Challenge.**
- **Connecting Mayors Challenge participants to local efforts via 25 Cities, Zero: 2016/Built for Zero, and Vets@Home.**
- **2015/2016: Saw need for improved engagement with landlords.**

Phase 1 of NLC Landlord Engagement Work



Project Goal:

Help four communities identify property owners and managers willing to rent housing to homeless or at-risk veterans via landlord engagement events.

Participating Cities:

- Charleston, SC
- Tucson, AZ
- Omaha, NE
- Madison, WI

Participating Cities:

- Charlotte
- Orlando
- St. Louis
- Houston (?)
- Columbus (?)
- Sacramento (?)

Key Lessons from Phase 1 & 2

- Engagement with local chapters of landlord/property management member associations is helpful.
- Use the language of landlords to quickly identify as narrow of a band of prospective partners as possible.
 - Class B & C properties
 - Owner managed v. Fee/third-party managed

Engaging Landlords to End Veteran Homelessness

HONORING THEIR SERVICE WITH A HOME

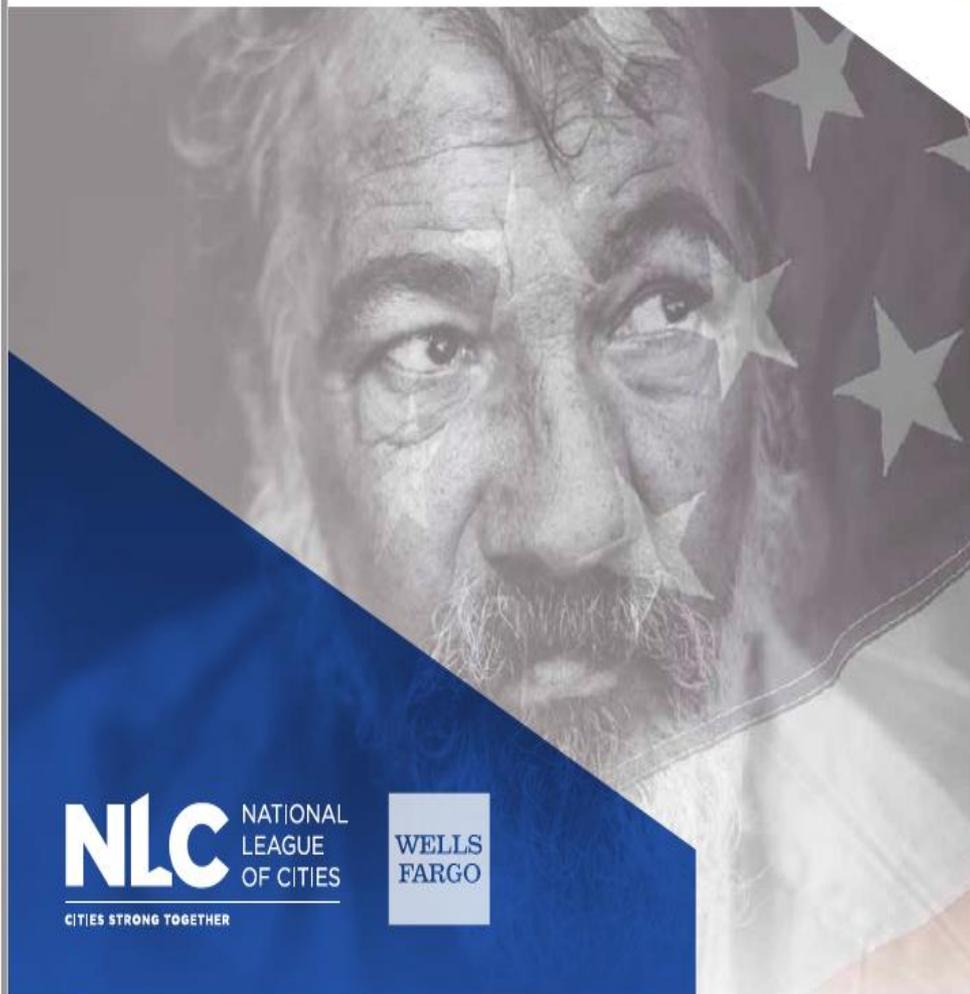


www.nlc.org/mayorschallenge



CITIES STRONG TOGETHER

WELLS
FARGO



Elisha Harig-Blaine

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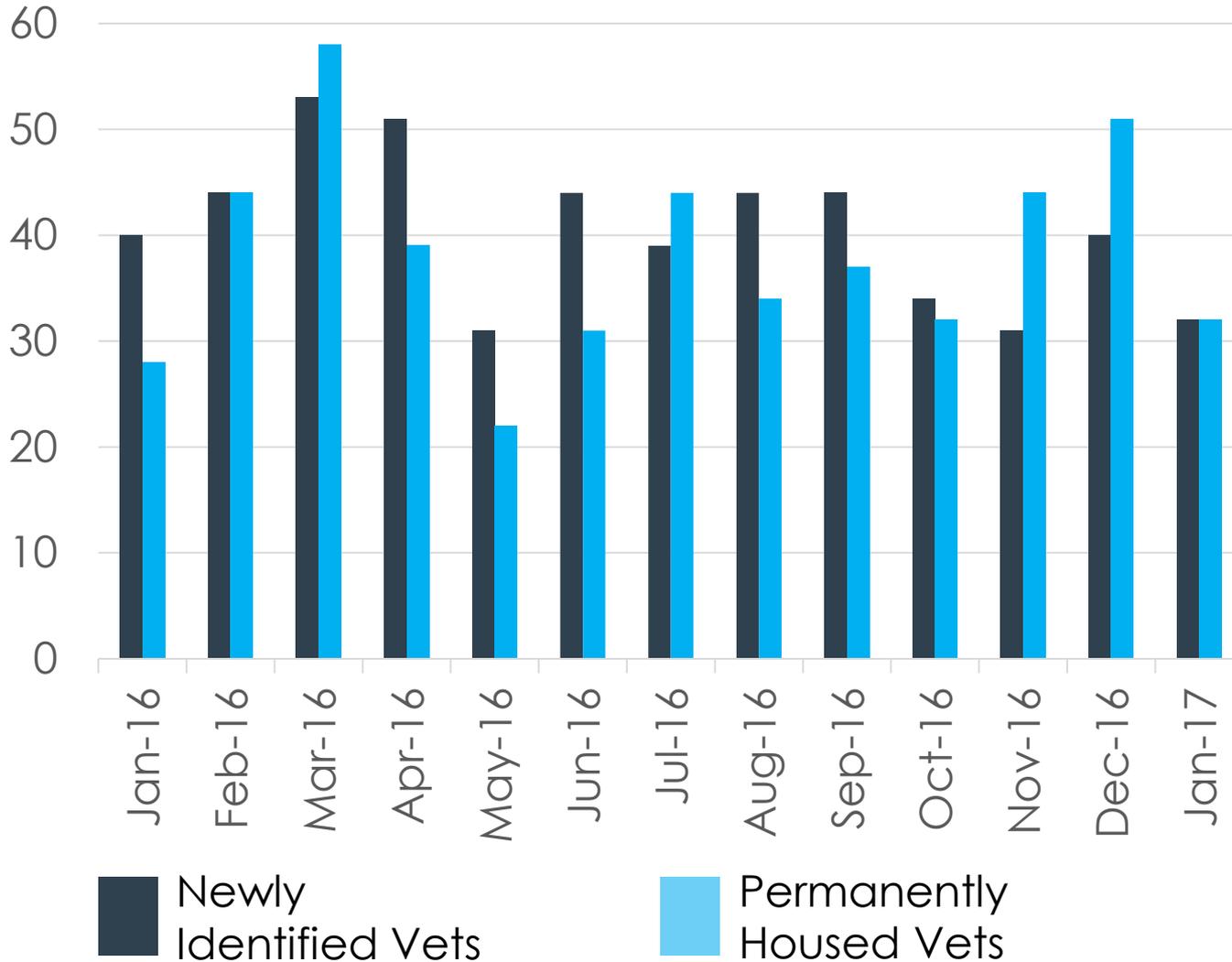
Creating Housing Opportunities in a Competitive Rental Market

Bree Williams, LMSW

Director of Community Housing
Ending Community Homelessness
Coalition



Newly Identified vs. Permanently Housed



Identify Networks

01

Who do you know?

What “ins” do you have?

1. Local political clout/ pressure/ encouragement
2. Local property management organizations
3. Veteran organizations
4. Media
5. Uncover key players

Build the Relationships

02

Landlords are Clients

1. What motivates them?

1. Recognition
2. Being a part of the solution
3. DECREASED RISK

2. What is their fear of change?

1. Liability
2. Losing tenants
3. INCREASED RISK

3. How can they be best supported?

1. Landlord outreach capacity
2. Responsive case management
3. MITIGATED RISK

Risk Mitigation

03

Level the Playing Field

1. Mitigate the Financial Risk

1. Rental loss on default & vacancy
2. Damages beyond normal wear and tear
3. Court costs

2. Commit to the Relationship

1. Landlord outreach
2. Responsiveness
3. Landlord outreach & responsiveness beyond program exit

3. Individualize the Plan

1. Keep their motivation at the forefront
2. Stay one step ahead
3. Stay flexible

It Worked! Roscoe Agreement

Alternative Screening Form

Screening Process

Roscoe Properties, Inc. agrees to partner with ECHO and partner agencies to successfully place veteran households in available units to achieve the community's goal to end veteran homelessness. The alternative screening criteria is to be negotiated with each individual property to reflect the unique needs of that property; the resulting alternative screening criteria is described below.

When receiving an applicant from one of ECHO's partner agencies, the landlord/property management company will apply the alternative screening criteria to veteran applicants. ECHO's partner agencies include the Veterans Administration, the Housing Authority of the City of Austin, Caritas of Austin, Front Steps, the Salvation Army, and other local supportive housing providers.

Screening Criteria

Beginning August 25, 2015, Roscoe Properties, Inc. will apply the following alternative screening criteria to veteran households exiting homelessness who are receiving supportive services from a partner agency:

1. Income requirements

- Cooperate with Housing Authority of the City of Austin's process when considering veteran households supported by a Housing Choice Voucher.
- When considering veteran applicants not supported by a Housing Choice Voucher, allow partner agencies to submit documentation of the veteran's plan to pay rent timely, including the partner agencies' ability to provide the household financial assistance and or the household's plan to increase income; this process is to replace common income requirements.

2. Prior tenancy history

- Allow for 2 evictions, for non-payment of rent, in the past 3 years.
- Partner agencies are expected to coordinate efforts to satisfy prior rental debts. Documentation of paid debts and or documentation of intent to pay debts can be provided. Extenuating circumstances that make such a written agreement unfeasible will be considered.

3. Credit history

- Allow up to 50% bad credit, not including medical or student loan debt.
- Allow for one cleared bankruptcy or foreclosure so long as the applicant is not currently in the process of a bankruptcy.

1. Criminal history

- Deny for violent felony convictions within the last 10 years, but allow for appeals and consideration of extenuating circumstances.
- Deny for non-violent felony convictions within the last 3 years, but allow for appeals and consideration of extenuating circumstances.
- Do not deny for any misdemeanor convictions; to include Class A, B, and C charges, except for violent crime (misdemeanor) against a person within the last year.
- Do not deny for arrests wherein the applicant was not convicted, nor for any perceived patterns of arrests or convictions.

2. Additional Terms

- Lease term of 12 months.
- Application Fee of \$50, plus Administrative fee of \$400 non-refundable (no Security Deposit).

By signing below, Roscoe Properties, Inc. agrees to apply the alternative screening criteria and process as described above to veteran applicants referred by a partner agency.



Angelique Goodnough Executive Vice President

Signature and company name if applicable

Date: August 25, 2015

Upload ilits completed document onto the OneKeyATX page. You will be contacted by an ECHO or HACA representative shortly. Please feel free to download our OneKeyATX Process document for more information on next steps.

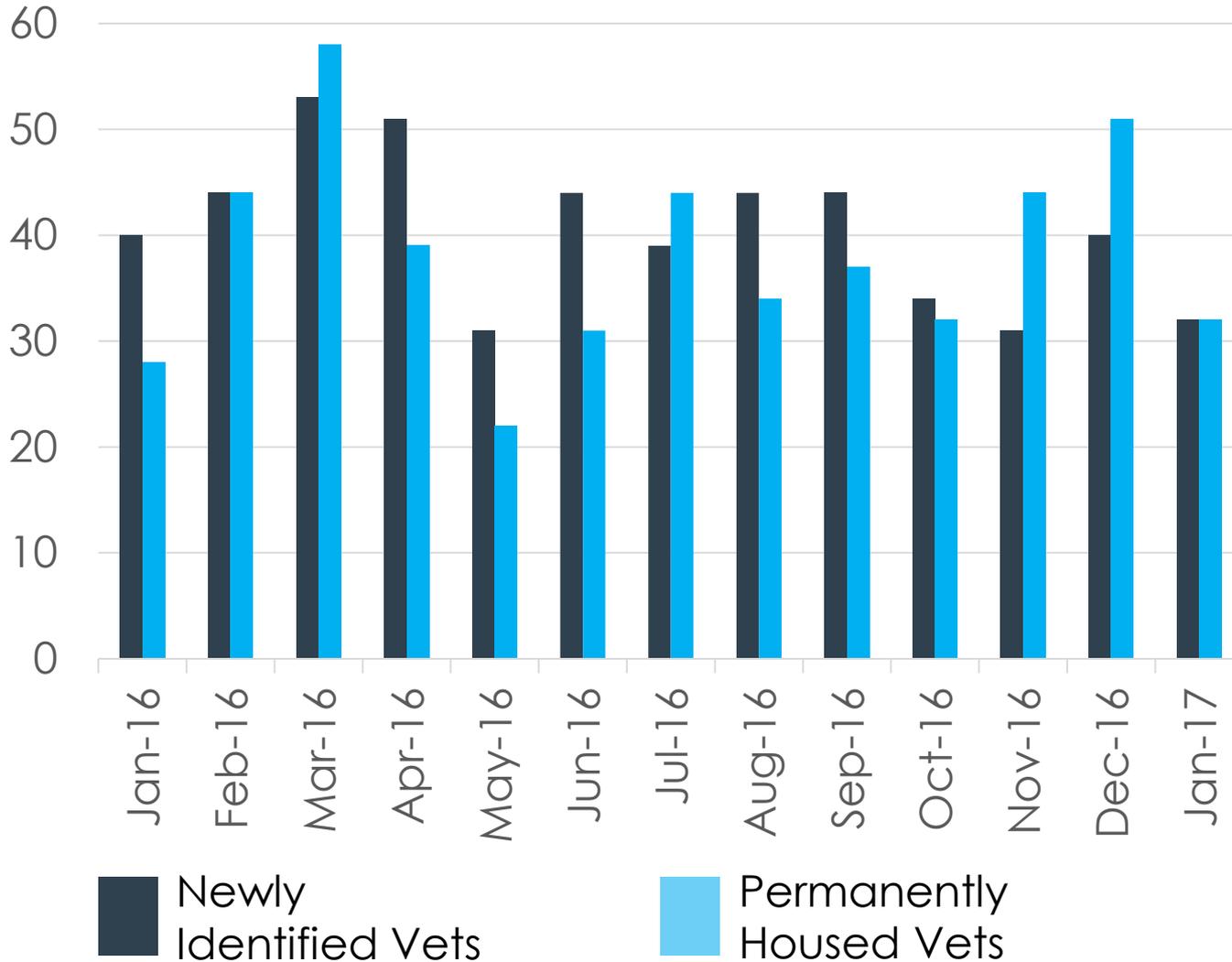
Please contact Bree Williams, ECHO Community Housing Liaison, with any questions related to the above process.

Bree Williams

(512) 940-9690

breewilliams@austinecho.org

Newly Identified vs. Permanently Housed



Bree Williams, LMSW

Director of Community Housing

breewilliams@austinecho.org

Ending Community Homelessness
Coalition

www.austinecho.org



Permanent Supportive Housing Landlord



*A Mission Driven, For-Profit Developer of Service Enriched
Affordable Housing for Veterans and Other Special Needs Groups.*

Our Community Developments



Over 3,000 bed units built since 1993 with support services provided by U.S. VETS, VA and other partners co-located in each community

A Landlord Perspective



A Housing First approach can be difficult for some landlords, especially when working with high barrier clients. What can help?

- Describe exactly what services will be provided. Generalizing “case management” won’t likely get buy-in
 - Do what you said you would do!
- Weekly check-ins/meetings with landlord and Case Manager
 - Seeing landlords less often than seeing your clients can be a recipe for disaster
- Tell them you appreciate their partnership...tell them often!

A Landlord Perspective



Remember, it's a business.

- Operating costs can go up. For example, our agency experienced a costs increase from \$3500 a unit/year to \$5,000 a unit/year.
- Engage Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC)-financed properties, as many are required to be affordable for low-income households.
- Speak to the heart (Veterans facing homelessness) and speak to the business mind.
 - Careful not to use “guaranteed income” as a sales pitch. Raising the bar on screening and assessments will support successful placements.
 - Quickly fill vacant units, risk mitigation, service provision



A Landlord Perspective

Helpful Ideas

- Become a student of LIHTC and HUD HOME Investment Partnership (HOME) programs. These are the major affordable housing programs
- Supports with other funding are relatively easy to create and not utilized often- it helps ease the perceived risk for landlords and won't get used often.
 - Remember, we already have damage contingencies and reserves built into the operating pro forma!
- Events where landlords can show their properties and be touted for their success, especially with political figures, helps further endear them into your mission.

A Landlord Perspective



Lessons Learned

- Understand the jobs required of Property Managers and support their goals of positive landlord/tenant relationships. They want to do their jobs well too!
 - It is helpful to ensure that potential tenants have been educated on the responsibilities of property managers, as part of case management and life skills services from providers.
- Landlords have certain tools that can help case managers educate tenants, without resulting in eviction
 - 10 day notices, notice of lease violation, etc.
 - These are also opportunities to educate on tenant rights and responsibilities, as well as what being a good tenant means (per the lease)
- There will be times of conflict...providers and housed tenants should discuss using caution when making veiled legal threats in these situations, especially if they are a supportive landlord. It makes Hulk angry.



Brad Bridwell

- Director of National Operations
- Cloudbreak Communities
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- 602-317-8582

Adopting a Homeless Preference HUD Multifamily & Public Housing *Services as a Recruitment Incentive*



**Presented by: Ashley Mann-McLellan
Technical Assistance Collaborative,
Inc.**

May 3rd, 2017

Overview

- Homeless Preferences, Multifamily & Housing Authorities
 - HUD Multifamily and Housing Authority Resources
 - How does the Homeless Preference work in Multifamily and Housing Authorities?

- Using SSVF Services to Incentivize a Homeless Veteran Preference

What is HUD Multifamily Housing?

- Privately-owned housing that receives HUD rental subsidy or mortgage insurance
- Prospective renters apply to each property separately
- Affordable and market-rate housing units for individuals, families, elders, and people with disabilities.
- It is not public housing or mobile housing vouchers
- Preference - targets their Project Based Section 8 units
- Rent Calc: Approx. 30% of renter's income

What Housing Resources does a Housing Authority Have?

- Public Housing
 - Project based, subsidized housing owned and operated by a City, County or State
 - Rent calc: Approx 30% of renters income; adjusts with income
- Housing Choice Vouchers (HCV) - i.e. Section 8 vouchers
 - Mobile subsidies participants can use in the private market
 - Rent calc: Approx 30% of renter's income; adjusts with income
- Preference - targets both housing types

What is the Homeless Preference?



Approval of an optional owner-adopted **admissions preference** for households experiencing homelessness



Allowance to include a preference in tenant selection, allowing these households a **first shot at vacant units**.

Link to Homeless Preference Notice

<http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=13-21hsgn.pdf>

<http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=pih2013-15.pdf>

How Does the Preference Work?



Partnering Option

Owners have the option of partnering with **service providers** to manage the **referral pool** of homeless participants



Turnover

The housing units at a property become available to homeless households **upon turnover.**



Balanced Approach

Preference applicants **alternate** with applicants on the existing waiting list using a **rate** set by the **property owner.**

Example: 1 of 2 or 1 of 3 vacant units goes to homeless households

Homeless Preference Definition

- HUD allows owners & housing authorities to use a more narrow definition of homelessness to:
 1. Meet local needs, and
 2. Leverage supportive services
- Sample Homeless Preference Definition

Literally homeless Veterans referred from x SSVF Program



Note About Fair Housing

- A preference cannot limit admission to a population if it violates any of the protected classes in the Fair Housing Act
- Screening criteria for all applicants remains the same

Protected Classes

1. Race
2. Color
3. National Origin
4. Religion
5. Sex
6. Disability
7. Presence of Children in the Household

Voluntary Preference for Owners

- Voluntary for Owners to Participate
- Common Concerns from Owners
 - Do the households come with supportive services?
 - Who do I call if there is a problem during the application process?
 - How fast will I get qualified referrals for my vacant units?
 - Who do I call if there are tenancy issues?
 - How will households pay for move-in costs?
- SSVF can address these concerns and incentivize owners to adopt a homeless Veteran preference

Best Practices in Service Package Design



Housing Placement Services

- Swift Referrals Upon Notice of Vacancies
 - # of business days to refer
- Prepare Eligibility Documentation Ahead of Time
- Assist Households to Identify and Mitigate Barriers to Admission
- Accompany Households to Appointments w/Property
- “One Number” to Call
- Funds Available to Cover Move-in Costs

Best Practices in Service Package Design



Supportive, Post-Placement Services

- “One Number” to Call
- Stabilization or Post-Placement Case Management Services
 - *Up to 3 months transition case management, plus more if Veteran still presents with needs*
- Periodic, Scheduled Check-Ins with Participating Properties
 - *Consider Collecting Basic Data*
- Contingency Fund
- Landlord Support Programming & Recognition

Offer to Formalize Relationship

- Prepare a Memorandum of Agreement (MOU) to outline the terms of the services you will provide
- Include concrete timelines for communication
 - *i.e. staff will respond to any property calls within 1 business day*
- Include supervisory contact for support

More Information

- HUD Multifamily Homeless Preference Page:
<https://www.hudexchange.info/homelessness-assistance/multifamily-housing-owners-managers/#assisted-multifamily-housing-owners-and-managers>
- HUD Public Housing Preventing and Ending Homelessness Landing Page:
https://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/public_indian_housing/homelessness

Q & A

Panelists:

- Elisha Harig-Blaine, *Principal Housing Associate (Veterans and Special Needs)*, National League of Cities
 - harig-blaine@nlc.org
- Bree Williams, *Director of Community Housing*, ECHO Austin
 - breewilliams@austinecho.org
- Brad Bridwell, *Director of National Operations*, Cloudbreak Communities/Cantwell-Anderson
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Additional Questions

SSVF Program Office

Email: ssvf@va.gov

Website:

www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf.asp

A recording of this presentation will be provided to webinar registrants and posted at SSVF University.