Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF)

SSVF National Webinar Series

Best Practices in Shared Housing
A Response to the Affordable Housing Crisis

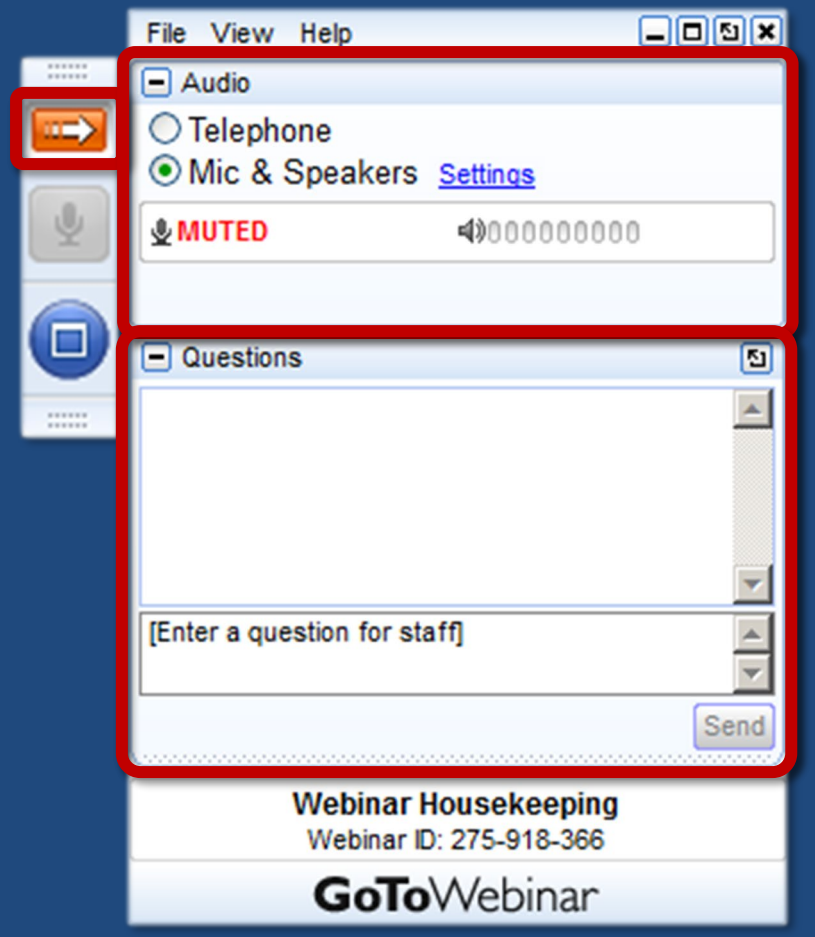
March 14, 2019

Link to Audio Recording

Webinar Format

- Webinar will last approximately 60 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

How to Submit Questions during the Webinar



Your Questions

Submit questions and comments via the Questions panel

This Session Objectives

- ✓ You will learn about different models of shared housing.
- ✓ You will learn about different considerations for establishing your shared housing program.
- ✓ You will learn from actual practitioners about their experiences in this work.

What is Shared Housing?

A shared housing unit is one that is occupied by *two or more individuals.*

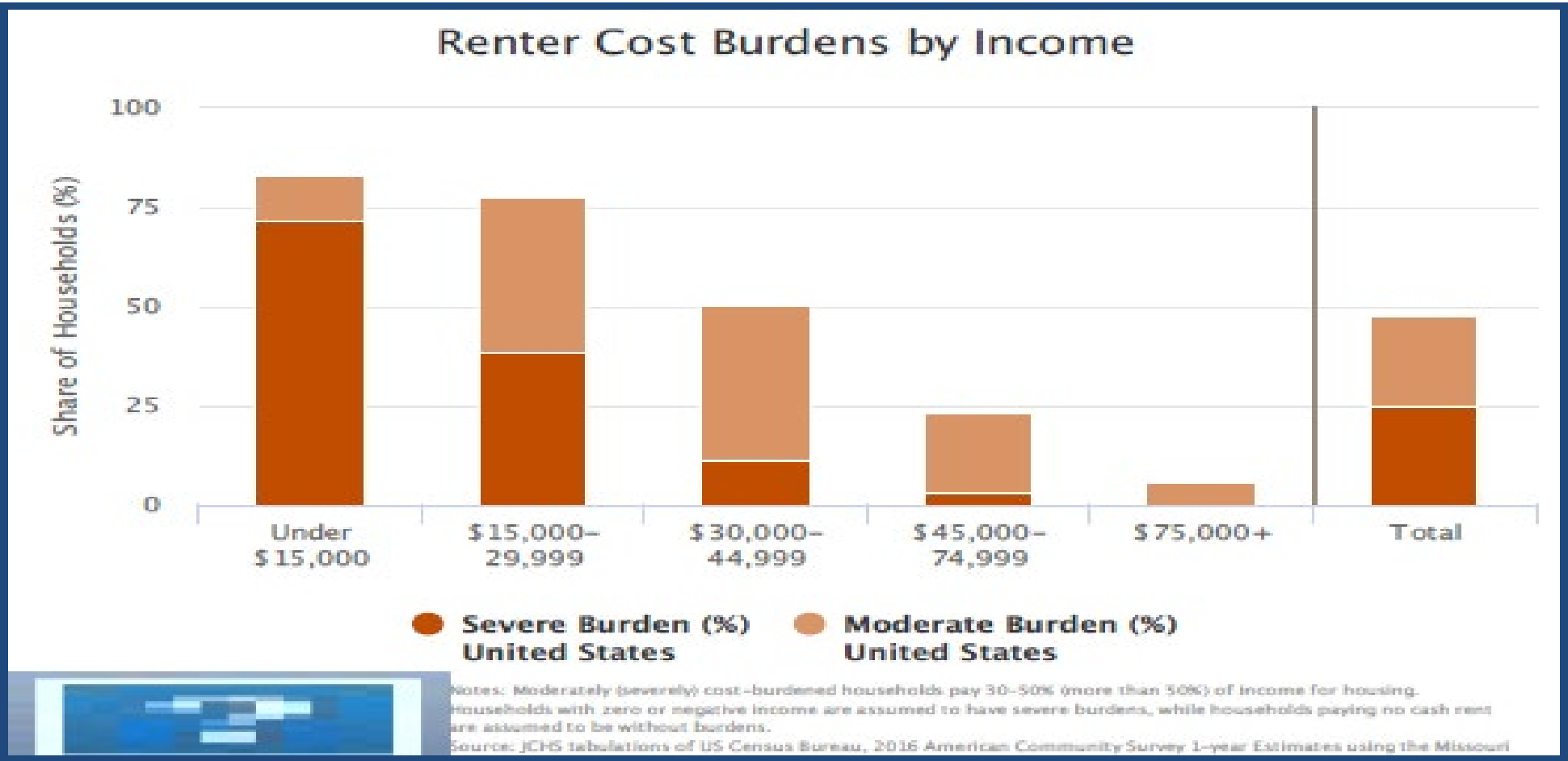
- ✓ A sleeping area and shared common space along with a bathroom and kitchen with cooking facilities and food storage.
- ✓ 1 bedroom, several bedrooms, or a studio
- ✓ Bedrooms can be used by a single resident or shared with another un-related individual.
- ✓ Each individual/household must have a standard lease or rental agreement that provides full rights of tenancy.
- ✓ Housing units must meet your CoC/program housing habitability/quality standards

Why Shared Housing?

- Many of our participants have very low income.
- We don’t have the resources for long-term rental subsidies.
- We are experiencing a national affordable housing crisis.
- Shared Housing is a natural complement to Rapid Resolution.
- Achieving shorter time homeless requires more housing options….Shared Housing is one of those options.

America's Affordable Housing Crisis

- The U.S. has a shortage of 7.4 million affordable and available rental homes for ELI renter households,
- Resulting in 35 affordable and available units for every 100 ELI renter households.
- Seventy-one percent (71%) of ELI renter households (8.1 million households) are **severely cost-burdened**, spending more than half of their income on rent and utilities.


Renter Cost Burdens by Income
Share of Households (%)
100
75
50
25
0
Under $15,000
$15,000–29,999
$30,000–44,999
$45,000–74,999
$75,000+
Total
Severe Burden (%) United States
Moderate Burden (%) United States
Notes: Moderately (severely) cost-burdened households pay 30–50% (more than 50%) of income for housing.
Households with zero or negative income are assumed to have severe burdens, while households paying no cash rent are assumed to be without burdens.
Source: JCHS tabulations of US Census Bureau, 2016 American Community Survey 1-year Estimates using the Missouri

Our Presenters

- Jennifer Lee, Director of Housing Partnerships, PATH, Los Angeles
- Evan Brennan, SSVF Program Supervisor, Community Psychiatric Clinic, Seattle
- Dana Brooks, Director of Housing, Catholic Charities, West Tennessee, Memphis

Shared Housing at PATH

Presented by:
Jennifer Lee, LCSW
Director of Housing Partnerships Program
PATH
JenniferLee@epath.org

Who is PATH?

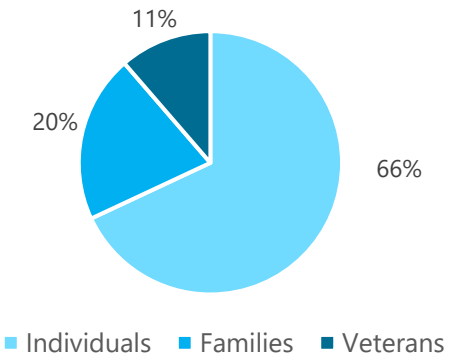
- PATH is a statewide organization, in California, dedicated to ending homelessness for individuals, families, and communities.
- In 2018, PATH served 10% of California's population experiencing homelessness

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

8,500+
PEOPLE HOUSED

140+
CITIES SERVED IN CALIFORNIA

CLIENTS SERVED



Housing Partnerships Program

- Landlord Care and Unit Acquisition Department
  - LA County Landlord Advisory Board
  - Partnerships with Apartment Associations

- Provide support to programs 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

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

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

Shared Housing Best Practices

EVAN BRENNAN
SSVF PROGRAM SUPERVISOR
COMMUNITY PSYCHIATRIC CLINIC
SEATTLE, WA
ebrennan@cpcwa.org

Shared Housing: It's Going Up

- Nationally
  - Shared housing among adults is increasing from 55 to 79 million since 1995
  - Americans 53 and older are sitting on some 3.6 million unoccupied rooms in their homes - known as "boommates"

- DC:
  - 13% increase in people living in shared living situations since 2012
  - 80% of all participants in Home Now have been in housed in shared housing (Washington, DC).

Shared Housing: What We've Learned

- When Everything Goes Wrong
  - And the landlord decides to bring in a documentary crew

- Additional Challenges:
  - Subleasing – can create unhealthy power dynamics
  - Landlords don't want to do individual leases
  - Personality issues/conflicts - What if it doesn't work?
  - Security deposits
  - The headaches

Shared Housing: What We've Learned

- Successes
  - Single case manager/point-of-contact (when possible)
  - Housing Specialist involved on landlord side for on-going support
  - Clear expectations for both sides:
    - Individual leases
    - Detailed roommate agreements (guests, substance use, laundry)
    - Flat rate utilities, cleaning service, etc.

- Additional Examples
  - Mutually beneficial relationships
  - Veterans housing Veterans

Benefits/How to Create Buy-In

- Talk about the benefits:
  - More options (less issues with qualifying, flexible screening criteria)
  - Quicker move ins
  - Waved fees
  - Lease flexibility
  - Save money
  - Build rental history
  - Sense of community/camaraderie
- "Plan B"
  - Shorter-term
  - "Save money, build rental history, get security deposit, move out"

Identifying Shared Housing

- Consider a Housing Specialist to “talk business, not social work”
- Creative avenues to finding shared housing
- Program can offer: long-term support from Housing Specialist, 24 hour emergency line, increased financial assistance, conflict resolution/mediation, tenant stabilization meetings/”house meetings”, mitigation funds (CoC funds), potential replacement of tenants with turnover
- Benefits to working with our program
  - We work with 100 Veterans at a time looking for housing
  - You screen Veterans to find the right tenant fit for your unit
  - We’ll list your units for free

Presenter: Dana Brooks

- **Director of Housing**
- **Catholic Charities of West TN**
- **Memphis, Tennessee**
- **Dana.Brooks@acc.cdom.org**
- **(901) 722-4759**

Catholic Charities of West Tennessee

TN-501-CoC Memphis, TN
14-TN-287 St. Sebastian SSVF

Inventory

- 127 GPD beds
- 300 SSVF households
- 450+ VASH vouchers
- 1380 PSH
- 760 RRH
- 25 CoC projects
- 2 SSO CES / DV CES
- HMIS
- CoC Planning
- 8 CoC Committees

Landscape

- 1 in 4 live in poverty
- Overall city poverty rate = 25%
- 39% of city's children = in poverty
- PIT 2018 = 1226 total/ 231 Vets
- 1 Bedroom FMR = $704
- 64% entered 14-TN-287 SSVF with 0 income in FY18
- **6 designated Single Women's shelter beds w/o requirements**
- **2 men's shelters, 1 co-ed, 2 DV, 2 women's**

Catholic Charities of West Tennessee

NEEDS

-Quality

-Affordability

-Close to Services and Transit

-Availability

-Reliable Rent & Occupancy

-Retention

SOLUTIONS

Landlord Workgroup

Property Interest Form

Master Landlord List

Landlord Engagement

Luncheon / Recognition

Shared Housing

Catholic Charities of West Tennessee

A Client's Assumptions of Shared Housing

- Dormitory or TH Setting
- No Privacy
- Designated and Strict Schedule
- Risk of Property Theft / Lack of Personal Space
- Curfew and Guest Limits
- Rules, Rules, and More Rules
- Can't Move or Relocate

Catholic Charities of West Tennessee

What Clients Learn About Shared Housing

- Cost Effective – Less for More (furnished, lower $)
- Utility Arrears Don’t Deter Move-In (util included)
- Ample Privacy and Space
- Access to Resources and Supplies
- Community, Relationships, and Support
- Routine and Schedule Is Doable
- Advocacy Promotes Landlord Connection
- Sustainable, Empowering, and Possible

Catholic Charities of West Tennessee

Case Management and Retention Benefits

- Increased Landlord Communication
- Proactive vs. Reactive = Eviction Prevention
- Creative Solutions (space, food, storage)
- Benefits of Peer Support
- Expedited Housing Navigation
- Long-term Networking and Relationships
- Success for Consumer and Projects

Shared Housing Services - Tacoma

- Shared Housing Services Tacoma
- Veteran for Veteran Pilot Project in collaboration with the local SSVF program.
- Marketing Material developed by King County

Supportive Services for Veteran Families

eliminating racism empowering women ywca Seattle | King | Snohomish

Catholic Community Services Catholic Housing Services of Western Washington

King County Veteran 2 Veteran (V2V) Initiative

Veteran 2 Veteran (V2V), a home sharing program that matches Veteran homeowners in King County to Veterans in need of affordable housing by renting out that "spare room" in a home. This program offers housemate matches based on preferences and compatibility, with support from your local SSVF program.

Veteran Homelessness

In 2018, on any given night approximately 921 Veterans were experiencing homelessness in King County. Compared to 2017, the number of Veterans experiencing homelessness decreased by 31%. [All Home PIT Count, 2018]

Veterans can find themselves grappling with the rising costs of living, unemployment, and mental and physical health. These barriers can undermine their ability to adjust to civilian life, meet basic needs, and maintain housing. Become a partner in this initiative to support a fellow Veteran to help end Veteran homelessness in King County.

Home Provider Benefits:

- Financial support through rent and/or other household expenses such as utilities
- Support provided by SSVF and local organizations
- Assistance with household tasks and other benefits that serve the needs of both the home provider and tenant [optional]

The Process

- Contact your local SSVF grantee to express interest in participating in the V2V initiative. Speak to a Housing Specialist to list your unit and
- SSVF will make matches based on determined needs, requirements, and compatibility to begin the home share referral process
- Option to complete a tenant screening (if desired)
  - Background checks can be requested by home owners to be completed by rental application companies (arrangements will be made by SSVF)
- If a home share match is made, the homeowner and tenant negotiate their living arrangements and document the negotiated arrangements through a lease or shared housing agreement.

If you...

- Are a Veteran with a desire to support other Veterans
- Have a spare bedroom(s) in your home to rent on a short or long term basis
- Desire to help a Veteran obtain safe, affordable housing

...Contact us today!

Coming Soon…

Along with this webinar we will be bringing you a…

Shared Housing Tool Kit that will have samples of forms, advertisements, etc. from your fellow grantees.

Stay tuned!

Question Time!

SSVF Customer Service FY 19 Program Goal Implementation

Veterans' Rights Poster

Veterans' Rights

As a Veteran, you have the right…

1. to be treated equally, professionally, and with respect, regardless of your gender, legal history, ability/disability, age, sexuality, race, ethnicity, housing status, or any other protected class
2. to be assessed for available services as a Veteran with your Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) issued photo identification (ID), whether or not you have your DD214.
3. to access or be directly referred to services you need for which you are eligible and that are available within your local community.
4. to have your phone number and general location with a time you can be reached requested so you can receive a text message, phone call, or in-person follow-up within a reasonable time, and to assist you with applying for a subsidized Universal Services Administration Lifeline phone plan, when needed.

Who to contact with concerns:

- (SSVF Grantee senior staff member contact information)

SSVF Grantee Action Plan

- All SSVF Grantees are required to display the Veterans' Rights Poster
- Where: visible to all Veterans who are served by SSVF
- Example: check-in desk, offices where Veterans are screened, Case worker offices, other areas where Veterans interact with SSVF staff

SSVF Grantee Action Plan cont.

- Grantee required to insert senior staff (ex-Program Manager) contact information.
- During grantee audits, FOFA and future USV visits staff will be checking for the posting of Veterans' Rights Posters
- Deadline to post and educate staff on Veterans' Rights: March 22, 2019
- Questions: contact your Regional Coordinator

Background: USV "Secret Shopper" Results

- Not accepting the VA ID without a DD 214.
- Follow up phone calls or text messages less common.
- Requesting a phone number or assisting the client with obtaining a no cost USAC Lifeline phone plan less frequent.
- Best practice: SSVF most accessible sites asked for a working mobile phone number and followed up with a phone call or text message

Insert Agency Logo

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Who to contact with concerns:

Insert Agency Contact Name, Title,
Telephone Number and Email

1

Thank you!