

Housing Location Infrastructure

Safe decent homes with rents affordable to lower-income households are becoming harder and harder to find. In turn when such a rental opportunity becomes available, homelessness assistance programs must move quickly to seize the opportunity. **It is vital to have a housing location infrastructure, which includes staff capacity, specialized services and resources, and landlord engagement strategies.** The simplest way to do this is make housing location and landlord engagement independent of direct client services and supports delivered through case management.

In a Housing Alliance survey of frontline workers providing housing location services, we learned that many were having trouble maintaining and recruiting new landlords.¹ One of the reasons cited for this challenge was landlords reported programs not being responsive when the landlord tried to contact a case manager. By having a more formalized and proactive approach to housing location, programs will be better positioned to be respond to landlords quickly as well as be more effective at helping people experiencing homelessness find and keep permanent housing.

Many communities already have some aspects of this infrastructure in place. However, when evaluating strong housing location programs, there are common elements that when aligned create a strong housing location infrastructure.

<p>Devoted Staff and Capacity</p>	<p>Establish a single point of contact between the homelessness assistance provider/s and the rental market.</p> <p>Hire staff who are skilled in real estate and or property management over the typical social service background.</p> <p>Develop resources and activities specifically geared towards landlords such as marketing materials outlining benefits to landlords, information events, and/or financial and customer service incentives</p>
<p>Continuous Tracking of Landlords and Available Units</p>	<p>Intensive outreach to landlords is needed to educate about programs, track vacancies, and monitor general satisfaction with the relationship with the program and client tenancy.</p> <p>Continuous communication with case managers and /or clients on specific housing needs and listings provided is vital as well documenting successful lease-ups.</p> <p>Ensure issues and concerns that may arise between client and landlord are addressed in a timely manner and provide conflict resolution supports as need.</p>

¹ Housing Alliance of Pennsylvania. "Landlord engagement in a Post-Pandemic Rental Market: What Is and Is not Working". 2023 March 14.

**Connecting
Clients to
Available
Housing**

Assist clients in viewing the units, applying for units, negotiating the terms of the lease, and/or other move-in needs and costs.

Setting and clarifying expectations between landlords, clients, and case managers as they work together.

Collaborate with landlords to ensure units meet basic health and safety standards prior to client moving in (i.e., inspections) and throughout the client's tenancy and/or program participation.

Additional Resources from the Landlord Engagement Library

- [Landlord Engagement in a Post-Pandemic Rental Market: What Is and Is Not Working](#)
- [Sample Housing Locater Job Description](#)
- [Sample Landlord and Unit Tracking Template](#)