



Housing Alliance
of Pennsylvania

Landlord Focus Group Guide-TEMPLATE

Purpose: These focus groups are to discuss the business challenges experienced by landlords operating private market rental housing post pandemic and explore the viability of landlord engagement strategies designed to support landlord-tenant business relationships for households overcoming homelessness and involved in services.

Duration: 60 minutes

Participant: up to 8 Landlords/Owners of Rental Properties

Format: zoom or in-person

Outline and Questions: It is recommended that questions be shared in advance of the focus group just so landlords know what to expect.

1. Opening Introductions

- i. Name, title, and company
- ii. Description of company/portfolio and the type of housing you provide.
- iii. Are you currently working with a rental assistance program?
 - a. If so, what type?
- iv. What are the biggest trends and opportunities in rental housing in PA?

2. General Business Questions

We'd like to learn from you –the real experts – about the rental housing context in your community and how things really work on the ground when you're managing these units.

- i. What are the biggest challenges in your rental business?
 - a. How often have you experienced those challenges in the past year?
- ii. What disqualifies a tenant from renting one of your units?
- iii. Of typical tenant screening criteria, which would you be willing to overlook if you were working with a tenant that had both rental assistance and case management?

3. Questions about Appeal/Feasibility of Landlord Incentives We'd like to talk just a bit about how landlord incentives might impact your business. We want to ask

you some very practical questions about what might work to reduce screening criteria or address or mitigate challenges experienced when a tenant does not adhere to the terms of the lease.

- i. Of incentives in your area:
 - a. What types of incentives would be most attractive and why?
 - b. Would any of the incentives change your screening criteria?
- ii. Would other incentives work better?

Currently available in the area

- Housing Navigator: a single point of contact for landlords to call when working with rental assistance programs.
- Sign-on Bonus: a landlord receives an additional one-time payment once a tenant enrolled in the rental assistance program is successfully leased up and moved in
- Risk / Damage Mitigation Funds: to help pay for damages caused by tenant.
- Education Classes: free trainings for landlords on topics related to their business needs.

Other examples

- Increased Security Deposits: a landlord receives double the advertised security deposit.
- Increase the Rent Caps: this allows landlords to charge a rent more in-line with the current market.
- Referral Bonus: a landlord receives a one-time cash payment for referring another landlord to work with the rental assistance program.
- Vacancy Payments: a landlord receives a one-time cash payment for holding a unit for a rental assistance and/or during the inspection process.
- Landlord Website / Portal to provide a central hub of information landlords need to know when working with rental assistance programs.
- Pre-Inspections: to expediate lease up process for rental assistance programs.
- Automatic Rent Increases: Removing the need and administrative burden of filing paperwork to request a rent increase from a rental assistance program.