



CA HCD ESG-CV Training Series:
Landlord Engagement & Incentives Foundation

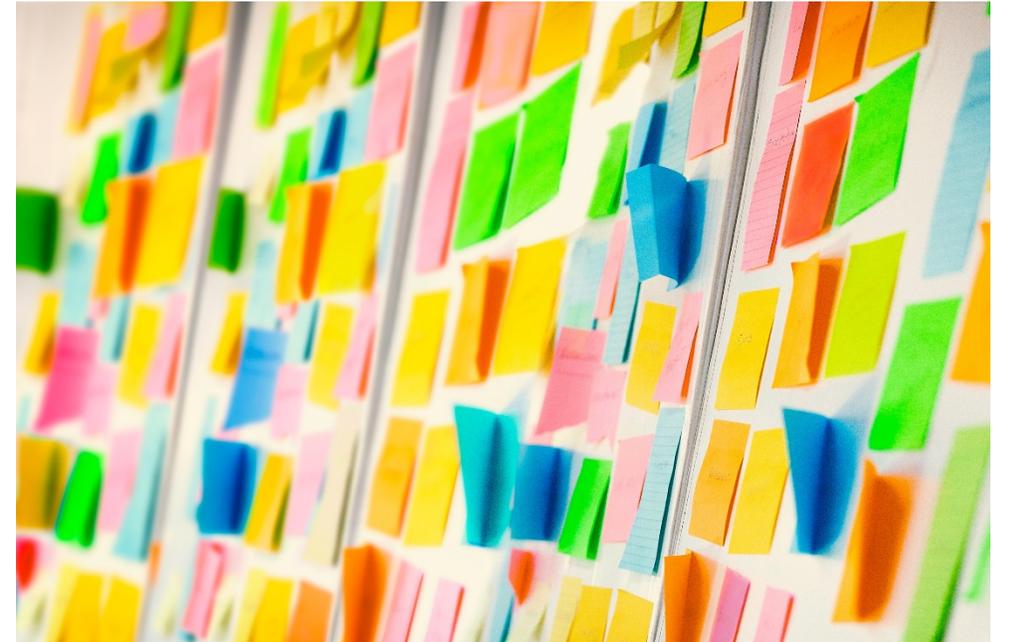


Learning Objectives

1. Gain an understanding of emerging and best practices related to landlord engagement and retention
2. Be able to work within communities to evaluate current landlord engagement practices and recommend systemic changes (centralized landlord recruitment or engagement system)
3. Gain a working knowledge of how to conduct effective landlord outreach, including landlord-focused approaches to recruit, engage and retain landlords
4. Understand common landlord concerns and have action-based solutions for addressing these concerns
5. Identify all eligible uses of ESG-CV funds for landlord incentives, as well as other sources of funding

Thank you to Miami-Dade County CoC, Houston Coalition for the Homeless, and Connecticut Balance of State for providing materials that supported the development of this training

- System-level Planning
- Equity Considerations
- Financial Incentives
- Using ESG-CV and Other Funds
- Marketing and Recruitment
- Landlord Retention
- Tenant Retention





Know Your Audience

Landlords want to be sure that:

- Rent is paid on time
- Property is respected
- Tenants are good neighbors
- Property doesn't suffer from vacancies or evictions





Why plan at a system level?

- Avoid duplicated or redundant engagement efforts
- Good landlord engagement is a matter of racial equity
- Ensure providers and direct staff are not competing against each other for limited resources
- Communicate a clear and coherent message about the need to community members and landlords
- Frontload the engagement process—reaching out about individual units is way more time intensive than investing in building relationships that will yield more units regularly
- Ensure that appropriate rental units are secured – location and proximity to transportation might matter to you and determine if there are certain geographic areas you will target and areas you will not invest time in



System-Level Planning

Designate a dedicated organization that will coordinate strategy and engagement on behalf of the system

Responsibilities

Set up system-level workgroup dedicated to landlord engagement and retention

Provide staff for recruiting and maintain relationships on behalf of the system

Assess how the current environment has shifted landlord practices or preferences

Establish financial incentive package to attract landlords



System-Level Planning

Create a landlord engagement team that will execute necessary activities to stand up and maintain a robust landlord engagement effort

Functions

Active recruitment, engagement, and "deal-making" with landlords

Secure units that will pass HQS inspection

Develop standardized landlord agreements and contracts that meet the needs of all funding streams

Actively coordinated and upkeep accurate unit inventory

Distribute financial incentives

Administer the Risk Mitigation Fund



System-Level Planning: Considerations

Is FMR too low to attract landlords? If yes, capitalize on the “rent reasonableness” waiver for CoC, ESG and ESG-CV funds

What redundancies, time lags, forms, inspection processes, and other bureaucratic steps can you remove or reduce? Consider for mom and pop AND large property managers, make it work for both

Who is best positioned in the system to triage and respond to landlord calls? Decide if it’s RRH providers, dedicated staff at the system-level, or another option, focus on customer service

Have landlords had negative experiences with housing people from homeless programs in the past? Consider a landlord survey to learn more and build in corrections

Can screening requirement reductions get negotiated upfront? Don’t try to do this work on a case-by-case basis

Do you need a unit inventory management database? The answer is yes if you anticipate volume



System-Level Planning: Equity Considerations

Long history and current practices of housing discrimination create disparities among people experiencing homelessness and in housing retention. Connect with local fair housing agency and ensure training for housing navigation and case management staff

Robust landlord outreach includes ensuring that you're reaching landlords of color, who may be more likely to be those "mom and pop" landlords who don't advertise in the usual places and just use things like window signs, church bulletin boards, and word of mouth in the community

Understand stigma against people experiencing homelessness, especially around substance use and mental illness and mitigate that with landlord education (Also has a racial equity and accessibility impact)

Be aware of the difficulties of finding housing for larger families and the racial equity implications of those urban planning realities and potential discrimination based on family configuration and work to develop a pool of larger units so that families don't have to wait a long time while engaging the single-family market, which often has higher vacancy rates and larger options

Recognize the disparate impact on BIPOC of legal tenancy screeners like criminal records, credit scores, eviction history, etc. doing good landlord engagement addresses all those things so when you do it, you're also doing racial equity!



System-Level Planning: Removing Hurdles

Landlords need the initiative to work for them, taking the time to map out processes will help you find ways to improve

Have you...

Made sure that rental payments will be issued promptly?

Removed all redundant forms or process steps?

Streamlined housing inspections?

Established a landlord hotline?

Established a standard for landlord response times?

Established a protocol for managing inventory?



System-Level Planning: Financial Incentives

Each financial incentive and strategy below helps to attract landlords and secure more units for people experiencing homelessness

Incentives & Strategies

Establish a Risk Mitigation Fund

Offer enhanced security deposits

Offer signing bonuses

Offer to cover loss of rent due to proration (usually up to 30 days)

Use Rent Reasonableness Standard if FMR is too low

Expedite housing inspections to reduce unit vacancy times



System-Level Planning: Risk Mitigation Fund

Risk mitigation funds pay for damages caused by tenants, eviction fees, and rent lost due to eviction and the overall pool of risk mitigation funds does not have to be large

Features

Claim-based

Advertise fund to recruit landlords

Easy to access for landlords

Landlord access is conditioned on a signed landlord agreement

Four examples:

https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset_library/Risk_mitigation_funds_community_profiles.pdf



System-Level Planning: Using ESG-CV + Other Funds

Waivers in the CoC and ESG Programs, as well as other funding sources, offer opportunities, take advantage of them!

Newly-Added Additional Eligible Activities (ESG-CV Notice CPD-21-08)



Sponsor-Based Rental Assistance

In addition to tenant-based and project-based rental assistance, funds may now be used for sponsor-based rental assistance (see p. 22-23 of the Notice for more information).



Renter's Insurance

Funding for renter's insurance for rapid re-housing and homelessness prevention program participants. Must be necessary to obtain/maintain housing (e.g., landlord requirement). Payment must be made directly to the insurance company on behalf of the program participant.



Laundry Services

Outreach funds may be used to provide laundry services (e.g., laundry trucks to outdoor locations where people reside).



Furniture & Household Furnishings

Rapid re-housing and homelessness prevention funds may be used to buy furniture and household furnishings for participant use while they are receiving assistance.



Essential Services

Services available to those receiving rapid rehousing or homelessness prevention assistance are expanded to include all listed at 24 CFR 576.102(a)(1).



Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Purchase of PPE (e.g., masks, hand sanitizer, etc.) for program participants as an essential service under emergency shelter and street outreach and for program participants receiving homelessness prevention and rapid rehousing.



Vaccine Incentives

Cash payments of up to \$50/dose to people experiencing homelessness as an incentive to receive the coronavirus vaccine.



Centralized/Coordinated Assessment

Additional costs to update/enhance/operate a coordinated entry system under 24 CFR 576.400(d). Documentation must show the use of funds is limited to an increase in system costs due to coronavirus. Recipient use of funds must be coordinated with the Continuum of Care (CoC).



Expanded Use of Cell phones & Internet

Costs to provide temporary cell phones for individuals and families experiencing homelessness, receiving rapid rehousing (CoC, YHDP, ESG) receiving ESG homelessness prevention, or residing in permanent supportive housing (CoC or YHDP). Cell phones must be owned by the recipient/subrecipient and loaned to participants. Wireless service plans must be the recipient/subrecipient's.



Landlord Incentives

Funds may be used to pay for landlord incentives for up to 3 times the rent charged for the unit, including signing bonuses, security deposits, repairing damages incurred by the program participant not covered by the security deposit or that are incurred while the program participant is still residing in the unit, and cost of extra cleaning or maintenance.



Fair Market Rent Limit—Waived. Units must still meet rent reasonableness standards.



System-Level Planning: Using ESG-CV + Other Funds

Waivers in the CoC and ESG Programs, as well as other funding sources, offer opportunities, take advantage of them!

Funding Source	Rehousing	Homelessness Diversion	Homelessness Prevention	Eviction Prevention	Rental and Utility Assistance	Services	Other Financial Assistance
Emergency Rental Assistance (1 + 2)	Yes*	Yes*	Yes*	Yes*	Yes	Limited	No
Coronavirus Relief Funds	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Emergency Solutions Grants-CV (CARES Act)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
CDBG-CV	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
ARP – Utility Assistance	Yes*	Yes*	Yes*	Yes	Yes***	n/a	n/a
ARP – EHV	Yes**	Yes**	Yes**	No	Yes	Very Limited	Limited
ARP – HOME	Yes**	Yes**	Yes**	No	Yes	Yes	No
ARP – TANF EA	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
ARP state/local government aid	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

* As part of housing relocation assistance to become lease holder
 ** For highly vulnerable households that need longer term rental assistance
 *** Utility assistance only



System-Level Planning: Consistent Message

A clearly written statement on the dedicated organization's website ensures that the public gets the same information and provides a place for key benefits and contacts for the effort

Consider the following:

Brand the initiative – tell people what the goal is

Clearly state the direct benefits to landlords

Use pictures that show people thriving in housing

Provide a single, reliable point of contact, with email and phone #



HOME4GOOD is a new initiative to recruit and retain landlord partners to increase access to market rate housing for people facing homelessness.

Example



HOME4GOOD

RECRUITMENT

Financial incentives are available for landlords who make available 2-3-4+-bedroom units to second chance renters. Benefits include:

- Incentive payments to landlords of \$500 for each 2 bedroom unit and \$750 for each 3+ bedroom unit
- Additionally, rent and deposit assistance for tenants to increase stability
- Opportunities to directly help the community by renting to veterans, individuals, and families facing homelessness
- Vacancies will be filled quickly because there are always tenant families ready to move in!
- Community Shelter Board's partners continue to work with tenants and serve as a point of contact and support for the landlord

[LEARN MORE](#)

HOME4GOOD takes a two-prong approach:

- Recruiting landlords to work with people facing homelessness
- Supporting landlords already participating in

ONGOING SUPPORT

A Risk Mitigation Fund is available to reimburse documented property damage, loss of rent, and other related issues. The fund provides an additional safety net for landlords, beyond a normal security deposit, when housing second-chance renters. Loss may include but is not limited to documented physical damage to a property beyond normal wear and tear, lost rent, unpaid utility charges, and, in certain cases, pest extermination.

[LEARN MORE](#)



If you would like to participate as a community partner landlord or get more information about HOME4GOOD, contact Janae Casto • jcasto@csb.org • 614-715-2551



System-Level Planning: Materials

Developing a single set of materials for use across the system ensures that everyone gets the same message, expectations, and access to incentives

Materials to develop

Landlord Agreement (outlines expectations of landlord; use as condition of receiving financial incentives)

Resident Approval Form

Marketing one-pager

Orientation packet/ppt for participating landlords



PHEW





Market, Recruit and Repeat

- Tell everyone!
 - Post ads (Craigslist, newspapers, [rent.com](https://www.rent.com), etc.)
 - Send brochures to a broad mailing list of rental property owners
 - Ask for referrals from other landlords
 - Connect with landlords of color and consider the more community-based ways they might “advertise”



Market, Recruit and Repeat

- Be proactive
 - Attend or host landlord events – partner with a landlord association if you can
 - Collaborate with local elected officials or agencies, especially in communities of color
 - Present at local clubs, religious organizations, etc., across diverse communities
 - Present at property management organizations



Market and Recruit: Marketing Materials

Anticipate what landlords will want to see, below is a set of possible materials to include in your arsenal

Marketing Materials

Agency Annual Reports

Initiative One-pager

Client Success Stories

Business cards

Testimonials and “Proofs of Concept” (positive media coverage, awards, other landlord statements)

Market and Recruit: Communication



DO describe why you believe in the initiative



DON'T outsource recruitment to clients



DON'T focus too much on client benefits, focus on them why it's good for THEM



DO describe the direct financial benefits



DON'T delay in following up after initial outreach



DO distinguish the initiative from other housing subsidy programs, especially if they have a negative reputation



DO emphasize that landlords have someone they can call



DON'T be critical of clients, landlords, or the initiative

Market and Recruit: Sell It!



Tenants receive
tenant and financial
education



Quick financial
payments



In-home services
provided once a
month



Financial incentives



Tenant-landlord
mediation as needed



Other benefits?



Now What? Maintain and Retain

- Wraparound support for landlords
 - Warm check-ins
 - Prompt responses re: issues/violations/questions
 - Neutral mediation
- Cut checks FAST
- Move clients in FAST
- Educate tenants AND landlords
- Wraparound support for tenants' success



Retention: Support for Move-in Day

Tenants' success is critical to retaining landlords and meeting your own goals of successfully rehousing people! Make move-in day count with these tips for case workers

Do a walk-through with the tenant, Be positive!

Bring a cleaning kit, roll up your sleeves WITH your client

Arrange for furniture and basic supplies to be delivered

Provide an orientation to the building and community; encourage meeting neighbors

Make sure locks and keys work, review fire safety plans, and safe appliance use. Discuss strategies for lost keys, etc.



Retention: Tenants are Protected

Landlords have a responsibility to not discriminate against or sexually harass clients, make sure staff and clients know their rights and how to file a complaint

HUD's Office of Fair Housing & Equal Opportunity enforces federal civil rights laws:

https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/fair_housing_equal_opp/online-complaint

Call 1-800-669-9777

Department of Justice enforces federal sexual harassment prohibitions

<https://www.justice.gov/crt/sexual-harassment-housing-initiative-how-report>



Thank you for listening