



## Landlord Incentive Pilot Program (LIPP) NCCEH Quarterly Report

Report Date: April 18, 2019

Reporting Period: First Quarter, 2019

### LIPP Community Reports

#### LIPP Communities Activity for Current Quarter

Recruitment	
Number of Landlords Recruited this Quarter	3
Number of Units Made Available to LIPP Program by Recruited Landlords this Quarter	46
Housing	
Number of Households Housed in LIPP Units this Quarter	28
Of these, Number of Veteran Households Housed in LIPP Units this Quarter	7

#### LIPP Communities Activity Year to Date

Recruitment	
Number of Landlords Recruited to Date	34
Number of Units Made Available to LIPP Program by Recruited Landlords to Date	288
Housing	
Number of Households Housed in LIPP Units to Date	92
Of these, Number of Veteran Households Housed in LIPP Units to Date	21

#### Challenges Encountered:

- One community reports that most of their lease terms are 1 year, so it is a little more difficult to sign up landlords because they won't be able to take advantage of the housing stability bonus. In these conversations the LIPP entity is pointing out the other

benefits of the program which could be used if there is client damage, abandonment, or eviction before the program end in the fall.

- Continuing from last quarter, one community reports that it has been challenging to solicit lease-up data from partner agency case managers/housing locators, especially as there has been staff turnover among several partner agencies in the last half-year. The LIPP entity held one-on-one meetings with two partner agencies to ask for this information, as well as share an overview of the UDI partnership overall. They are hoping that this meeting will assist them in getting more regular data updates, as well as information around households that can qualify for coverage by the Risk Mitigation Fund. The LIPP entity is waiting for lease-up numbers from two of our Key Partner Agencies, one of which specifically works with veterans. They hope that a lot of these challenges can be addressed through the new Landlord Engagement Program funded by the city, which includes a full-time coordinator position. The current community-wide landlord cultivation work will transition to this position, and they will lead the continuation and expansion of these partnerships.
- A challenge that one LIPP entity worked through was figuring out the best way to coordinate the Risk Mitigation Fund claims process. As there have been a lot of staff changes at partner agencies since we delivered initial trainings and made announcements, the availability of these funds, as well as the process of filing a claim, have not been on people's radar. With two possible claims that came in, the LIPP entity worked with the landlords and agency partners to provide clarity around what documentation will be required for submission. They also explained the process to members of the Landlord Engagement Team, a group of local housing locators, so that the steps are clear for future claims.
- One community reports that the central challenge this quarter was trying to salvage a relationship between a landlord and a tenant who has a mental disorder that is progressing. The tenant continuously calls the leasing office 3-4 times a week with some type of maintenance issue. In the past couple of months, the tenant has filed a claim with Legal Aid indicating that she is being charged extra monthly fees in addition to her portion of the rent. These fees are for water, sewer, trash, and rental insurance. The tenant receives a rental subsidy. The tenant also filed two complaints with the city housing code enforcement office, which has caused the apartment community to pull back from accepting referrals from the LIPP entity. After much discussion with the district manager and leasing agents, they were able to persuade the apartment community to begin accepting referrals on a limited basis.
- A community reports they have had difficulty in finding available properties for families that need 3 or more bedrooms. Although a few units have been located, they are not at an affordable price point.
- A community reports that convincing landlords to accept Housing Choice Vouchers continues to be a challenge due to the landlords having negative experiences with tenants. Landlords need more education and support on the topic of working with persons with vouchers. This would help to alleviate some of the stigma that surrounds families who have vouchers.

- One community reports that participation from partner agencies has not increased since the introduction and initial show of interest.
- A community reports that landlord engagement has been difficult. Housing in the affordable price range has been minimal/limited in this area which does not allow for positive recruitment efforts. The LIPP entity spoke with one MOU landlord and covered challenges to participating which include additional steps to their existing process and extra paperwork.

#### Success Factors/Strategies Identified:

- A community reports that they have signed several new leases with a LIPP landlord that finished construction on a new apartment building, after being delayed due to weather at the end of 2018. The number of LIPP units reported this quarter increased significantly because they were able to sign leases for these apartments.
- One community reports that a new landlord partner has signed a Key Partner Agreement and is sending regular updates of their available units. They also had two possible Risk Mitigation Funds claims within our UDI partnership. While one situation self-resolved and the tenant was able to cover the damage themselves, they are waiting for the required documentation from the other landlord. The landlord, agency partners, and LIPP entity staff have been important in coordinating communication between all parties, as well as ensuring that clear instructions are provided to initiate the claims process. They have also continued to send weekly emails to property managers and landlords asking for available housing unit updates, as well as to housing locators/case managers to share the spreadsheet of housing through partners.
- A community reports that they continued convening monthly Landlord Engagement Meetings with agency partner housing locators. These meetings have provided a space to share landlord successes and challenges, as well as support collaboration and housing resource sharing. The group has brainstormed ideas around expanding affordable housing options, as well as addressing the barriers to housing that are often faced. Participants in these meetings have also been able to coordinate their landlord outreach efforts to efficiently engage with key stakeholders in Durham. The community is also going to use future meetings to focus on housing stability and different approaches agencies take to keep people in their homes. Additionally, they are hoping to provide Fair Housing Training to all housing locators.
- One community reports that they continue to build trusting relationships with landlords, sending a short email or a phone call around the 6<sup>th</sup> of each month to make sure they have received rental payments helps to create a good rapport. Here is a list of key strategies that have been successful:
  - Asking landlords to share a copy of the late notice and in return notifying the referring agency. This gesture demonstrates that the LIPP entity is committed to ensuring that they are supporting the landlord.
  - In-person visits with landlords to just say “hello” while inquiring if they are any upcoming vacancies.

- Meeting and educating all leasing staff on the increasing homeless population in our city, making the case that everyone deserves a place to call home.
- Building a relationship with other agencies by constantly asking for their feedback and holding bimonthly focus groups.
- Meeting with the director of the city's housing code inspector to gain a better understanding of how a complaint from a tenant is handled and the expectations of the landlord. This helped begin a partnership with housing code inspectors that will help in recruiting and maintaining landlords.
- One community reports that the contributions to the success in meeting the program purpose includes supportive services and continued training and assistance to help strategize. Also, guidance from NCCEH staff in understanding best practices for recruitment and support to current landlord efforts and having multiple mitigation categories helps market the program.

#### Success Stories:

- In addition to the number reported, a LIPP entity had two lease renewals in January. These clients are doing great in their housing, and the landlord was appreciative of the housing stability bonus provided!
- One very significant outcome of the LIPP and advocacy of the community is that there has been a lot of progress in the new Landlord Engagement position being funded by the city. Several organizations have applied to house the position and the target date to start the contract is in the beginning of June. Leadership of the landlord initiative will transition from the current team to be led by this new Coordinator, who will continue to cultivate partnerships with private landlords and property managers to support community-wide efforts to increase the availability of affordable housing. They will also develop and manage our centralized database of units available to people experiencing homelessness. This individual will ultimately maintain the work that the community collaborative is currently doing, while also increasing the capacity and network. As most of the current back-end support is driven by part-time volunteers and students, having a full-time position dedicated to this work will expand the scope to ensure continuity and long-term sustainability.
- One community applied as a partner with UNC-Chapel Hill researchers to receive a grant to design a local affordable housing search app. This app will pull listings on existing websites and rank them in order based upon housing opportunity as defined by households experiencing, or at-risk of experiencing, homelessness. They recently received the C. Felix Harvey Award, which will help them build this app and integrate it into the community's work.
- A client was diagnosed with HIV in 2009. This news led to severe depression and a loss of employment, and she eventually became homeless. While seeking shelter through a local program, she began to be connected to services that helped treat her depression and HIV diagnoses. The LIPP entity was able to assist her, and she was able to spend Thanksgiving and Christmas in her own home.

- To date, tenants housed through LIPP assistance are still housed which offers future opportunity to utilize the bonus program and recognize landlords for successful stability in housing efforts. A partner agency has a potential claim for the next quarter, and they will identify households in LIPP units as they attempt to work with tenants.

#### Reimbursement Information for Current Quarter

Number of Payment Requests Submitted	2
Total Amount of Payment Requests	\$1,000.00
Payment Requests Approved	2
Total Amount of Approved Requests	\$1,000.00
Payment Requests Denied	0
Total Amount of Denied Requests	\$0
Average Length of Time from Request to Reimbursement	17 days

#### Reimbursement Information Year to Date

Number of Payment Requests Submitted	2
Total Amount of Payment Requests	\$1,000.00
Payment Requests Approved	2
Total Amount of Approved Requests	\$1,000.00
Payment Requests Denied	0
Total Amount of Denied Requests	\$0
Average Length of Time from Request to Reimbursement	17 days

#### Challenges with reimbursement process:

- One challenge encountered was that the agency who submitted payment did not put client identifier on proof of payment. NCEH and NC HFA were able to connect the documentation quickly and could move forward with payment.

#### Successes with reimbursement process:

- Both requests for reimbursement were for housing stability bonuses, meaning that two landlords signed lease renewals with tenants.