



Landlord Incentive Pilot Project  
Final Report

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## Executive Summary

The Landlord Incentive Pilot Project (LIPP) was an initiative created through a partnership with the NC Housing Finance Agency (NCHFA), the NC Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (NCDMVA), and the NC Coalition to End Homelessness (NCCEH) through Operation Home, the state taskforce to end Veterans homelessness.

The goal of LIPP was to measure the impact of risk mitigation and housing stability tools on the recruitment and sustained engagement of landlords and property managers. We sought to evaluate such tools for their relative importance and future usage within the work of localities and the state. Specifically, LIPP sought to enhance landlord engagement in four communities by supporting local agencies to:

- Work with landlords to initially engage in providing housing for people experiencing homelessness
- Encourage and assist landlords to work with tenants as problems and issues arise
- Recognize landlords for supporting successful stability in housing

### LIPP Highlights

Operation Home, the state taskforce to end Veterans homelessness, selected and approved four communities to implement the pilot based on 2017 homeless Veteran Point-In-Time count data and the capacity for project implementation. Each community designated a local agency to organize the pilot, provide payments to landlords, and receive reimbursement for eligible expenses. These agencies were:

- Asheville: Homeward Bound
- Charlotte: Socialserve, HousingCLT
- Durham: Housing for New Hope
- Wilmington: Good Shepherd Center

LIPP agencies were required to document attempts to engage local homeless veteran service providers to join the project, including Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF); Housing and Urban Development/Veteran Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD/VASH); Grant Per Diem (GPD), and local Veteran Service Officers. LIPP agencies could serve both veteran and non-veteran households throughout the pilot.

NCCEH and NCHFA staff created the following eligible expenses for risk mitigation reimbursements:

- Unpaid Damages
- Unpaid Tenant Portion of Rent and Late Fees
- Loss of Rent Due to Tenant Abandonment
- Successful Eviction Costs
- Housing Stability Bonus

- Security Deposit

On September 25, 2017, NCCEH provided a kick-off training to assist the four communities in designing their risk mitigation pilots, including a review of potential program designs, eligible expenses, and questions and concerns. Throughout LIPP implementation, NCCEH facilitated peer-to-peer calls with LIPP entities, key community partners, and NCHFA staff as well as provided one-on-one technical support and training. This provision of multifaceted and ongoing support generated opportunities for the engaged communities to participate in the design of the pilot.

NCHFA agreed to set aside \$100,000 for the LIPP pilot, and each LIPP entity had access to \$25,000 for local risk mitigation activities. Of the total amount, the pilot expended \$17,359, or 17% of the total set-aside funding.

- All combined, 129 households were housed through the LIPP pilot, and LIPP funds were expended for 20 households, or 16% of the households housed.
- Of these 20 households, 17 households were approved for housing stability bonuses and/or security deposits.
- Only 3 households utilized payments for unit damages, unpaid rent, late fees, eviction costs, or unit abandonment.
- Only 2% of the households housed needed traditional risk mitigation tools to preserve landlord relationships.

## Recommendations

Overall, funding for risk mitigation tools provided LIPP entities with new strategies for engaging landlords in their communities and assisted households with moving into permanent housing. While case management services were still viewed as the most important factor for landlords, risk mitigation tools did increase access into the rental market for homeless service systems.

To continue successful landlord engagement in the state, NCCEH recommends:

- North Carolina continue to explore and fund risk mitigation along with other landlord engagement tools to increase access to fair market units for households experiencing homelessness.
- Future risk mitigation programs should anticipate not utilizing the full amount of funds set aside for the program.
- Future risk mitigation and landlord engagement efforts need to fund staff capacity along with extensive training and ongoing support for landlord engagement staff to optimize results.
- A reimbursement-based payment process together with ongoing training about eligible expenses and documentation is recommended for future risk mitigation programs to sustain good relationships with landlords.
- Future landlord engagement programs should continue to include housing stability bonuses as an eligible activity. This was the most popular category and viewed as helpful in supporting ongoing permanent housing for households while strengthening relationships with landlords.

## Pilot Description

### Pilot Funding and Goals

The Landlord Incentive Pilot Project (LIPP) was an initiative created through a partnership with the NC Housing Finance Agency (NCHFA), the NC Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (NCDMVA), and the NC Coalition to End Homelessness (NCCEH) through Operation Home, the state taskforce to end Veterans homelessness. LIPP operated in four communities in North Carolina from January 16, 2018 through November 15, 2019.

LIPP was funded through two funding streams. First, NCHFA allocated \$100,000 to be used as the risk mitigation funds for the pilot. The pilot would support four communities that would be eligible to receive up to \$25,000 for approved eligible expenses. NCDMVA also provided funding to NCCEH complete program design, oversight, technical assistance, and evaluation of the pilot.

The overall goal of LIPP was to measure the impact of risk mitigation and housing stability tools on the recruitment and sustained engagement of landlords and property managers and to evaluate such tools for their relative importance and future usage within the work of localities and the state. Specifically, LIPP sought to enhance landlord engagement in the four communities by supporting local agencies to:

- Work with landlords to initially engage in providing housing for people experiencing homelessness
- Encourage and assist landlords to work with tenants as problems and issues arise
- Recognize landlords for supporting successful stability in housing

### Supporting Veterans

As a part of the implementation, participating LIPP agencies were required to document attempts to engage local homeless Veteran service providers to join the project. Such providers included but were not limited to Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF); Housing and Urban Development/Veteran Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD/VASH); Grant Per Diem (GPD), and local Veteran Service Officers.

LIPP agencies could serve both veteran and non-veteran households throughout the pilot. For the pilot, a Veteran is any person who served on active duty in the armed forces, regardless of how long they served or the type of discharge they received. LIPP participants used the HUD definition of Categories 1 & 4 of homelessness as an individual or family who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence or is fleeing, or attempting to flee, domestic violence. To assess impact on Veterans experiencing homelessness, LIPP communities tracked the number of Veteran households housed through the pilot.

### Participant Communities

Operation Home selected and approved four communities to implement the pilot based on 2017 homeless Veteran Point-In-Time count data and the capacity for project implementation. The four communities were: Asheville, Charlotte, Durham, and Wilmington.

Each community had a designated LIPP entity—a local agency—that organized the pilot, provided payments to landlords, and received reimbursement for eligible expenses.

Pilot Community	Project Entity
Asheville	Homeward Bound
Charlotte	Socialserve, Housing CLT
Durham	Housing for New Hope
Wilmington	Good Shephard Center

### Eligible Expenses

All LIPP funds were administered on a reimbursement basis by NCHFA, electronically, to the approved LIPP Entities. The reimbursements were paid only after submission of required documentation for review and approval by NCCEH staff who then forwarded the request to NCHFA for payment.

During August and September of 2017, NCHFA and NCCEH staff worked together to design eligible LIPP expense categories. This included policies around caps for payments and required actions for landlords and LIPP entities to receive approval for claims. Staff from both agencies also defined the necessary supporting paperwork required for each expense, developed a LIPP Payment Request portal, and created an invoice document, the LIPP Request for Reimbursement.

All eligible expenses were available for each community to use. However, some communities chose not to offer all of the categories in their pilots.

Eligible expenses included the following six categories:

- **Reimbursement of Unpaid Damages:**
  - Insurance claim – When the tenant permanently vacates the unit and there is a remaining unpaid balance after the insurance payment, a reimbursement claim may be filed for the outstanding balance, minus the retained security deposit and any payments made by the tenant. The rate of reimbursement is 100% not to exceed \$3,000. The owner/agent must have a policy of conducting inspections at least annually to be eligible to seek reimbursement of unpaid damages.
  - No insurance claim - When the tenant permanently vacates the unit and there are damages that do not exceed the deductible for an insurance claim, as determined by the owner/agent, a reimbursement claim may be filed for documented damages caused by the tenant, minus normal wear and tear, minus the retained security deposit, minus any payments made by the tenant. The rate of reimbursement is 75% not to exceed \$2,500. The owner/agent must have a policy of conducting inspections at least annually to be eligible to seek reimbursement of unpaid damages.

*Required Documentation: LIPP Request for Reimbursement, copy of payment from LIPP Entity, documentation of unit condition prior to tenant occupancy, itemized list of damages, and invoice or receipt for repairs.*

- **Reimbursement of Unpaid Tenant Portion of Rent and Late Fees:**

Once the tenant permanently vacates the unit, a reimbursement claim may be filed for any uncollected tenant portion of rent and late (late fees cannot exceed \$15 per month or 5% of the monthly rent, whichever is greater, in accordance with N.C.G.S. 42-46 (a) that occurred during the period of occupancy minus the retained security deposit, not to exceed 3 months of the tenant portion of rent plus late fees. The reimbursement is contingent on the owner/agent having notified the LIPP Entity within a week of issuing a delinquency notice to the tenant. The LIPP Entity must provide documentation of notification for compliance with this requirement.

*Required Documentation: LIPP Request for Reimbursement, copy of payment from LIPP Entity, documentation of the tenant portion of the rent, invoice for unpaid rent and late fees with dates*

- **Reimbursement of Loss of Rent Due to Tenant Abandonment:**

If a tenant abandons a unit a claim for may be filed for reimbursement for the full unit rent for the obligation during the remaining lease period or until the unit is re-rented, whichever is sooner, minus the retained security deposit, not to exceed 2.5 months of rent. This category can also be used for reimbursement of “trash out” expenses if the unit is abandoned.

*Required Documentation: LIPP Request for Reimbursement, copy of payment from LIPP Entity, documentation of monthly rent amount, invoice for “trash out” fees if applicable*

- **Reimbursement for Successful Eviction Costs:**

In the event of repeated property rules infractions and/or lease violations, in order to be eligible for reimbursement of eviction costs minus the retained security deposit, the owner/agent must have been in communication with the LIPP Entity and provided three opportunities to intervene prior to eviction proceedings. The reimbursement claim cannot exceed \$1,000 and will only be paid if the owner/agent prevails in the eviction action. The LIPP Entity must provide documentation of the three notifications for compliance with this requirement.

*Required Documentation: LIPP Request for Reimbursement, copy of payment from LIPP Entity, copy of the court order that includes eviction fees and court costs*

- **Reimbursement of Housing Stability Bonus:**

The LIPP entity may design this category as best fits its program. A maximum of 25% or \$6,250 of total award may be used. Singular guideline includes that a max of \$500 per each tenant

retention after one year and renewal of lease may be reimbursed to the LIPP entity for payment to the owner/agent.

*Required Documentation: LIPP Request for Reimbursement, copy of payment from LIPP Entity, copy of renewed lease*

- **Reimbursement of Security Deposit:**

The amount of the deposit is reimbursable to the LIPP Entity not to exceed one month of rent. The security deposit will revert to the tenant upon move out and settlement of the security deposit disposition. LIPP Entities are encouraged to use other resources for this category if available.

*Required Documentation: LIPP Request for Reimbursement, copy of payment from LIPP Entity, page of lease that states security deposit amount*

## Training and Ongoing Support

On September 25, 2017, NCCEH provided a kick-off training to assist the four communities in designing their risk mitigation pilots, including a review of potential program designs, eligible expenses, and questions and concerns. NCCEH created a Program Development Worksheet that summarized the key decision points that each community would need to make to design its risk mitigation pilot. NCCEH staff assisted each community to complete this worksheet at the kick-off training.

NCCEH and NCHFA approached the kick-off training and ongoing support as a way of collectively designing the pilot with the communities. For example, community participants raised a concern at the kick-off training that the initial timeline for the project did not allow for a long enough landlord recruitment time. The risk mitigation funds would need to be available for tenants throughout a year-long lease in order to be effective. The original timeline of November 2017 – June 2019 would only allow for 6 months for pilot launch and landlord recruitment. Hearing these concerns, NCCEH worked with NCHFA to extend the pilot until November 2019 to allow for four additional months of landlord recruitment.

Throughout the LIPP implementation, NCCEH facilitated peer-to-peer calls with LIPP entities, key community partners, and NCHFA staff. These peer-to-peer calls allowed NCCEH and NCHFA to address any questions or concerns coming from the field about LIPP policies and pilot implementation. The calls also allowed pilot communities to share strategies and solutions in engaging landlords. LIPP participants reported that these calls were useful in learning from each other about how to use risk mitigation tools successfully.

NCCEH also provided one-on-one technical support and training throughout the pilot implementation. This training was especially needed as three out of the four LIPP entities had staff turnover during the pilot. The trainings reviewed overall pilot design, eligible expenses, data tracking, and payment request submissions.



## Pilot Implementation

Throughout pilot implementation, the four communities were required to submit quarterly reports on the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the month following the end of the quarter (April 15<sup>th</sup>, July 15<sup>th</sup>, October 15<sup>th</sup>, and January 15<sup>th</sup>). Reports summarized recruitment of landlords and units, households housed, challenges encountered, and pilot successes. The first community report was due on April 15, 2018 and the last was due on October 15, 2019. NCCEH staff reviewed each report and developed a state summary report incorporating all the information gathered. These reports were sent the NCHFA. The state summary reports were also posted to the NCCEH website. The following information provides a summary of the information gathered in these reports.

### Total Units Recruited and Households Housed

The quarterly reports gathered information to gauge the impact of risk mitigation tools on landlord engagement, access to units, and placing households in permanent housing. When landlords agreed to participate in the pilot, they designated how many of their units would be available to the homeless service system under the pilot. While most communities recruited landlords with a smaller number of units, several of the communities were able to engage landlords who made a larger number of units available.

The numbers reported by communities also showed the challenge of placing households in available units. They reported that in tight rental markets, units were often rented on the fair market before a housing program could identify and apply with a household experiencing homelessness. Only one LIPP entity, Asheville, worked with landlords to negotiate hold times with landlords for available units.

<b>Recruitment</b>	<b>Asheville</b>	<b>Charlotte</b>	<b>Durham</b>	<b>Wilmington</b>	<b>Total</b>
Number of Landlords Recruited to Date	17	15	20	3	55
Number of Units Made Available to LIPP by Recruited Landlords to Date	28	58	198	50	334
<b>Housing</b>					
Number of Households Housed in LIPP Units to Date	57	54	16	2	129
Of these, Number of Veteran Households Housed in LIPP Units to Date	24	6	0	1	31

### Identified Challenges

From the start of the pilot, one of the communities struggled with the risk mitigation concept and wanted to initially limit the risk mitigation tools to only eight households for fear that full coverage of potential expenses for landlords could not be guaranteed. This limited understanding of risk mitigation

led to reduced landlord recruitment and a struggle to engage landlords around the new funding. NCCEH staff had to review the goals and overall concept of risk mitigation with the pilot entity several times to reach an understanding that risk mitigation is meant to provide reassurance to landlords that potential damages will be fixed but that the likelihood of utilizing the full claim amount for each household served was very low.

Staffing and staff capacity was a major challenge identified by all communities. The pilot entities reported that dedicated staff time was needed to engage landlords, coordinate with partnering housing agencies, ensure that available units were used, respond to landlord concerns, gather documentation for payments, collect data for the project, and submit ongoing reports. LIPP pilots that did not have dedicated staff to oversee the project struggled with overall recruitment and utilizing the risk mitigation funding. Furthermore, staff turnover impacted all four communities and led to project delays and reduced landlord recruitment while new staff were trained on LIPP policies and procedures. All four pilots report that dedicated staff is needed to make landlord engagement programs successful.

Furthermore, pilot entities reported that recruiting landlords at a system level, where numerous housing agencies engage in a joint landlord recruitment effort, was a new approach for their communities and required a high level of engagement with housing agencies. The effort to train partner housing agencies to collect data and documentation necessary for payment was an ongoing struggle due to staff turnover. LIPP entities also had difficulty in recruiting veteran service agencies to participate despite targeted outreach.

Another common challenge to the project was a reluctance from landlords to participate. The risk mitigation paperwork was perceived as extra work. This paperwork on top of the other paperwork needed to utilize rental assistance seemed to deter larger property managers from participating. LIPP entities reported that smaller landlords were more likely to participate but did not want to have to get quotes for repair work. Quotes were not a requirement for LIPP payment, but this remained a false impression that LIPP entities had to address in recruitment.

LIPP entities also reported that there were challenges in utilizing all the units recruited. While landlords would sign on and make units available to the pilot, housing agencies were not able to place households in units before they were rented on the fair market. One community developed a unit spreadsheet to track available units for housing agencies as an attempt to house more households.

Other challenges reported by LIPP entities throughout implementation included:

- Hurricane Florence negatively impacting the Wilmington rental market and pilot implementation,
- Difficulty in correctly gathering and submitting documentation for LIPP payments, leading to multiple submissions for claims, AND
- Increases in local rents above the fair market rents interfered with being able to use rental assistance funding.

## Pilot Successes

LIPP entities in Durham and Charlotte reported that the pilot allowed their communities to engage with large landlords who owned a number of units. By targeting these landlords for engagement, LIPP entities were able to gain access to a large number of units through a single relationship.

The pilot led to the creation of a community landlord engagement positions in Durham and in neighboring Orange County. The Durham position will engage landlords on behalf of the homeless service system and is funded through a contract with the City of Durham. LIPP assisted in establishing the need for more staff capacity to complete landlord engagement in the community.

LIPP entities reported that the pilot allowed for their communities to develop new strategies in landlord engagement. These new strategies included:

- Engaging landlords at system level rather than individual agencies engaging landlords
- Using landlords to engage other landlords
- Using strategic community leaders to recruit landlords, including mayors
- Creating a video to engage landlords
- Engaging property management during construction of new affordable units

For the communities that had staff capacity to engage landlords and act as a liaison when there were issues, the LIPP entities reported success in being able to assist individual households maintain housing through creative solutions. Charlotte discovered that housing programs were often delayed in getting first month rent and deposits to landlords. To address this issue, the LIPP entity created a flexible funding source to be able to immediately pay landlords first month rent and deposit with housing agencies reimbursing the LIPP entity for those payments. Charlotte also reported that they started to send monthly emails to landlords to ensure rental payments were received and ask about any concerns. The Charlotte LIPP entity also worked with the city code enforcement office to learn how to address housing quality issues while still preserving relationships with landlords.

LIPP entities reported that they found NCCHE's staff to be supportive and helpful, and the peer-to-peer learning in the pilot implementation to be beneficial. Hearing from fellow LIPP entities influenced pilot design and helped to address challenges in implementation. For example, Durham stated that they were having difficulties in tracking the available units under LIPP to help connect households to those units. Charlotte heard this concern and worked with Durham to develop a database system to track recruited units and measure utilization of those units.

As shown in project expenditures below, Asheville and Charlotte found housing stability bonuses to be an effective strategy to get landlords to renew annual leases. Both stated that these funds were helpful in retaining households in housing and strengthening relationships with landlords to house additional people.

## Use of Risk Mitigation Funds

### Overview

NCHFA agreed to set aside \$100,000 for the LIPP pilot. Each LIPP entity had access to \$25,000 for local risk mitigation activities. Of this total amount, the pilot expended a total of \$17,359.09, or 17% of the total set aside funding.

In total, 129 households were housed through the LIPP pilot, and LIPP funds were expended for 20 households or 16% of the households housed. Of these 20 households, 17 households were approved for housing stability bonuses and/or security deposits. Only 3 households utilized payments for unit damages, unpaid rent, late fees, eviction costs, or unit abandonment. This means that only 2% of the households housed needed traditional risk mitigation tools to preserve landlord relationships.

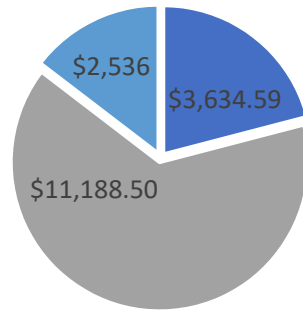
*The ratio of money spent and households served are in line with the early assumption that risk mitigation programs do not utilize all the set aside funding and risk mitigation tools are needed for a low percentage of households housed through the project.*

LIPP Payment Requests	
Total Number of Requests Submitted	28
Total Number Approved	20
Total Number Denied *of these 7 were resubmitted for approval	8
Average Number of Days from Submission to Payment	15 days
Total Funds Expended	\$17,359.09

### Summary of Expenditures

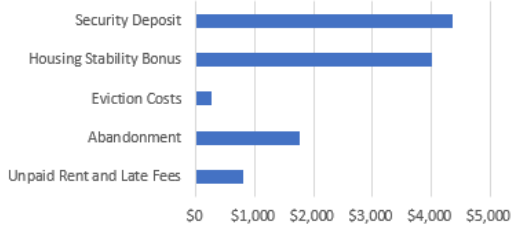
Three out of the four LIPP entities expended funds and were reimbursed through the pilot. Durham did not submit a LIPP payment request. Charlotte submitted the most LIPP payment requests with a total of 13. Asheville submitted 6 requests, and Wilmington submitted 1 request.

### LIPP Funds Spent By Pilot Community

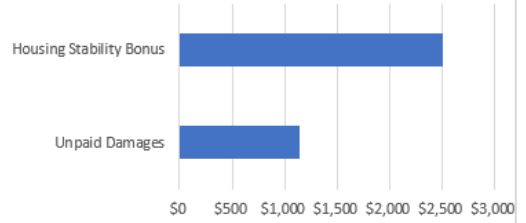


■ Asheville   ■ Charlotte   ■ Wilmington   ■ Durham (\$0)

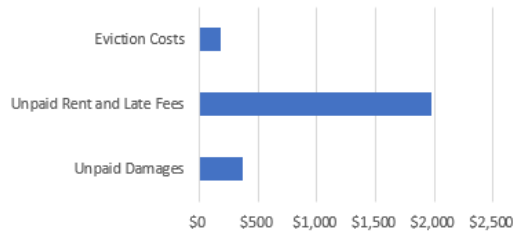
#### Charlotte (Total: 13 Households)



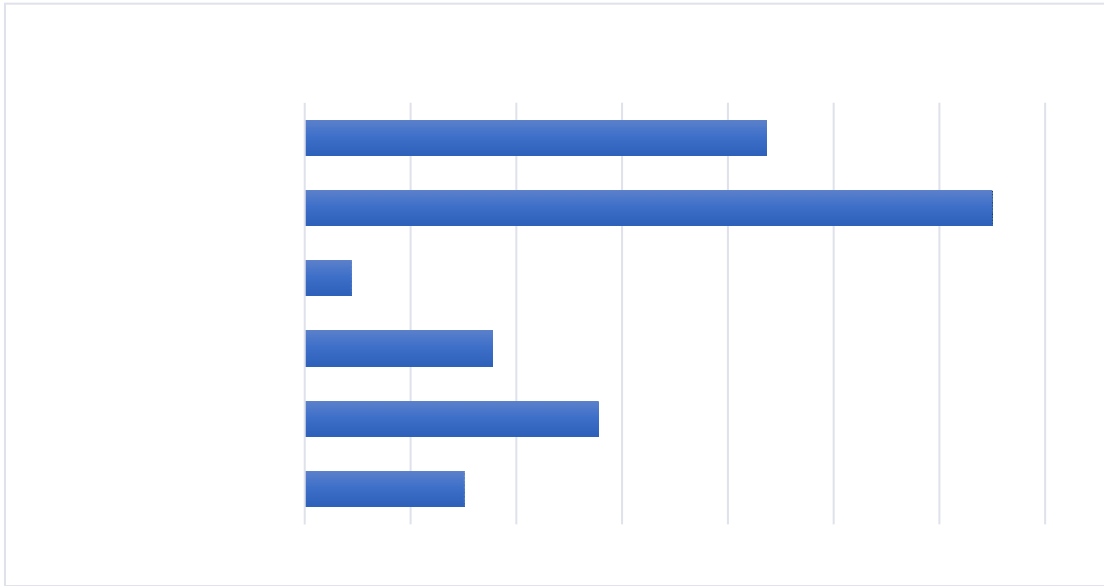
#### Asheville (Total: 6 Households)



#### Wilmington (Total: 1 Household)



The most utilized category of expenditures was the housing stability bonus with \$500 provided for 13 households. Security deposits were the next highest category of with a total of 5 households receiving support. The traditional risk mitigation categories accounted for \$6,494.09, or 37%, of the total funds spent.



### Success in Payment Process

Overall, the payment structure for LIPP was successful in accomplishing pilot goals. The reimbursement model ensured that landlords received timely payments from LIPP entities. NCCEH’s document review helped to catch mistakes in the field, identify training needs, and problem-solve for issues that arose. Payments were remitted to LIPP entities by NCHFA in an average of 15 days.

### Challenges in Payment Process

Some challenges did arise in the payment process. First, ongoing staff turnover and training needs led to improper documentation and the need for claims to be resubmitted for payment after an initial review. This resubmission process created more demands for staff time with the LIPP entities, NCCEH, and NCHFA. In addition, there was one instance that a LIPP entity was reimbursed for a lower amount than they paid the landlord. The difference in reimbursement was due to a misinterpretation of the project’s payment caps by the LIPP entity. Finally, NCCEH and NCHFA staff realized that in order to reimburse for unit vacancy, there should be a required explanation as to why the unit sat vacant for longer than one month, especially in competitive rental markets. In future risk mitigation programs, it is recommended that an explanation for unit vacancy should be required.

## Pilot Evaluation

### Development of Evaluation plan

NCCEH, NCHFA, and the LIPP entities created an evaluation plan for the pilot in October 2017. NCCEH staff researched other risk mitigation evaluation efforts, and the group aimed to balance the need for measuring the impact of the pilot funding while not presenting a barrier to landlord engagement by being overly intrusive or cumbersome.

Throughout the pilot, evaluation proved to be a challenge. Evaluation efforts suffered from low staff capacity at the local level to implement and low response rates from landlords and partner agencies.

### Landlord Responses

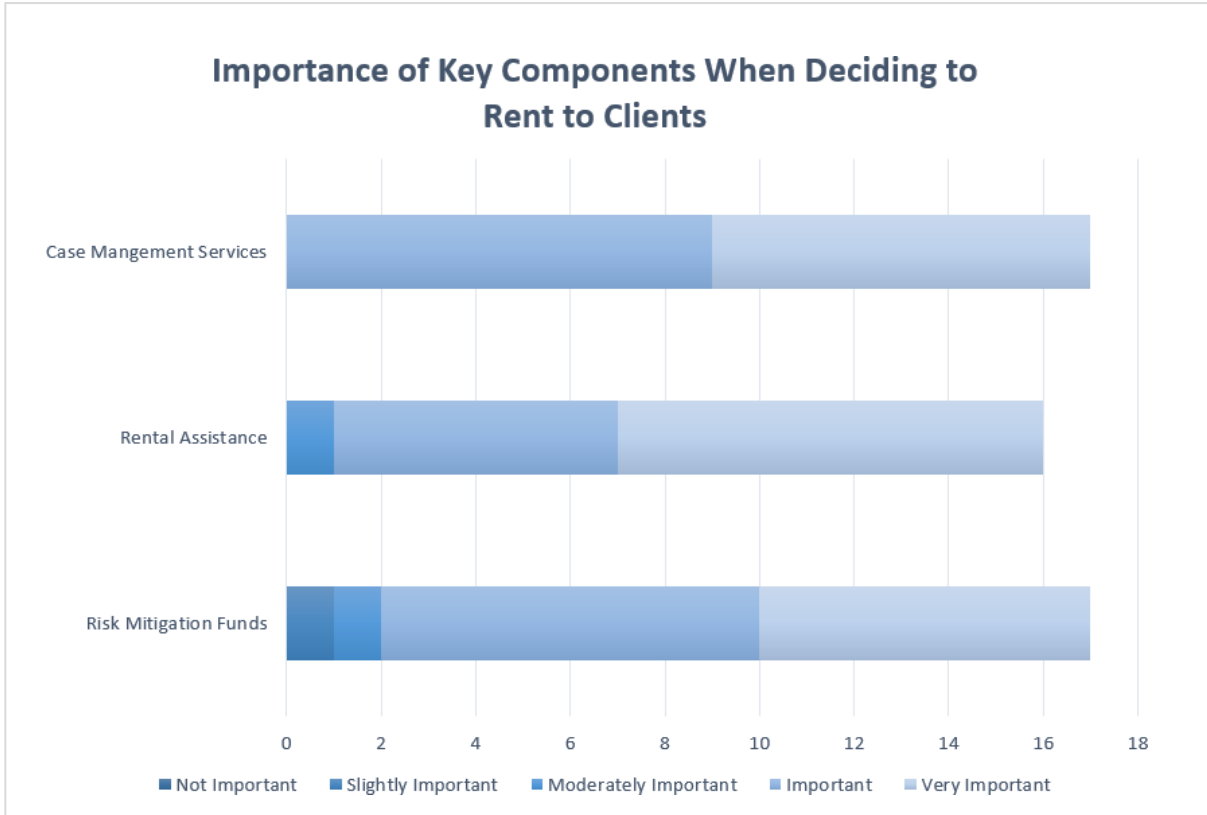
Landlord feedback on the pilot was gathered through surveys at two points. First, landlords were offered a survey when they agreed to participate in the pilot and signed an MOU with the LIPP entity. Second, LIPP entities disseminated surveys via an electronic and paper version to participating landlords at the end of the pilot.

#### Survey at Pilot Entry

NCCEH received 18 surveys from landlords who made 203 units available to the pilot. This response group represents 32% of the total landlords and 61% of the total units. Respondents came from all four of the communities, i.e., Ashville (8), Wilmington (3), Charlotte (3), and Durham (4). Of these, 9 landlords 50% had not partnered with the homeless service system prior to LIPP.

As a part of the survey, landlords were asked about various components of housing programs to determine which component made them more or less likely to rent to people experiencing homelessness. Case management services were seen as most important with all landlords stating these services were either very important or important. Rental assistance was also seen as important with the majority of respondents stating that it is very important or important (15); a respondent stated it was moderately important (1); and respondents not providing an answer (2). Risk mitigation funds had a slightly more mixed response with 15 landlords responding that they were very important or important: a landlord answering as moderately important (1); and a landlord seeing the funds as only slightly important (1).

When asked how likely they were to partner with homeless service agencies without risk mitigation funds: landlords viewed the risk mitigation funds as making it more likely to partner (6); landlords responded that the funds made it moderately more likely to partner (5); landlords stated risk mitigation funds were either slightly important or not important to them in deciding to partner (6).



**Survey at Pilot Conclusion**

NCCEH received 7 responses from landlord surveys at the conclusion of the pilot. This response group represents 11% of the total landlord participants. However, the response group only represents two LIPP communities: Charlotte (5) and Asheville (2). Six of the landlords who responded received funding from LIPP with 1 landlord receiving 5 funding requests, 1 landlord receiving 3 funding requests, and 3 landlords receiving funding for 1 request. One landlord did not request or receive funding through the pilot.

Overall, the respondents were satisfied with their participation in the pilot. Landlords were asked to rate their satisfaction with various facets of the pilot on a 5-point Likert Scale with 1 being Very Unsatisfied and 5 being Very Satisfied. Landlords reported that they were satisfied with recruitment and education about the pilot (2 respondents selected 4; 5 respondents selected 5). All 7 respondents answered that they were very satisfied with the agency that provided case management services to tenants. Six out of the 7 respondents stated that they were satisfied with communication with the LIPP entity (2 respondents indicated 4; 4 respondents selected 5) with one landlord rating communication a 3. All 6 landlords who received funding were very satisfied with the process for submitting fund requests. Five of the landlords were satisfied with the timeliness of payments (1 respondent selected 4; 4 respondents indicated 5), and one landlord rating timeliness as a 3.



## Housing Agency Responses

NCCEH provided LIPP entities with an electronic survey to send to partnering housing agencies, such as SSVF and local housing programs, that participated in their community's pilot project. The survey was sent to housing agencies at the conclusion of the pilot.

Only 4 housing agencies responded to the survey, and all of the agencies were in the Charlotte area. The 4 agencies provided a mixture of rental assistance with 3 agencies providing short-term rental assistance through rapid rehousing, 3 agencies providing long-term rental assistance through permanent supportive housing programs, and 1 agency providing long-term rental assistance through Housing Choice Vouchers. All four agencies provide case management and utility payments in addition to rental assistance, and 2 agencies provide landlord engagement or housing navigation services. Three of the agencies submitted payment requests through the LIPP pilot.

Agencies were asked to rate their satisfaction with various facets of the pilot on a 5-point Likert Scale with 1 being Very Unsatisfied and 5 being Very Satisfied. All four agencies reported that they were satisfied with recruitment and education (1 respondent indicated 4; 3 respondents selected 5). All four agencies were very satisfied with communication with the LIPP entity. The 3 agencies that submitted requests for payment were satisfied with the process of submitting funds (1 respondent chose 4; 2 respondents, selected 5); and all were highly satisfied with the timeliness of payments. When asked about the impact of risk mitigation funds on landlord recruitment, 3 agencies were very satisfied, and 1 agency reported that they were neutral.

## LIPP Entity Responses

NCCEH sent electronic surveys to all four LIPP communities at pilot conclusion. LIPP entities and their key partner stakeholders were only able to submit one response per community and all communities responded to the survey. The goal of the survey was to gain insight into the overall impact of the risk mitigation funds on landlord recruitment and to gather feedback on the pilot design.

LIPP entities were asked to rate the statement "Risk mitigation funds had an impact on recruiting landlords" on a 5-point Likert scale with 1 being Strongly Disagree and 5 being Strongly Agree. LIPP entities showed a mixed response with 2 respondents strongly agreeing (5), 1 respondent neutral (3), and 1 respondent disagreeing (2).

LIPP entities were asked to rate their satisfaction with various facets of the pilot on a 5-point Likert Scale with 1 being Very Unsatisfied and 5 being Very Satisfied. NCCEH recruitment and education was rated by 3 LIPP entities as neutral (3) and 1 LIPP entity as satisfied (4). All four LIPP entities were satisfied with the pilot design and ongoing communication with NCCEH staff (4). The 3 LIPP entities that requested funds were very satisfied with the process of submitting requests (5), and 2 LIPP entities were very satisfied with the timeliness of payments (5) while 1 LIPP entity was neutral (3).

LIPP entities were asked what the two things they liked most about the LIPP pilot. LIPP entities stated that the launch of the pilot was very helpful to set clear goals and expectations of the pilot. The training

and built-in flexibility in the pilot design allowed the LIPP entities to create effective programs for their communities. They also liked the ongoing cohort phone calls with all four communities because it allowed for peer-to-peer learning. In addition, LIPP entities identified housing stability bonuses, landlord MOUs, and risk mitigation tools as key tools in engaging landlords.

LIPP entities were asked what two things they liked least about the LIPP pilot. One pilot entity responded that there was staff turnover midway through the pilot which led to a steep learning curve to understand and oversee the pilot. Another LIPP entity stated that their implementation was limited due to a lack of staff capacity to oversee implementation which quickly became complicated by including partner agencies and the paperwork to track which tenants were covered by the LIPP funding. A LIPP entity stated that the LIPP paperwork requirements and agreements were perceived as too cumbersome and interfered with landlord engagement, and the community did not have dedicated staff to help ease the paperwork burden for landlords. Finally, a LIPP entity stated that they liked least that the pilot had to end.

LIPP entities were also asked for suggestions to improve future risk mitigation projects. LIPP entities suggested funds to help increase staff capacity for LIPP entities to oversee the project and assist with landlord engagement. LIPP entities also suggested that providing sample policy documents to the LIPP communities would speed up the implementation of risk mitigation programs. In future pilots, a LIPP entity identified the need to increase the timeline so that there was a longer time to engage landlords in the risk mitigation program. Finally, a LIPP entity identified that an increase in payment for unit abandonment may be needed.

All four communities plan to continue to use risk mitigation funds to engage landlords. The City of Durham has invested funding towards a pilot Landlord Engagement project that provides dedicated staff and a new Landlord Incentive funds. Durham writes:

*Our experience built in implementing the LIPP Risk Mitigation Fund was invaluable for building and implementing the new Landlord Incentive Fund. We knew what kinds of documentation to collect, what communications/trainings would be needed, and how to design the “flow” and tools for fund claims, approvals, and disbursements. The Landlord Incentive Fund’s soft launch has been very smooth so far, as a result!*

Charlotte plans to continue to offer support to landlords in the event of an eviction, abandonment, and damage. Other LIPP communities plan to use double deposits and limited damage funding to cover repairs after a client moves out and have housing specialists conduct quarterly walk throughs of clients’ units with the intention of catching any needed maintenance. All four LIPP entities would like to see the continuation of funding for risk mitigation programs at the state level.

## Recommendations

Overall, funding for risk mitigation tools provided LIPP entities with new strategies for engaging landlords in their communities and assisted households with moving into permanent housing. While case management services were still viewed as the most important factor for landlords, risk mitigation tools did increase access into the rental market for homeless service systems. **NCCEH recommends that North Carolina continue to explore and fund risk mitigation along with other landlord engagement tools to increase access to fair market units for households experiencing homelessness.**

In the end, as with other risk mitigation pilots, only a small percentage of funds (17%) were utilized with an even smaller percentage going towards traditional risk mitigation tools, such as repairs, eviction costs, unpaid rent, and abandonment (6%). **Future risk mitigation programs should anticipate not utilizing the full amount of funds set aside for the program.**

LIPP entities with dedicated landlord engagement staff proved to be the most successful in implementing the LIPP pilot. Training and coaching on how to effectively use risk mitigation tools in building relationships with landlords was part of that success. **Future risk mitigation and landlord engagement efforts need to fund staff capacity along with extensive training and ongoing support for landlord engagement staff to optimize results.**

Overall, the payment structure for LIPP was successful for ensuring landlords received timely payments from LIPP entities. NCCEH's document review helped to catch mistakes in the field, identify training needs, and problem-solve for issues as they arose. Payments were remitted to LIPP entities by NCHFA on an average of 15 days. **A reimbursement-based payment process together with ongoing training about eligible expenses and documentation is recommended for future risk mitigation programs to sustain good relationships with landlords.**

Housing stability bonuses were the most popular tools used by LIPP communities. The bonuses were viewed as helpful in supporting ongoing permanent housing for households while strengthening relationships with landlords. **Future landlord engagement program should continue to include housing stability bonuses as an eligible activity.**

# Appendix I: LIPP Request for Reimbursement

# LIPP Request for Reimbursement

## Reimbursement Request Summary

*Turn in one LIPP Request for Reimbursement form per tenant with all charges denoted in the applicable categories. All active worksheets should be saved as a PDF and the Reimbursement Request Summary should be signed either electronically or by hand.*

Tenant Identifier	
LIPP Entity (Click on Cell to Choose from Dropdown)	
Lease Start Date	
Lease End Date	

Damages	\$ -
Unpaid Rent and Late Fees	\$ -
Abandonment	\$ -
Eviction Costs	\$ -
Stability Bonus	\$ -
Security Deposit	\$ -

<b>Request for Reimbursement Total:</b>	<b>\$ -</b>
---	-------------

\_\_\_\_\_  
Approving Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Appendix II: Kick Off Training Slides

# LANDLORD INCENTIVE PROGRAM PILOT (LIPP) ORIENTATION

Terry Allebaugh and Emily Carmody



North Carolina Coalition to End Homelessness

securing resources • encouraging public dialogue • advocating for public policy change

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## Welcome and Introductions

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- Introductions:
  - Name
  - Agency
  - Role
  - How are you feeling: nervous, excited, confused, tired, hungry?



# Overview of Today

- Goal: To begin the implementation process of the Landlord Incentive Pilot Project
- Agenda Review
- Logistics



## Program Overview



## How we got to today

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- State Level:
  - Rapid Results Initiative and Veterans
  - Operation HOME
  - NC HFA history of risk mitigation
  
- Local Level:
  - Charlotte
  - Durham
  - Informal risk mitigation activities

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## Pilot Goal

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- Measure the impact of risk mitigation and housing stability tools upon the recruitment and sustained engagement of landlords and property managers
  
- Evaluate for the relative importance and future usage of risk mitigation and housing stability tools within the work of localities and the state

## The program is a partnership of NCHFA, NCDMVA, and NCDHHS.

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- NCHFA serves as the bank to hold the funds for the landlord payments
- NCDMVA is in charge of creating and overseeing the pilot implementation
  - Contracted with NCCEH to fulfill some of these duties
- NCDHHS provided funding for pilot implementation



## NCCEH's role is to support implementation and oversight.

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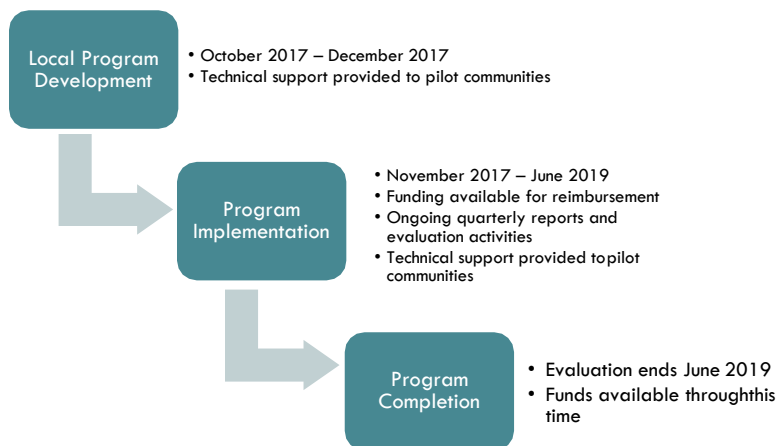
- NCCEH will assist pilot communities in program development
- Oversee the payment process
- Evaluate the program
- Provide quarterly updates about the pilot to state-level agencies and pilot communities

## Each community will have access to funding for landlord incentives.

- Each pilot community has \$25,000 for their landlord incentive program
- Create a new program or join with an existing program
- Evaluation activities will need to be done even if joining with existing program



## Pilot Timeline



## Eligible Reimbursement Categories

There are six eligible areas for reimbursement.

- Communities can choose to use all or some of the eligible categories
- Landlord Requests could include more than one category for payment

Unpaid Damages (Insurance Claim or No Insurance Claim)	Unpaid Tenant Portion of Rent and Late Fees
Loss of Rent Due to Tenant Abandonment	Eviction Costs
Housing Stability Bonus	Security Deposits

## 1. Unpaid Damages- Insurance Claim

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- Tenant vacates the unit and there is a remaining unpaid balance after the insurance payment, a reimbursement claim may be filed for the outstanding balance, minus the retained security deposit and any payments made by the tenant.
- Rate of reimbursement 100% not to exceed \$3,000
- Owner/agent must have a policy of conducting inspections at least annually



## 1. Unpaid Damages- No Insurance

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- Tenant vacates the unit and there are damages that do not exceed the deductible for an insurance claim, as determined by the owner/agent, a reimbursement claim may be reimbursed for documented damages caused by the tenant, minus normal wear and tear, minus the retained security deposit, minus any payments made by the tenant.
- Rate of reimbursement 75% not to exceed \$2,500.
- Owner/agency must have a policy of conducting inspections at least annually.

## 2. Unpaid Tenant Portion of Rent and Late Fees

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- ▣ Tenant permanently vacates the unit, a claim for reimbursement may be filed for the uncollected tenant portion of rent plus late fees during the period of occupancy, minus the retained security deposit.
- Cannot exceed 3 months of the tenant portion of rent plus late fees
- Late fees are a maximum of \$15 per month or 5% of monthly rent
- Contingent on the owner/agent having notified the LIPPEntity within a week of issuing a delinquency notice.



## 3. Loss of Rent Due to Abandonment

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- Tenant abandons a unit, a claim for reimbursement may be filed for the full rent for the obligation during the remaining lease period or until the unit is re-rented whichever is sooner (minus the retained security deposit).
- The reimbursement can also include the “trash out” fee due to tenant abandonment.
- Cannot exceed 2.5 months rent.

## 4. Eviction Costs

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- In order to be eligible for reimbursement of eviction costs minus the retained security deposit, the owner/agent must have been in communication with the LIPP Entity and provided three opportunities to intervene prior to eviction proceedings.
- Rate of reimbursement cannot exceed \$1,000 and will only be paid if the owner/agent prevails in the eviction action.
- Reimbursement may include attorney fees and court costs.



## 5. Housing Stability Bonus

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- The LIPP Entity may design this category as best fits their program.
- Twenty-five percent (25%) of total award or \$6,250 max may be used. Reimbursement to LIPP Entity for payments made to owner/agent .
- Additional guidelines include a max of \$500 per tenant as a bonus for owner/agent after 1 year lease renewal.

## 6. Security Deposits

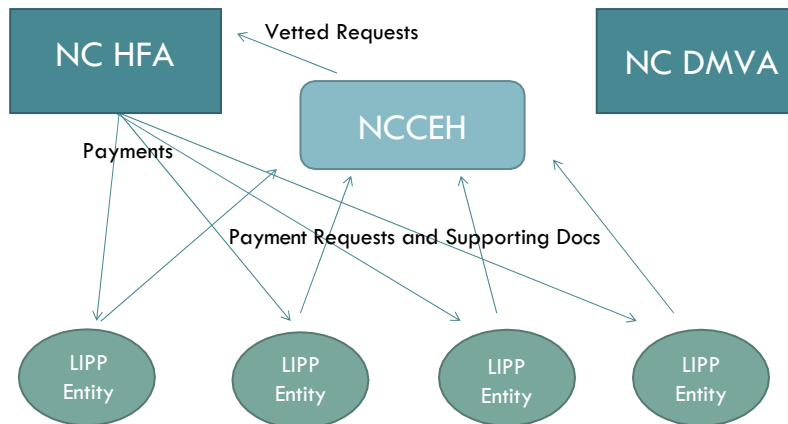
- The amount of the security deposit cannot exceed one month rent.
- The security deposit will revert to the tenant upon move out and settlement of the security deposit disposition.
- The LIPP Entity is encouraged to use other resources for this category if available.



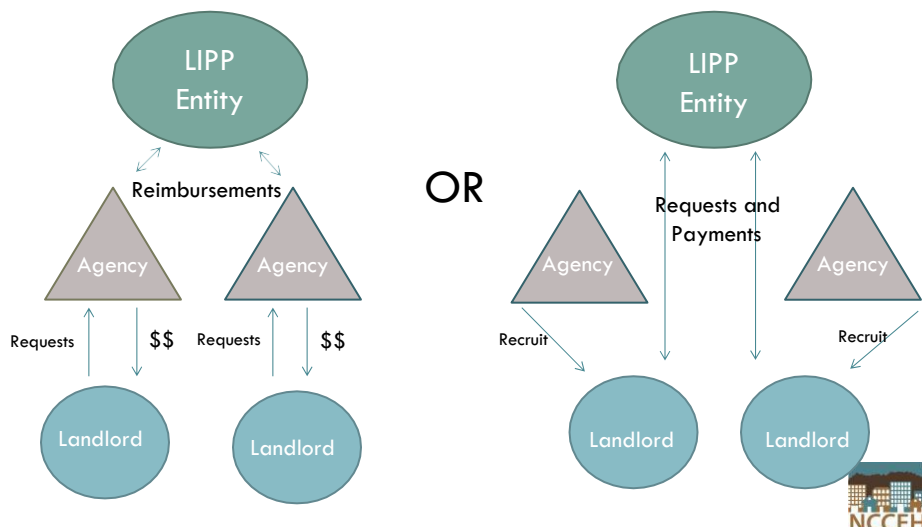
## Reimbursement Process



## Payments will be reimbursements to the designated LIPP entities.



## LIPP Entities can set up their own local process for payment requests.



## Submitting Reimbursement Requests

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LIPP Request for Reimbursement should be completed first.

- Form insures that the correct amounts are provided
- Let's take a closer look

## Reimbursement requests will be submitted to NCCEH for review.

- Requests will be submitted via Smartsheet form: <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/6ce8a234295f439eb1c133764540b624>
- All requests are required to have:
  - LIPP Request for Reimbursement
  - Copy of the check from the LIPP entity to the landlord with tenant HMIS number and address of unit on the check
  - Other supporting documents as required by category

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## Additional documents are required per category.

Unpaid Damages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Documentation of the unit condition prior to tenant occupancy</li> <li>• Itemized list of damages</li> <li>• Invoice or receipt for repairs</li> </ul>
Unpaid Rent and Late Fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Documentation of the tenant portion of the rent</li> <li>• Invoice for unpaid rent and late fees with a timeperiod</li> </ul>
Loss of Rent Due to Tenant Abandonment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Documentation of amount of monthly rent</li> <li>• Invoice for "trash out" fees, if included</li> </ul>
Eviction Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Copy of the Court Order that includes eviction fees and court costs</li> </ul>
Housing Stability Bonus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Copy of renewed lease</li> </ul>
Security Deposit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Page of the lease that states security deposit</li> </ul>

## Creating a Local Program

### Requirements and caps for all communities to use.

- Funding categories and caps cannot be changed.
- Veterans Requirement

## Veterans Requirement

- LIPP participating entities shall be required to document attempts to outreach and engage local homeless veteran service providers to join the project.
  - SSVF
  - HUD-VASH
  - GPD
  - Local Veteran Service Officers
- Veteran is any person who served on active duty in the armed forces, regardless of how long they served or the type of discharge they received.



## Pilot communities will have flexibility on how their program is designed.

- Choose the eligible reimbursement categories to provide
- Choose to cap eligible categories or how much per tenant
- Process for payments to landlords
- Process for submitting reimbursement requests
- How to recruit and train agencies
- How to recruit and engage landlords

## LIPP entities need to establish MOUs for both agencies and landlords.

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- Agencies:
  - Training requirements
  - Payment process/Documentation Required
  - Evaluation activities
  
- Landlords:
  - Eligible reimbursement categories
  - Payment process/Documentation Required
  - Evaluation activities



## Community Conversations

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- Communities will have time now to discuss options for their program design

# Pilot Evaluation

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## NCCEH identified key measurements.

- Key measurements:
  - Recruitment: Landlords report that the availability of LIPP impacted their decision to participate and continue partnership with community agencies
  - Utilization: Landlords accessing funds report satisfaction with the process
  - Community Impact: Community gains access to more housing to reduce numbers of homeless households
  - Successes and challenges of program implementation

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## NCCEH is in the process of designing evaluation tools.

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- Challenge to have a light touch evaluation that does not interfere with landlord recruitment
- Challenge to capture community impact and implementation activities



## Communities will submit quarterly reports.

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- Reports will outline:
  - Challenges
  - Successes/Key Strategies
  - Success stories
- Submit to NCCEH who will report to NC DMVA and NC HFA
- First report due January 15, 2018



## Next Steps

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### And so it begins...

- W-9 and Direct Deposit forms completed for lead agencies
- Establish local process and MOUs
- Partner agency recruitment, engagement, training
- Landlord recruitment, engagement, training
- Pilot Partners Conference Call

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# Appendix III: Program Development Worksheet

## LIPP Program Design

<b>Program Name:</b>	
<b>Agency Administering Program:</b>	
<b>Community Goals for Program:</b>	

**Community will offer the following eligible reimbursement categories:**

- Unpaid Damages
- Unpaid Rent and Late Fees
- Loss of Rent Due to Tenant Abandonment
- Eviction Costs
- Housing Stability Bonus
- Security Deposit

<b>Additional caps or limitations on categories:</b>	
<b>Limitations per tenant:</b>	
<b>Additional documents required:</b>	

**Establish Payment Process**

	<b>Decisions</b>	<b>Next Steps/People to Contact</b>
How many days to approve submission?		
How will requests be made? (electronic and paper)		
How will documentation be stored?		
Who will make payments to landlords?		
How many days to pay from approval?		
Who will submit reimbursement requests to NCCEH?		
How many days from payment to reimbursement request submission?		

**Memorandums of Understanding**

Topics to Cover in Agency MOU	
Topics to Cover in Landlord MOU	

## Agency Recruitment and Training

	Decisions	Next Steps/People to Contact
Who will design trainings?		
Topics to Cover in Training:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Payment process</li><li>• Document Requirements</li></ul>	
How will trainings be delivered? (By agency, community-wide trainings, online, in-person, etc.)		
Who will train agencies?		
When will trainings begin?		
How often will trainings be held?		
Agencies to Recruit:		

### Veterans Preference

	Decisions	Next Steps/People to Contact
Veterans agencies to contact:		
How will Veterans agencies be included in trainings?		
How will community document recruitment of Veterans agencies?		

### Landlord Outreach

	Decisions	Next Steps/People to Contact
Who will outreach landlords?		
Materials needed to educate/engage landlords in the program:		
How will landlord recruitment be done? (Presentation at local meetings, recruitment event, one-on-one meetings, etc.)		

## Appendix IV: Evaluation Plan

## LIPP Evaluation

### Landlords:

#### Program Entry

All LIPP programs will administer a brief survey at the time of landlord enrollment. These surveys will be sent to NCCEH staff to compile.

At landlord enrollment, LIPP programs will collect mailing addresses for all landlords and store this information for a mailed survey at the end of the program.

#### Survey Questions:

- Number of Units Made Available to LIPP Program: \_\_\_\_\_
- On a scale of 1-5, how important were program case management services in deciding to rent to homeless households?
  - 1- Not Important
  - 2- Slightly Important
  - 3- Moderately Important
  - 4- Important
  - 5- Very Important
- On a scale of 1-5, how important was program rental assistance in deciding to rent to homeless households?
  - 1- Not Important
  - 2- Slightly Important
  - 3- Moderately Important
  - 4- Important
  - 5- Very Important
- On a scale of 1-5, how important were risk mitigation funds in deciding to rent to homeless households?
  - 1- Not Important
  - 2- Slightly Important
  - 3- Moderately Important
  - 4- Important
  - 5- Very Important
- If risk mitigation funds were not available, how likely would it be for you to partner with homeless agencies?
  - 1- Very Unlikely
  - 2- Somewhat Unlikely
  - 3- Neutral
  - 4- Likely
  - 5- Very Likely
- Have you partnered with homeless agencies prior to the risk mitigation program? Yes/No



## Program Completion

Landlords will be mailed a survey to complete and mail back to NCCEH. There will be an option for landlords to fill out an electronic version of the survey. The survey will be anonymous. LIPP entities will send out a communication prior to the survey being sent to introduce the survey to the landlords and encourage their participation. The survey will include:

- Pilot Community (choose one of four)
- Number of times requested funds from the program: \_\_\_\_\_
- Number of times received funds from the program: \_\_\_\_\_
  
- Level of satisfaction with:
  - Recruitment/Education about the program
    - 1- Very Satisfied
    - 2- Satisfied
    - 3- Good
    - 4- Not satisfied
    - 5- Very Unsatisfied
  
  - Communication with case management agency participating in the program
    - 1- Very Satisfied
    - 2- Satisfied
    - 3- Good
    - 4- Not satisfied
    - 5- Very Unsatisfied
  
  - Communication with risk mitigation agency participating in the program
    - 6- Very Satisfied
    - 7- Satisfied
    - 8- Good
    - 9- Not satisfied
    - 10- Very Unsatisfied
  
  - Process of submitting fund requests (if applicable)
    - 1- Very Satisfied
    - 2- Satisfied
    - 3- Good
    - 4- Not satisfied
    - 5- Very Unsatisfied
  
  - Timeliness of payment (if applicable)
    - 1- Very Satisfied
    - 2- Satisfied
    - 3- Good
    - 4- Not satisfied
    - 5- Very Unsatisfied

- Of the types of rental assistance that you accessed through the risk mitigation fund, please rank the rental assistance programs in order of satisfaction with “1” being most satisfied. If a rental assistance program was not accessed, please do not rank:
  - └ SSVF
  - └ HUD-VASH
  - └ RRH
  - └ PSH
  - └ HCV
  - └ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

There will also space on the form for comments.

Do you want someone from your community to follow up with you? Yes/No

Contact Info: \_\_\_\_\_

### Community Agencies

Agencies who sign on to participate with the LIPP program should be informed that evaluation surveys will need to be completed at the end of the program. LIPP entities should include participation in this survey in the MOAs with programs.

### Program Completion

Partner agencies will complete an electronic survey at the end of the program with one agency completing one survey. Surveys will be sent to NCCEH to compile and will include:

- Pilot Community (choose one of four)
- Risk mitigation funds had an impact on recruiting landlords to house our agency’s clients.
  - 1- Strongly Agree
  - 2- Agree
  - 3- Neutral
  - 4- Disagree
  - 5- Strongly Disagree
- Level of satisfaction with: (same as with landlords)
  - Recruitment/Education about the program
    - 1- Very Satisfied
    - 2- Satisfied
    - 3- Good
    - 4- Not satisfied
    - 5- Very Unsatisfied
  - Communication with risk mitigation agency participating in the program
    - 1- Very Satisfied
    - 2- Satisfied
    - 3- Good
    - 4- Not satisfied
    - 5- Very Unsatisfied
  - Process of submitting request documentation (if applicable)

- 1- Very Satisfied
- 2- Satisfied
- 3- Good
- 4- Not satisfied
- 5- Very Unsatisfied

- Timeliness of payment (if applicable)
  - 1- Very Satisfied
  - 2- Satisfied
  - 3- Good
  - 4- Not satisfied
  - 5- Very Unsatisfied

- What type of rental assistance do you provide:

- ┆ SSVF
- ┆ HUD-VASH
- ┆ RRH
- ┆ PSH
- ┆ HCV
- ┆ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

- What other types of services do you provide:

- ┆ Case management
- ┆ Landlord engagement/Housing Specialists
- ┆ Utility payments
- ┆ Rental Areas
- ┆ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

There will also space on the form for comments.

### LIPP Entities

LIPP Entities will report additional data that they compile throughout program operation. This table will be added to the report template to be turned in on the 15<sup>th</sup> day after the quarter ends.

### Quarterly Table

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

## Program Completion

LIPP Entities will complete an electronic survey at the end of the program with one entity completing one survey. Surveys will be sent to NCCEH to compile and will include:

- Risk mitigation funds had an impact on recruiting landlords.
  - 1- Strongly Disagree
  - 2- Disagree
  - 3- Neutral
  - 4- Agree
  - 5- Strongly Agree
- Level of satisfaction with:
  - Program Design
    - 1- Very Satisfied
    - 2- Satisfied
    - 3- Good
    - 4- Not satisfied
    - 5- Very Unsatisfied
  - NCCEH Recruitment/Education about the program
    - 1- Very Satisfied
    - 2- Satisfied
    - 3- Good
    - 4- Not satisfied
    - 5- Very Unsatisfied
  - Ongoing Communication with NCCEH
    - 1- Very Satisfied
    - 2- Satisfied
    - 3- Good
    - 4- Not satisfied
    - 5- Very Unsatisfied
  - Process of submitting fund requests (if applicable)
    - 1- Very Satisfied
    - 2- Satisfied
    - 3- Good
    - 4- Not satisfied
    - 5- Very Unsatisfied
  - Timeliness of payment (if applicable)
    - 1- Very Satisfied
    - 2- Satisfied
    - 3- Good
    - 4- Not satisfied
    - 5- Very Unsatisfied

There will also space on the form for comments.