



**BACK @ HOME**  
NORTH CAROLINA

# Welcome to the Back@Home team!

We are excited to have you join the Back@Home team to help fellow North Carolinians facing homelessness.

***You are an integral part of Back@Home implementation and ongoing feedback.***

Our goal is to make sure you have the information you need to be successful and that we have an ongoing feedback loop about what is and isn't working in your Back@Home program.



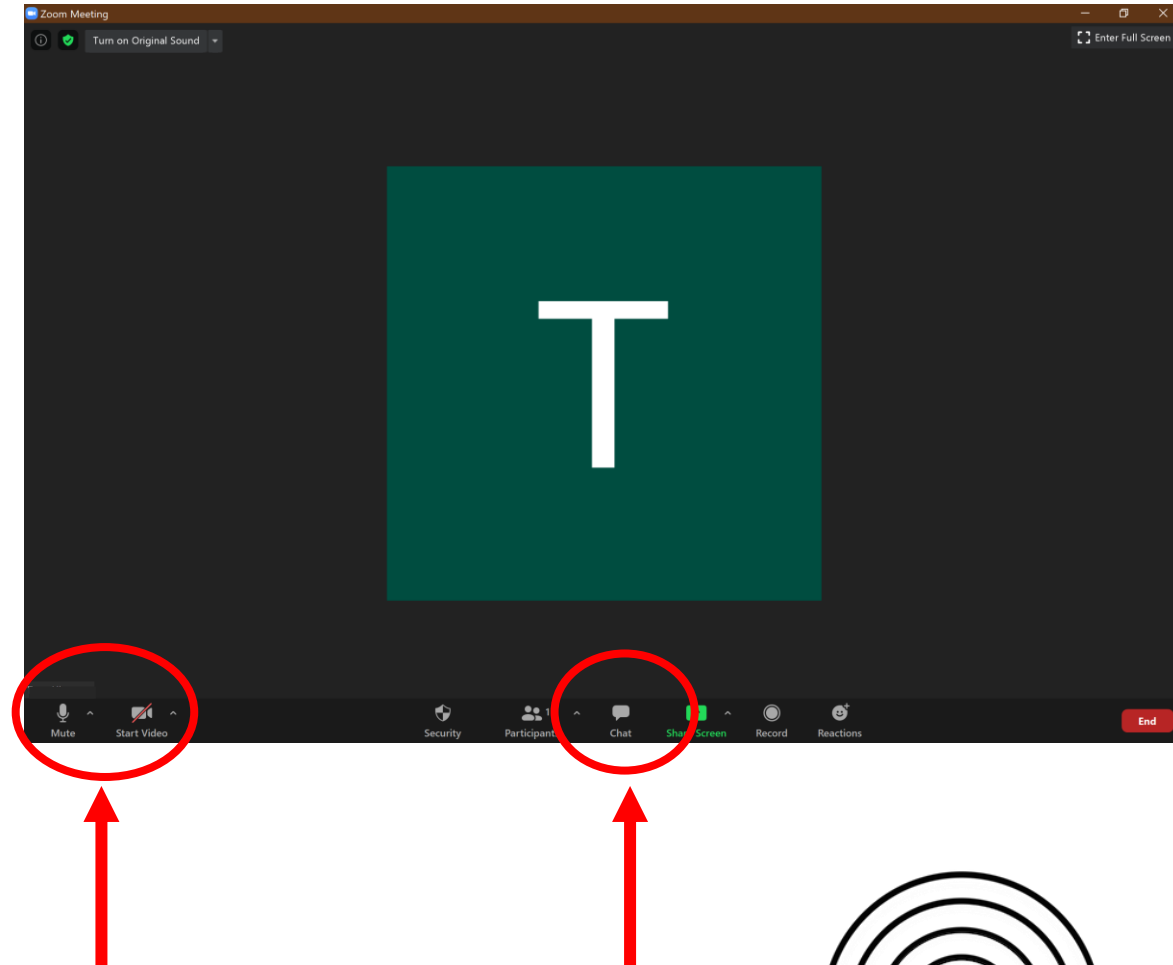
# Please be sure to ask questions and use the chat box to participate.

## Reminders:

Mute your line while not talking to cut down on noise.

The chat box is available to use anytime.

Please make sure to put the name of your agency in your response so can follow up afterwards if we don't get to your question or suggestion today.



*This training will be recorded and posted to Back@Home Resource Portal for future use by current or new Back@Home staff. Turn off video if you do not wish to be recorded.*





# Who's here?

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## POLL

- What's your role?

## POLL

- How long have you worked in targeted homelessness prevention and/or rapid rehousing programs?



# Housing-Focused Case Management Training

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Welcome!



# Housing-Focused Case Management Training

**Goal:** Provide an in-depth review of housing-focused case management and related progressive assistance practices, including an in-depth review of:

- ✓ Housing barrier assessments
- ✓ Creating Housing Stability Plans
- ✓ Providing participant-centered, home-based and remote case management and tenancy supports
- ✓ Reviewing and adjusting assistance in a progressive manner and determining when housing stability is achieved



# Housing-Focused Case Management Training

All new staff should review this and other core training as part of their orientation and initial training.

**Other Core Trainings for Back@Home (applicable to all homelessness prevention and rapid rehousing)** <https://www.ncceh.org/backathome/training/>

- Back@Home RRH and Targeted Homeless Prevention Onboarding Training (foundational principles and practices)
- Deep Dive Training: Engaging Landlords and Recruiting Units
- Deep Dive Training: Fair Housing and Landlord/Tenant Law





## Case Management Documents

TERMINATION  
FORM

CASE REVIEW  
AND CLOSURE  
CHECKLIST

90-DAY HOUSING  
STABILITY PLAN

NOTICE OF  
INELIGIBILITY

ELIGIBILITY  
SCREEN AND  
DOCUMENTATION  
CHECKLIST

NOTICE OF  
ENDING  
ASSISTANCE

## Back@Home Training Information

ONBOARDING  
INSTRUCTIONS  
FOR  
SUPERVISORS

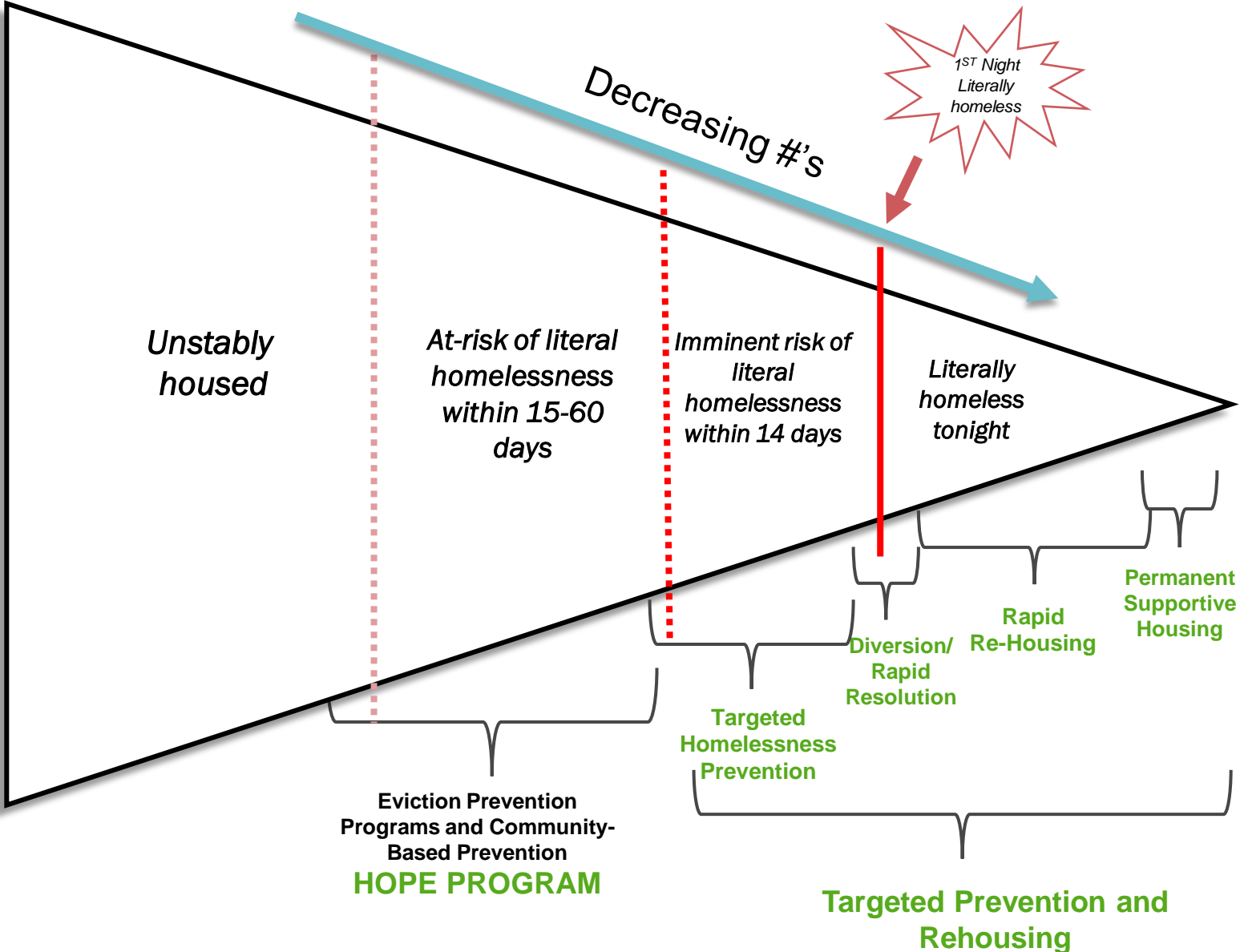
STAFF SELF  
DIRECTED  
TRAINING  
GUIDE

TRAINING SLIDES  
AND  
RECORDINGS

*Why*  
“Housing-Focused”  
Case Management  
and Services?



# Housing Crises: Types & Interventions



# Homeless Crisis Response System GOALS



**RARE**

Targeted Prevention

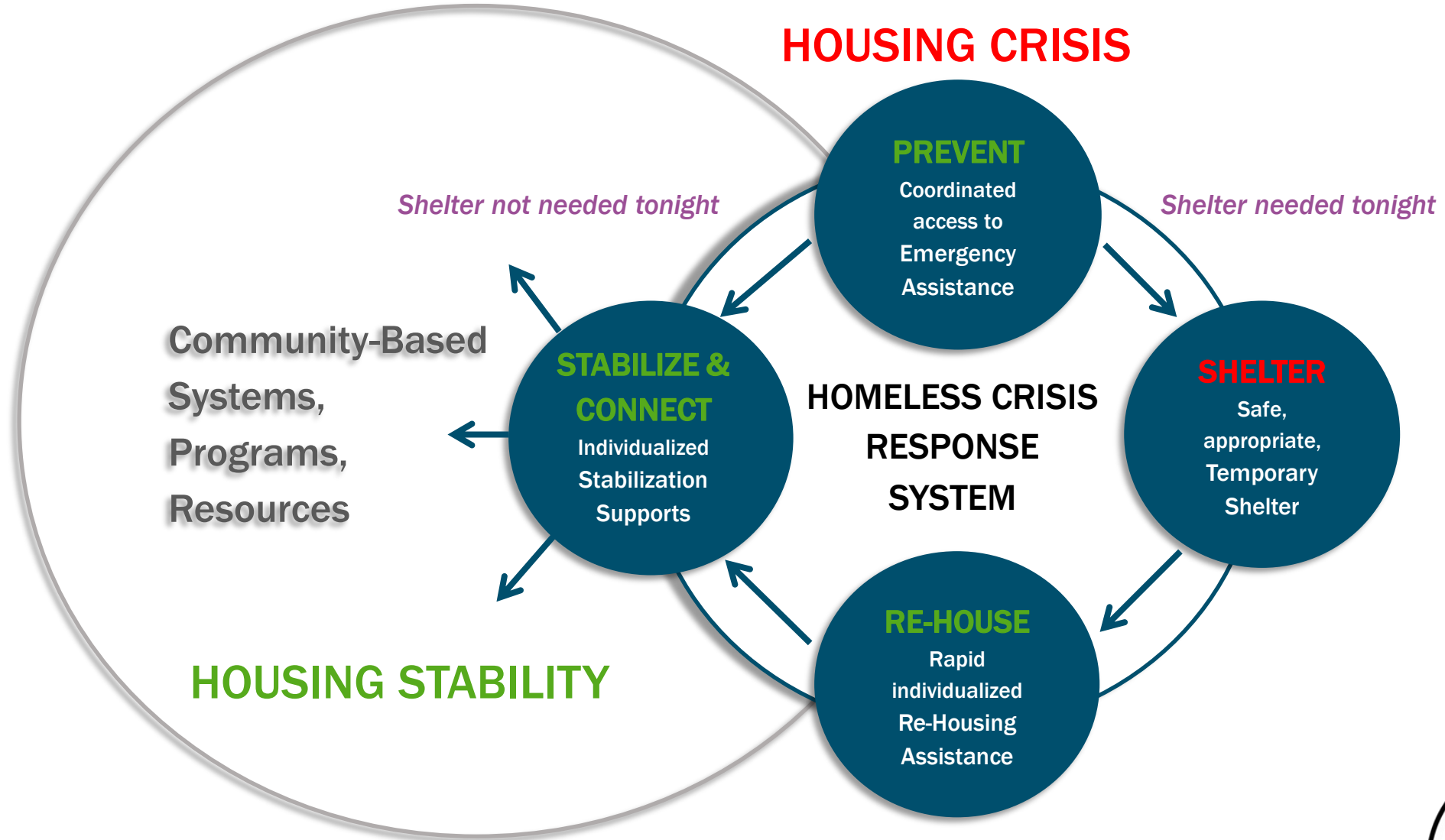
**BRIEF**

Rapid Re-Housing

**ONE-TIME ONLY**

Housing Stabilization

# Homeless Crisis Response System: Key Functions



# Homeless Crisis Response System: Key Principles



## Homelessness is a crisis

Crisis resolution = safe, stable housing



## Equity in *access* and *outcomes*

People and data informed  
Low barrier  
Prioritization (when needed)



## Autonomy & Choice

Authentic engagement and involvement  
Self-determination and individual rights



## Housing is healthcare

Key to COVID-19 prevention



## Community integration

Supported connections during and after housing crises



## Resource stewardship

Efficient, effective, accountable



# Effective Targeted Homelessness Prevention & Rapid Rehousing...

- Reduces potential for community transmission of coronavirus and risk of severe illness among people with health vulnerabilities (i.e., large % of those at-risk or who experience literal homelessness)
- Reduces the overall number of people experiencing homelessness (“inflow”)
- Increases the number of people communities are able to serve- *Reduced inflow and length of shelter stays frees up crisis beds for others in need*
- Helps people exit homelessness quickly to permanent housing and not return to shelter
- Reduces the negative impacts of long-term homelessness
- Connects people to other community assistance to improve overall well-being



# What effective Targeted Homelessness Prevention & Rapid Rehousing *Doesn't Do...*



- X Cure poverty
- X Assure people will have *affordable* housing; i.e. eliminate rent burden
- X Protect people from the impact of the housing market, job market, bad choices or bad judgment
- X Eliminate housing mobility





# Effective Targeted Homelessness Prevention & Rapid Rehousing Requires...

## CORE COMPONENTS

### Housing Navigation Assistance

ASSISTANCE TO LOCATE A NEW HOME

### Rent and Move-In Assistance (Financial)

SHORT-TERM FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO MAINTAIN HOUSING OR MOVE IN TO A NEW HOME

### Housing Stabilization Services

ASSISTANCE TO STABILIZE IN HOUSING AND INCREASE HOUSING RESILIENCY

Housing-Focused Case Management is fundamental to each of these core components



*What is*  
“Housing-Focused” Case  
Management?



# Goal of Housing-Focused Case Management

Help participants *resolve their housing crisis* (whether imminently at-risk of literal homelessness or already literally homeless) by assisting them to obtain and/or remain in safe housing, stabilize in housing, and get connected to services and supports they need and desire to remain stably housed.



# What is “Case Management” in a Social Work Context?

The primary goal is to **optimize client functioning and well-being** by providing and coordinating high-quality services.

## Characteristics

- ✓ Person-centered services
- ✓ Primacy of client-social worker relationship
- ✓ Person-in-environment framework
- ✓ Strengths perspective
- ✓ Collaborative teamwork
- ✓ Intervention at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels

## Core Functions

- ✓ Engagement with clients
- ✓ Assessment of client priorities, strengths, and challenges
- ✓ Development and implementation of a care plan
- ✓ Monitoring of service delivery
- ✓ Evaluation of outcomes
- ✓ Closure (including termination or transition follow-up)



## Housing-Focused Case Management and Services...

- **Is a crisis response model focused on meeting basic needs for safe, stable housing.** The goal is to resolve the crisis. Not an anti-poverty or treatment intervention.
- **Acknowledges and is responsive to chronic stress**, which reduces the ability of many people experiencing a housing crisis to make long-term plans or manage multiple goals/activities
  - Case managers must be able to identify their participants' levels of **resilience and stress**, recognizing when to reduce expectations and when to increase them.
- **Meets participants where they are** – shelter, street and in-home. Staff must be mobile, flexible, savvy, safe and supported.
- **Is participant-driven, voluntary and strengths-based** to maximize autonomy and participant choice



# What are the *Key Features and Practices* of Housing-Focused Case Management?



# Key Features and Practices of Housing- Focused Case Management



- Crisis Orientation, Trauma-Informed Care, and Authentic Engagement
- Housing First
- Home-Based and Remote Services
- Progressive Engagement & Assistance
- System & Community Partnerships



# *Key Feature:*

## **Crisis Orientation & Readiness**



*Crisis intervention refers to urgent, emergency care that is aimed at assisting persons facing a crisis situation. Crisis intervention assistance seeks to end the crisis situation and restore balance to biological, psychological, and social functioning, while also minimizing the potential for additional psychological trauma to the person in crisis.*

People in crisis experience high levels of stress and specific physiological responses to stress that negatively affect their ability to reason and solve problems. While these reactions can be reversed, prolonged crisis and stress may have long term effects.

**People in or facing the risk of homelessness are in crisis, and staff assisting them should be ready and able to respond accordingly.**





# *Key Feature:*

## Trauma-Informed Care



*Services and supports designed to respond to the prevalent trauma among people who experience homelessness, and the ongoing trauma that people experiencing or at-risk of homelessness face daily.*

Trauma-informed care (TIC) provides a framework for organizational and individual service delivery that honors and responds to that trauma.

It's critical to also embed TIC in staff training and support.





# *Key Feature:* Authentic Engagement

*Supporting client autonomy requires trust, safety and engagement and recognizes that people have the right to decide whom they will live with and what services they want/need to achieve their goals.*

**Engagement means establishing a relationship and building upon it.**

The Core of Engagement: Relationship

Trust

Safety

Respect

Boundaries

Power

Cultural Humility





# *Key Feature:* Housing First

*Housing First is a proven approach in which all people experiencing homelessness are believed to be housing ready and are provided with permanent housing immediately and with few to no preconditions, behavioral contingencies, or barriers.*

Rehousing agencies will serve households without additional requirements like income and sobriety.

***Housing First doesn't mean Housing Only***



# Housing First is not a new idea...

Housing First is *evidence-based*

<https://endhomelessness.org/resource/housing-first/>



## Key Feature:



# Progressive Engagement & Assistance

*Progressive engagement and assistance is an approach to helping households end their homelessness as rapidly as possible, despite barriers, with minimal financial and support resources. More supports are offered to those households who struggle to stabilize and cannot maintain their housing without assistance.*

- ✓ Avoids false assumptions
- ✓ Individualized
- ✓ Efficient – conserves limited resources to assist more people
- ✓ Effective – reduces how many experience homeless, how quickly people end their homelessness, and how many avoid homelessness again





## Key Feature:

# Home Visits and Remote Services

“If a landlord *suddenly* evicts your program participant, you haven’t been paying attention.”

- #1 Priority: your safety – be aware of environment, potential risks – more on that later...
- During home visits, be aware of potential tenancy issues, but not as a “gotcha” – be respectful
- Red flags are an opportunity for teachable moments such as noise levels, basic housekeeping, making or responding to a complaint—the “soft skills” of renting



# Key Things to Think About



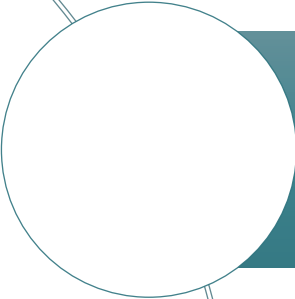
**TRAUMA:** Remember your best trauma-informed practices at all times.

**EDUCATE AND EMPHASIZE**-Just like when doing home visits, a phone call can be an important time to help educate them about recent developments about COVID-19

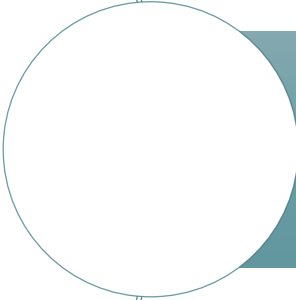
**HOW THEY PREFER TO COMMUNICATE BY PHONE**-Find out and agree on the best way to communicate



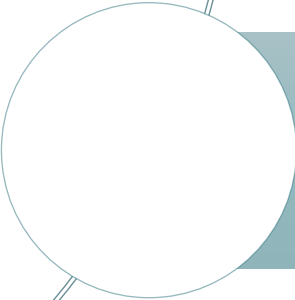
# Key Things to Think About



**CHECK-IN**-Plan the **REGULAR** calls with your participant. We all know that when things feel out of control, it is comforting to have some routines that we can count on. Set a regular day and time appointment and remind them about when the next one will be occurring at the end of each call



**FREQUENCY OF CHECK-IN'S**-If you are checking in by phone and not able to do regular home visits, it is probably worth checking in more often. For most people, once a week is a good goal to strive for. Some may need a check-in more often.



**STAY PRESENT**- Even if you and your participant agree to only talk once a week, try to let them know you are thinking of them at other times as well. Send a quick text in the morning or evening to ask how they are doing. Share an uplifting quote or funny video you found.





# Safety in the Field

- Talk with participant ahead of time
- Make sure someone knows where you are going and what time you will be there
- Be prepared: have documents in order, pre-fill in documents, bring clip board, etc.
- Know the area: view area online, park in plain view
- Put items away in your car in advance
- Be aware of surroundings and exterior of buildings
- Ask about/be aware of pets, bug infestations



# Safety in the Field

- Utilize smart phone: map, camera, recorder, text
- Be aware who is in unit
- Always sit where you can exit
- Be aware of time it gets dark
- Follow instinct
- Reschedule, if needed
- Always project calmness and respect



# Home Visits *(when possible and safe with COVID-19)*

**What to have with you for  
your safety:**

**Hand sanitizer**

**Mask**

**What to bring to your  
clients:**

**PPE, hand sanitizer**

**Food**

**Activities**

**Service coordination  
Assessment of the unit**



# Team Homework:

*What are key safety considerations and strategies?*

*POLL: Should we dive deeper on this together?*



## *Key Feature:*

# System & Community Partnerships

*THP and RRH programs must be fully integrated with other homelessness prevention, homeless crisis response, and community resources and services to ensure coordinated, person-centered services and to effectively meet both the immediate and long-term needs and preferences of those assisted.*



# Community/Mainstream Service Linkages

Fundamental to assisting people to *get* and *keep* housing includes helping them *access* short and long-term *assistance from community-based and mainstream agencies*:

- ✓ Public benefits and income supports (TANF, VA disability, SSI, SNAP/food stamps, etc.)
- ✓ Jobs Training and Employment
- ✓ Credit Counseling
- ✓ Legal Assistance
- ✓ Free/subsidized goods and services
- ✓ Daycare
- ✓ Healthcare



# Housing-Focused Case Management: Common Functions & Steps



# Housing-Focused Case Management & Services

## Common Functions & Steps

- Intake** to provide additional information about program services, gather participant demographics and other required data, identify immediate needs, obtain consent, and establish rapport and trust
- Screening & Assessment** to further understand *housing-related* history, needs, barriers, resources, and preferences and to identify and further assess other critical/urgent needs
- Housing Plans** to identify participant goals, steps and needed supports to address *housing* barriers, stabilize in housing, and have access to supports for other critical/urgent/ongoing needs
- Services** to support participant efforts to find, pay for, and stabilize in *housing*
- Linkages** to other needed and desired services, resources, and supports to support short- and long-term housing goals and other needs
- Case Closure and Transitional Supports** for successful exit and transition from housing crisis intervention services

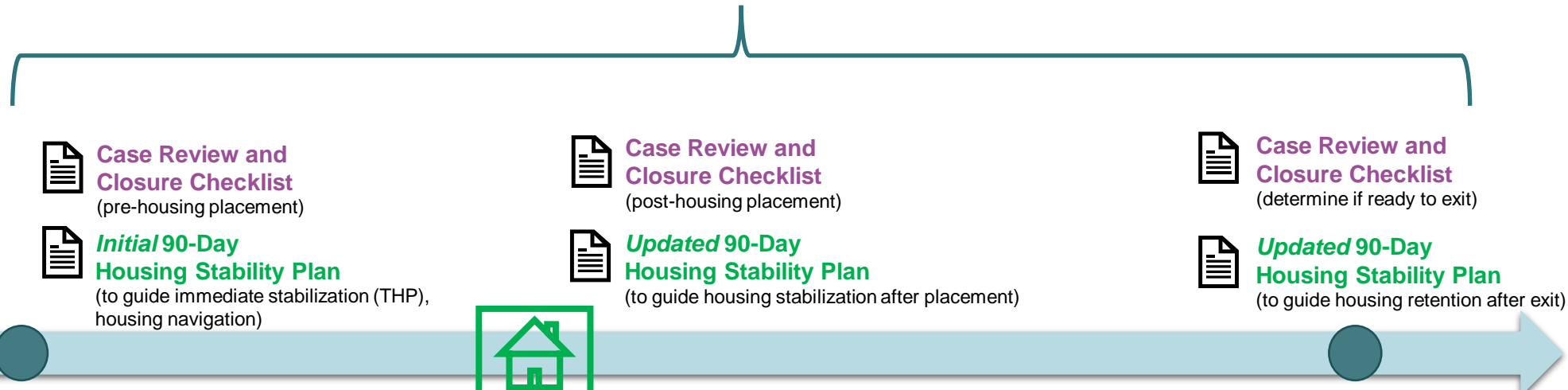




# Housing-Focused Case Management Flow

**Regular (e.g., monthly) case review**  
 (housing stability indicators, assistance needs, participant preferences)

**Housing Crisis**  
 (imminently at-risk of or currently literally homeless)



**Case Review and Closure Checklist**  
 (pre-housing placement)

**Initial 90-Day Housing Stability Plan**  
 (to guide immediate stabilization (THP), housing navigation)

**Case Review and Closure Checklist**  
 (post-housing placement)

**Updated 90-Day Housing Stability Plan**  
 (to guide housing stabilization after placement)

**Case Review and Closure Checklist**  
 (determine if ready to exit)

**Updated 90-Day Housing Stability Plan**  
 (to guide housing retention after exit)



**Program Eligibility Screening, Prioritization**

**Eligibility Screen, Documentation Checklist**

If not eligible: **Notice of Ineligibility**

**Program Enrollment**  
 (based on eligibility, priority, and case slot opening)

**Program Intake/Assessment**

**Crisis Stabilization in Current Housing (THP) OR Initial Housing Placement (RRH/THP)**

**Program Exit**  
 (based on case review and housing stability indicators)

**Termination Form is only used if household has fraudulent activity that would have influenced the outcome of an eligibility certification or recertification.**



# Start with the End in Mind...Stable Housing Situations

Shared housing  
with friends or  
family

Return to or  
secure their own  
housing

Relocate  
permanently to  
safe place out of  
town

***Some stay temporarily with family or friends while working to secure longer-term housing.***



# When is Housing “Stable”?

- ✓ Housing is safe, habitable
- ✓ Financial means to pay rent and utility costs at least for next few months, even if cost burdened
  - With own income and/or other ongoing subsidy
- ✓ Understand and comply with lease and/or other tenant or guest expectations
  - Current on rent, utility payments
  - No major conflicts that could jeopardize housing
  - What to do if lease or ‘house rules’ compliance issue
- ✓ Connected to needed/desired resources
- ✓ Contingency plan for future housing-related crisis
  - Aware of/knows how to access community and network supports for future emergency



## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ✓ Housing First – and not only
- ✓ Progressive assistance
- ✓ Begin with end in mind – focus on *housing stability*
- ✓ Being present and safe
- ✓ Continue to process with team and learn





**Questions?  
Reflections?  
5 MINUTE  
BREAK**



# Screening and Assessments





# Screening & Assessment

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- **Goal:** to understand housing-related history, needs, barriers, resources, and preferences to inform a plan that resolves the housing crisis successfully and as quickly as possible. Secondly, identify and further assess other critical needs requiring urgent attention.
- **Focus:**
  - ✓ **Critical and/or urgent needs** requiring attention
  - ✓ **Income, resources and expenses**, especially those key to finding/securing housing (e.g., childcare, transportation)
  - ✓ **Housing requirements** (e.g., # bedrooms, accessibility) **and preferences** (e.g., amenities, location)
  - ✓ **Housing barriers** related to both tenant screening and housing retention



# Assessing Critical and/or urgent needs

*Focus: Unmet critical needs requiring immediate attention*

- Housing
- Food
- Physical/mental/emotional health and safety
- Transportation
- Childcare/school

*Examples:*

- Lapse in prescribed medication needed for a mental health condition
- Car repair needed to maintain employment
- Insufficient food and money or SNAP benefits to pay for food
- Mounting debt and debt collectors
- Child emotional wellbeing

**Considerations:**

- High level screening before deeper, more personal assessment
- Use open-ended questions
- Avoid over-assessing, intrusion





# Assessing Income, Resources and Expenses

Type	Sources
<b>Employment Income</b>	employment, “under-the-table” income
<b>Cash Benefits</b>	TANF cash assistance, disability benefits, child support, etc – <i>currently receiving and potentially eligible for</i>
<b>Non-Cash Benefits</b>	housing subsidy (e.g., “Section 8”), health insurance, childcare, SNAP/food stamps – <i>currently receiving and potentially eligible for</i>
<b>Other resources</b>	car or other transportation, family/friends able to support (e.g., provide childcare) – <i>currently receiving and potentially available</i>
<b>Expenses</b>	necessary vs discretionary, honest – <i>current and once stably housed</i>

# Assessing Income, Resources and Expenses

## Considerations:

- Income needed for essential housing and other costs – immediately, while housed and assisted by the program, after program exit
- Identify any/all cash or non-cash benefits not receiving and potentially eligible for
- “Honest” budget is a must – but so is respect, non-judgmental conversation and support
  - See OrgCode ["Honest Budget"](#) tool



# Assessing Housing Requirements & Preferences

## ***Focus:***

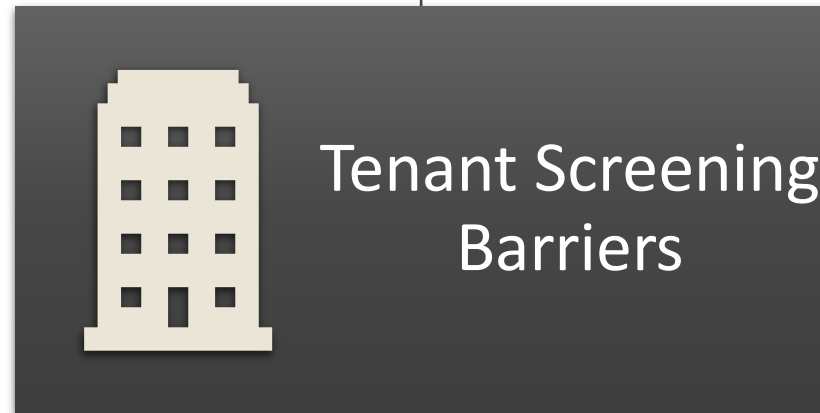
- ✓ **Accessibility and safety:** universal design features, safety concerns/features
- ✓ **Size and features:** Minimum bedrooms, bathrooms, cooking/kitchen, storage, parking
- ✓ **Location:** proximity to family, friends, other supports, work
- ✓ **Nearby amenities:** food, laundry, childcare, public transportation
- ✓ **Services/assistance:** on-site or readily accessible
- ✓ **Utilities:** able to have in own name, prior arrears/concerns
- ✓ **Furnishing/household items:** currently possess vs needed

## ***Considerations:***

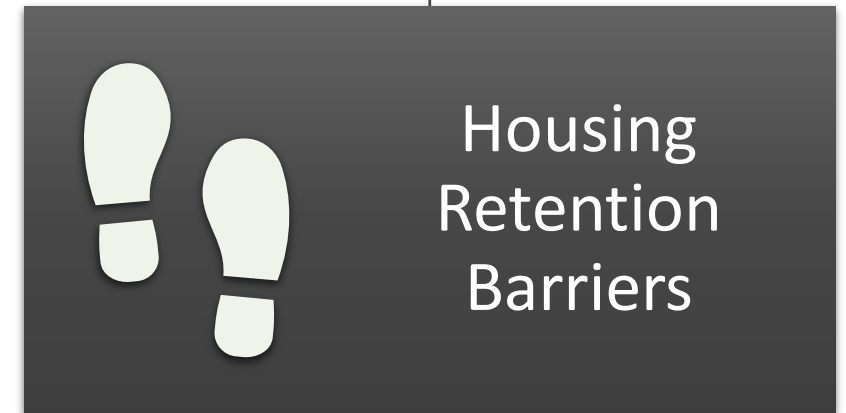
- Use closed- and open-ended questions
- Clarify “must-have” vs “nice-to-have”



# Assessing Housing Barriers (Household Level)



Reduce a person's ability to obtain housing because of landlord criteria and screening



Reduce a person's ability to retain housing – pay housing costs, care for unit, comply with lease



# Housing Barriers (Household Level)

<b>TENANT SCREENING</b> <i>Barriers to GETTING Housing</i>	<b>HOUSING RETENTION</b> <i>Barriers to KEEPING Housing</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Criminal History</li><li>• Credit History</li><li>• Housing History</li><li>• Financial Resources</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Financial Barriers<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• income &amp; budgeting</li></ul></li><li>• Physical/Behavioral Barriers<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• mental health</li><li>• substance use</li><li>• domestic violence</li><li>• tenancy skills</li><li>• other activities of daily living</li></ul></li></ul>
<b>Other Barriers to GETTING and/or KEEPING Housing</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Chronic stress, trauma</li><li>• Reliable, affordable, flexible childcare</li><li>• Reliable, affordable, flexible transportation</li><li>• Family conflict, functioning</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Shelter rules</li><li>• School issues, parenting demands</li><li>• Health and physical limitations</li><li>• \$ for application fees, gas, etc.</li></ul>



# Why Do Landlords Screen?

<b>What Landlords Worry About: Can the Tenant....?</b>	<b>What Landlords Use to Reduce Those Risks:</b>
Pay the rent on time?	Credit History, Income, Employment, Landlord References
Treat the building with respect?	Criminal History, Landlord References
Treat other people with respect?	Criminal History, Landlord References
Avoid trouble with the police?	Criminal History, Landlord References



# THINK LIKE A *LANDLORD*...



Landlords want to minimize their risk and maximize their gain.

A landlord's two biggest concerns are receiving their rent on time and protecting their property.

# THINK LIKE AN *ADVOCATE*...



Know Fair Housing Laws and watch for discriminatory practices, conditions

Help participants and landlords understand their rights/responsibilities

Help participants review lease, location, and apartment and, when needed, report discrimination





What is the most common tenant screening barrier you have encountered?



# Tenant Screening Barriers: Why Do You Need to Know?

- Level of resistance you may face from prospective landlords—how serious is/are the barrier/s?
- Additional supports the landlord may require or otherwise need to be aware of to take a chance on a person s/he perceives to be “high risk” – e.g., access to a case manager, additional security deposit, rental assistance
- Partner landlords who might be a good match based on who they’re known to consider
- If there are errors in criminal or credit history data systems (e.g., Equifax) which should be corrected in the future
- Patterns that *may also* suggest Housing Retention Barriers to avoid, minimize or overcome



# Assessing Tenant Screening Barriers

## How do you identify barriers?

- ✓ Client interview

## *And with consent...*

- ✓ Search public databases
- ✓ Call previous landlords OR
- ✓ Buy credit or tenant screening report online (e.g., Equifax, TransUnion, Experian, etc)



# Why the look beyond the assessment interview?

- People may not know or understand their criminal record or housing evictions (e.g., is an arrest a criminal record if there was no conviction?)
- People may conceal information from you because they need assistance and are afraid you won't give it
- In a crisis, a person's memories may be fuzzy...remember, chronic stress
- Even records may be inaccurate (especially if the person has a common name)
- You need to know as much as the landlord who will screen the person's rental application in (or out!)



# Assessing Housing Retention Barriers

Patterns in a person's history that have directly contributed to a housing crisis or housing loss

*Patterns may be due to:*

- Lack of information (leases, tenant responsibilities)
- Lack of skill(s) (care of unit, communication)
- Interpersonal/Communication style (initiates/escalates conflict)
- Poverty (couldn't pay the rent)
- Bad luck (company closed, illness, etc.)
- Problematic friends/relatives
- Housing discrimination from landlord or property management company



# Possible Challenges to Housing Stability in the Past (and possibly inter-related)

## Paying rent/utilities on time

- Layoff, job loss
- Low-paying, inconsistent work
- Access to affordable, reliable childcare and transportation
- Benefit losses
- Unexpected emergencies
- Generational, network poverty
- Different priorities (aka “bad choices”)

## Treating building with respect

- Damages or lack of upkeep beyond “normal wear and tear”
- Abandoned vehicles
- Overflowing trash
- Lack of awareness, knowledge, and/or skills to care for unit

## Health/safety/conflict

- Interpersonal style, household and neighbor conflicts
- Intimate partner violence
- Severe symptoms from mental illness, substance use disorders, and co-occurring disorders
- Hoarding
- Trauma triggers
- Noise, smell, and/or behavior that disturbs neighbors
- Bug infestations
- Police and/or ambulance calls

## Following the lease

- Unauthorized pets
- Unauthorized guests
- Noise, smell, and/or behavior that disturbs neighbors
- Lack of information about lease requirements
- Lack of awareness, knowledge, and/or skills to proactively mitigate, resolve issues



# Activity # 1: Assessment Interview and Housing Barriers



## HANDOUT

- Three case scenarios with information based on the first client interview
- Take 5 minutes to read...
- **Breakout Group Discussion – *Pick 1 OR Discuss All 3***
  - What additional information would you want for each person so you can identify Tenant Screening and possible Housing Retention Barriers?
  - Where would you get it?

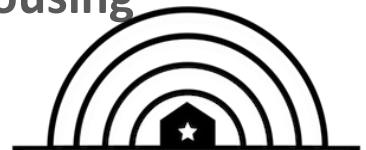


# Activity # 2: Further Assessing Housing Barriers



## HANDOUT and WORKSHEET

- Same three clients with new assessment information.
- Take 5 minutes to read...
- **Breakout Group – *Pick 1 OR Discuss All 3***
  - With all information you now have, list the Tenant Screening Barriers (TSBs) and Housing Retention Barriers (HSBs) for each person
- **Breakout Group Discussion:**
  - How serious are the TSBs?
  - What kind of landlords would accept the person—will additional incentives be needed? Other assurances?
  - How would you assist the person to retain their housing?
  - What could immediately affect their housing stability?





# Housing Stability Plans



# SMART Goals/Actions

Specific—who will do what, where, when?

Measurable—how will you know if you've met goal?

Attainable: Is it reasonable to think you can do it?

Relevant: Is it directly related to the outcome?

Time-limited: What is the deadline? Right level of urgency?



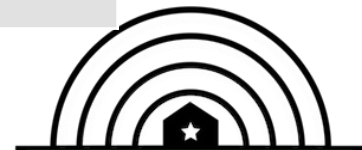
# Get Smart!

## *Vague* Goal

GOAL	ACTION STEPS	BY WHEN
Find an apartment that meets my needs.	Check newspapers and listing	Ongoing
	Apply for rent assistance	Prior to move-in

## *SMART* Goal

GOAL	ACTION STEPS	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE	BY WHEN
Identify a landlord willing to rent to me who has a vacant unit that meets the needs of me and my children by end of December or sooner.	Review apt.com, newspaper, and XYZ Program landlord list at least weekly to ID vacant units	Jane [participant]	Weekly until unit identified
	Start application process for TANF emergency rental assistance online at <a href="http://www.welfareoffice.gov">www.welfareoffice.gov</a>	Jane with help from Angie [case mgr] as needed	By 11/24/2020
	Meet with Dave, XYZ Program Housing Specialist, for further screening and possible additional help	Jane with help from Angie	By 12/2/2020



# Housing Stability Phases & Plans

## Crisis Stabilization & Housing Search

- Goals/actions focus on emergency health and safety needs that must be immediately met and, if relocating or literally homeless, steps for housing search

## Housing Stabilization

- Goals/actions focus on stabilizing in housing, addressing income, tenancy, childcare, service connections, etc. Updated regularly as goals are achieved or plans and circumstances change.

## Housing Retention

- Goals/actions focus on continuation toward longer-term goals; contingency plan for future housing emergencies.



Think  
*Coaching to achieve housing goals.*



**Above all, facilitate access, maximize and explore options, and promote agency**

*(Agency: when a person acts on their own behalf)*



# Supporting Participants with Achieving their Housing Plans



# *Crisis Stabilization & Housing Search*





## Crisis Stabilization & Housing Search

Goals/actions focus on emergency health and safety needs that must be immediately met and, *if relocating or literally homeless*, steps for housing search

What emergency health and safety needs must be immediately met?

What tenant screening barriers were identified?

What landlords do we work with who may be a good fit?

What supports does the person need and want?

How much can they afford to pay?

What kind of housing they need and want?

Where do they want to live?



# Crisis Stabilization & Housing Search Plan

Don't assume	Difficult Choices	Help	Consider	Match
<p>Don't assume households will substantially increase their incomes (unless they have zero income!).</p> <p>Look for housing based on a realistic projection of income and expenses.</p>	<p>Help households think through what housing situation they can stabilize in now.</p> <p>Living with family or friends or finding a roommate.</p> <p>A smaller unit and/or one in a less desirable area.</p> <p>Realistic income expectations or reductions in spending.</p>	<p>Help households consider the smallest unit they can tolerate in the least expensive area where they can find safe housing.</p> <p>Wherever possible, assist to apply for any type of subsidy for which they qualify, even if long waiting list ("you can't win if you don't buy a lottery ticket").</p>	<p>Consider shared housing as an option</p> <p>Rent will still exceed 30% income in most cases.</p>	<p>Match clients with housing options from partner landlords-- unless they want to do their own housing search or are being helped by someone else (and then monitor to see how it's going)</p>





## For the initial plan (and later), consider...

---

What specific help does the participant need – and – what do they want?

What type of help can you provide or another staff person or partner?

How much help should you provide?

- Searching for a housing unit?
- Reviewing the lease?
- Arranging move-in?
- Securing furnishings?
- Application for assistance/benefits?
- Job search?
- Finding free/subsidized goods/services?
- Transportation assistance related to any of the above?
- Access to childcare assistance?



# What can you do about *Tenant Screening Barriers?*

Participants are both priced out and screened out of safe, decent housing. How can we change that?

- Help to pay for landlord incentives (e.g., bonuses, support for repairs) and risk mitigation (e.g., double security deposit, last month's rent, access to risk mitigation fund)
  - Using incentives as a negotiating tool
- Negotiate reduced screening requirements. Examples:
  - Acceptance of -0- income or 1x income over rent versus 3x income over rent, knowing your program will help bridge the financial gap
  - Acceptance of 3 prior evictions versus 1 max
  - Acceptance of prior felony versus no prior
- Commit to support rent and utility costs while enrolled
- Commit to provide tenancy supports and landlord point of contact
- Commit to aftercare/point of contact for troubleshooting



## Knowledge Is Power

It's important to know your housing market in order to truly understand and appreciate your landlord partners!

- Do your research on your local housing market
- Know & understand Fair Housing, landlord/tenant law
- Attend landlord events and local forums in order to network and stay informed on current market trends and housing issues
- Connect with other housing locators and case workers in order to share information and resources



# *Helping with Housing Search?*

## Know the Housing Market!

*Effective plans require informed support...*

Research & understand housing market conditions and options in your service area/community, including:

- ✓ Different types of housing and housing subsidies
- ✓ Eligibility requirements and application processes
- ✓ Where there are vacancies and wait list openings

### Types of housing and housing subsidies:

- Private Market Rate (non-subsidized)
- Homeless Set Aside (e.g., CoC Program)
- Sub-population Set Aside (e.g., HUD-VASH)
- Mainstream Subsidized (e.g., Housing Choice Vouchers (“aka Section 8 via local Public Housing Authority))
- Special Populations (e.g., 202 elderly)





# What Assistance will be Needed for Move-in Costs and/or Short-Term Rent Subsidy?

Given expected income and necessary (real) expenses, what can the participant reasonably be expected to contribute for application costs, move-in expenses, and rent/utilities in the first few months?

- People experiencing homelessness rarely have any cash reserves to obtain housing (which may cost \$2000 or more).
- Not all households will need deep subsidies; your goal is not to eliminate rent burden.
- Provide ***just enough*** financial assistance, ***just in time***, and for ***only as long as necessary*** to get/keep housing. This avoids the “cliff effect” and allows you to assist more people in crisis.
- Don't over-promise.
  - ✓ Refer to your program policies, procedures





# Improving access to and/or stabilization in housing by increasing income in the immediate or near-term

## Employment

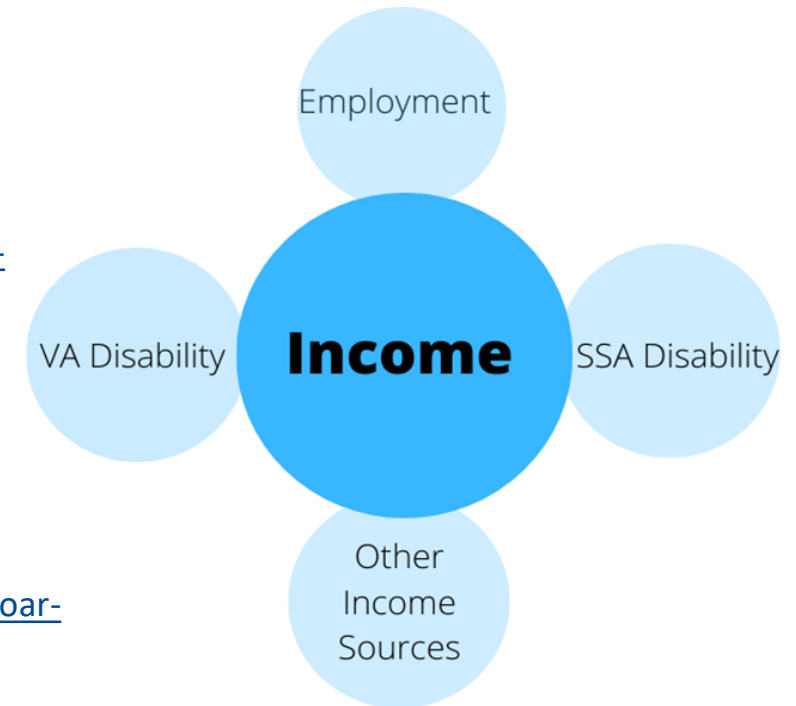
- Workforce Innovation & Investment Act (WIOA) funded resources
  - WIOA and Homelessness Factsheet: <http://nationalinitiatives.issuelab.org/resources/27128/27128.pdf>
  - U.S. Department of Labor CareerOneStop: <https://www.careeronestop.org/LocalHelp/local-help.aspx>
- Supportive Employment
- Vocational Rehab

## Disability

- SOAR - SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access and Recovery
  - SOAR Starting the Employment Conversation Guide: <https://soarworks.prainc.com/article/soar-employment-conversation-guide>
- Social Security Administration – Ticket-to-Work Program for SSI/SSDI beneficiaries
  - Search for local providers: <https://choosework.ssa.gov/findhelp/>

## Creative strategies to boost household income/resources

- Shared housing
- Assistance programs
- Food pantries



# Employment as a short-term goal

## Considerations

- Can the program participant pay move-in costs and rent with current income?
- Are there landlord partners you work with who will consider a participant working toward employment while your program supports financially – i.e., so you can expedite housing placement while working on employment goal?
- Can efforts to increase income wait until after housing is secured?
- Are other employment/workforce programs and supports available you can connect to?
- When was last job? Job history?
- What options are there in the local job market?
- Are there significant employment barriers (over 50, etc.) or disabilities that make finding or maintaining work more challenging?
- Is person experiencing severe stress symptoms?



# Other Move-in Needs and Possible Assistance to Consider for the Plan...

- Needed furnishings, beds, towels, linens, crib, household supplies
- Dealing with belongings in storage
- Required housing inspection

## **If moving to new housing:**

- Getting utilities connected (and any arrears paid or otherwise accounted for)

## **If staying in place (own place or doubled-up/shared situation) or moving to doubled-up/shared situation:**

- Addressing utility arrears and keeping utilities connected, splitting or sharing utility costs
- Putting a roommate/housemate/guest agreement in place to set expectations and boundaries
- Other contributions to shared household costs, upkeep



# Activity #3: Initial Housing Search Plan



## HANDOUT and WORKSHEET

- Same three clients
- Basic “Initial Housing Search Plan” template

## Breakout Group Discussion:

- Develop an Initial Housing Search Plan for *Robert, Rhonda, or George*. Refer to information you already have

## Large Group Sharing/Discussion:

- Groups share their plan with the entire group and ask for feedback



# Housing Stabilization & Housing Retention



## Housing Stabilization

- Goals/actions focus on stabilizing in housing, addressing income, tenancy, childcare, service connections, etc. Updated regularly as goals are achieved or plans and circumstances change.

## Housing Retention

- Goals/actions focus on continuation toward longer-term goals; contingency plan for future housing emergencies.





U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration (SAMHSA)

# Housing Stabilization Plan

**First**, expect (and encourage) a short period for participants to settle in and “decompress” after the housing crisis is over and housing is secure.

**After housing is secured (current or new), consider needs and desired help with:**

- Income
- Tenancy skills
- Childcare
- Transportation
- Additional furnishing, household items
- Orienting to the neighborhood, nearby grocery store/bus lines/pantry/etc.
- Additional service connections

# What can you do about *Housing Retention Barriers?*

- If participant has zero or insufficient income to pay for housing and other essential costs after program exit, you must include income goals: employment and/or income supplements, public benefits, etc
- Use the person's pattern of barriers to select housing: Avoid similar or trigger situations (type or location of housing, landlord style, etc.)
- Help understand what led to prior housing crisis
- In select situations, help program participant to recognize and change behaviors that have led to housing crises
- Correct errors in the record (AFTER person is housed...the process can take a long time)





# Housing Retention Plan

Plan ahead with your participant about how to avoid recurrence of problems:

- Demonstrate/teach tenancy skills in real life during home visits
- Provide information on landlord/tenant rights/responsibilities
- Review the lease, expectations
- Maximize income available for rent
- Planning for a future housing crisis



# Primary Focus: *Keeping Housing* Landlord and Tenancy Supports

Keeping housing and remaining “stable” doesn’t mean a household won’t move again – sooner or later.

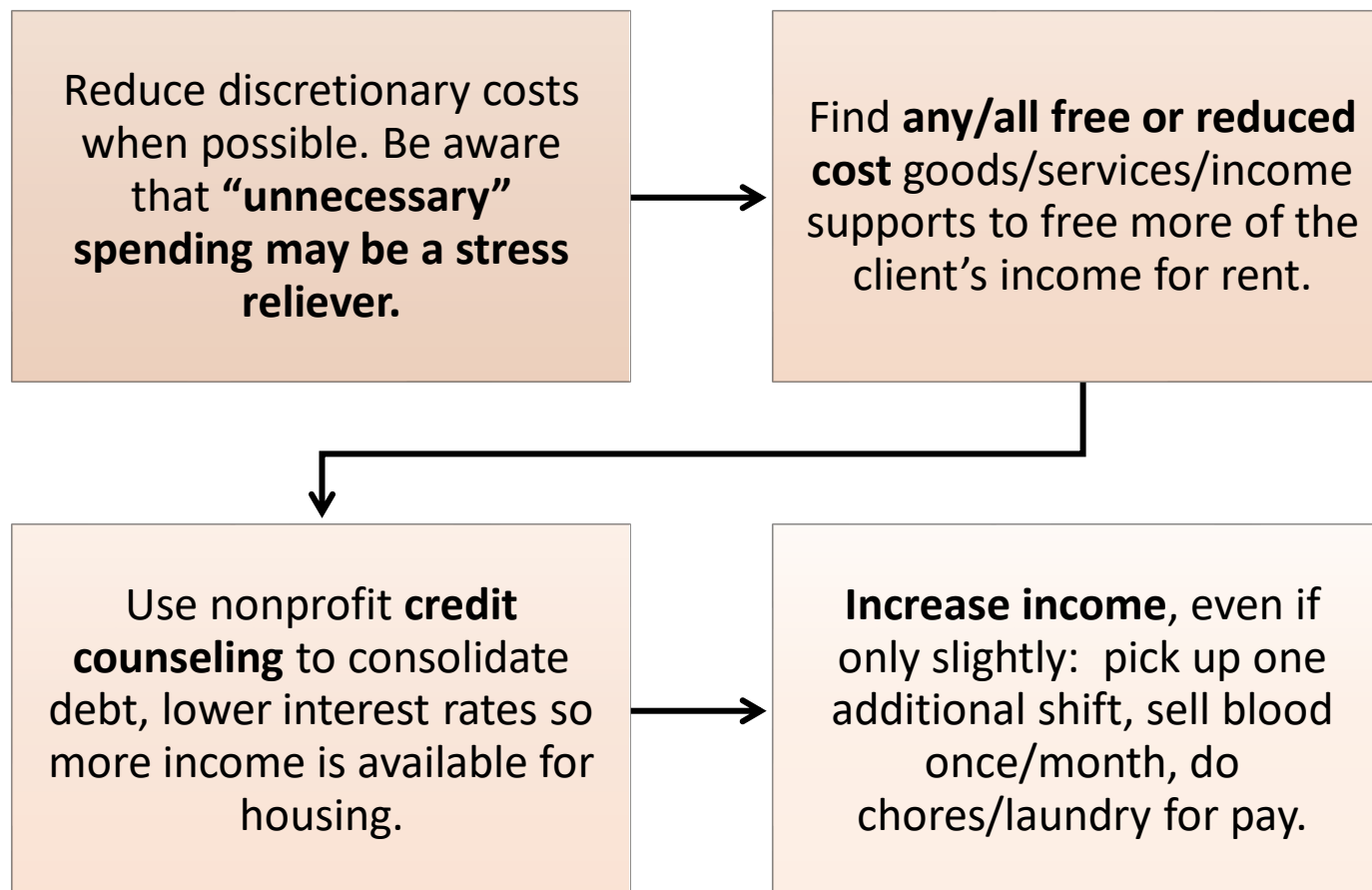
**TENANCY GOAL: “BE THE TENANT LANDLORDS WANT”**

- ✓ Pay the rent on time
- ✓ Treat the building with respect
- ✓ Treat other people with respect
- ✓ Follow the lease and avoid issues



# What Landlords Want: Pay Rent on Time

Household budgeting with clients every month:



# Rent and Utility Assistance

Remember... “*just enough*” – the least amount for the shortest time possible

- ✓ Client always pays a share, but be prepared to pay 100% if client income is zero
- ✓ Based on amount needed to fill household budget gap – difference between available income and housing/other essential costs.
- ✓ Flexibility allows for response to changing situations (client lost job, client obtained job, etc.)



# What Landlords Want: *Treat the Building With Respect*

- Home visits are a good time to check-in with client about how to avoid damage
- Fire risk
- Plumbing abuse
- Children causing damage



# What Landlords Want: Treat Other People With Respect



- Other people = other tenants, nearby neighbors and, of course, the landlord
- Control of noise, trash, guests and children – anything that may be significant cause of conflict with other tenants—and a lease violation



# What Landlords Want: Follow the Lease/Avoid Issues



Read and explain— **in simple terminology** -- the lease (or have a tenant/legal service provider “translate”)



Emphasize the “quiet enjoyment” clause



Assure they have a basic understanding of tenant and landlord rights and responsibilities.



Explain that compliance with Federal/State/Local laws and ordinances may be a lease requirement



Explain: In some communities, landlords face severe penalties for tenant legal violations, particularly drugs



# What Landlords Want: Your Support

**Decide who your landlord will call:** the tenant household's case manager or a Housing Specialist

**Do what you promise:** never burn a landlord

**Express appreciation** when due:

1. Letters, cards, certificates
2. Share success stories in newsletters

**Match tenants** with landlords according to landlord risk tolerance (i.e., you're the "match-maker")

***AND***

**Have plan** and be ready to help "mutually rescind" a lease if not working out to avoid eviction, help participant relocate, and back fill unit with new participant/tenant





# WHAT DOES MY LEASE SAY-- *simplify*

## Things that can get me evicted:

- Rent is more than 5 days late
- Someone moves in with me (stays more than 2 weeks)
- If I get a dog
- If the police are called about me twice in 30 days
- If anyone buys or sells drugs in my unit

## Things I can do but *only if the landlord agrees, in writing*:

- Get a roommate
- Get a cat



# Housing Retention *Supports*

**Help** address Housing Retention Barriers and avoid recurring problems:

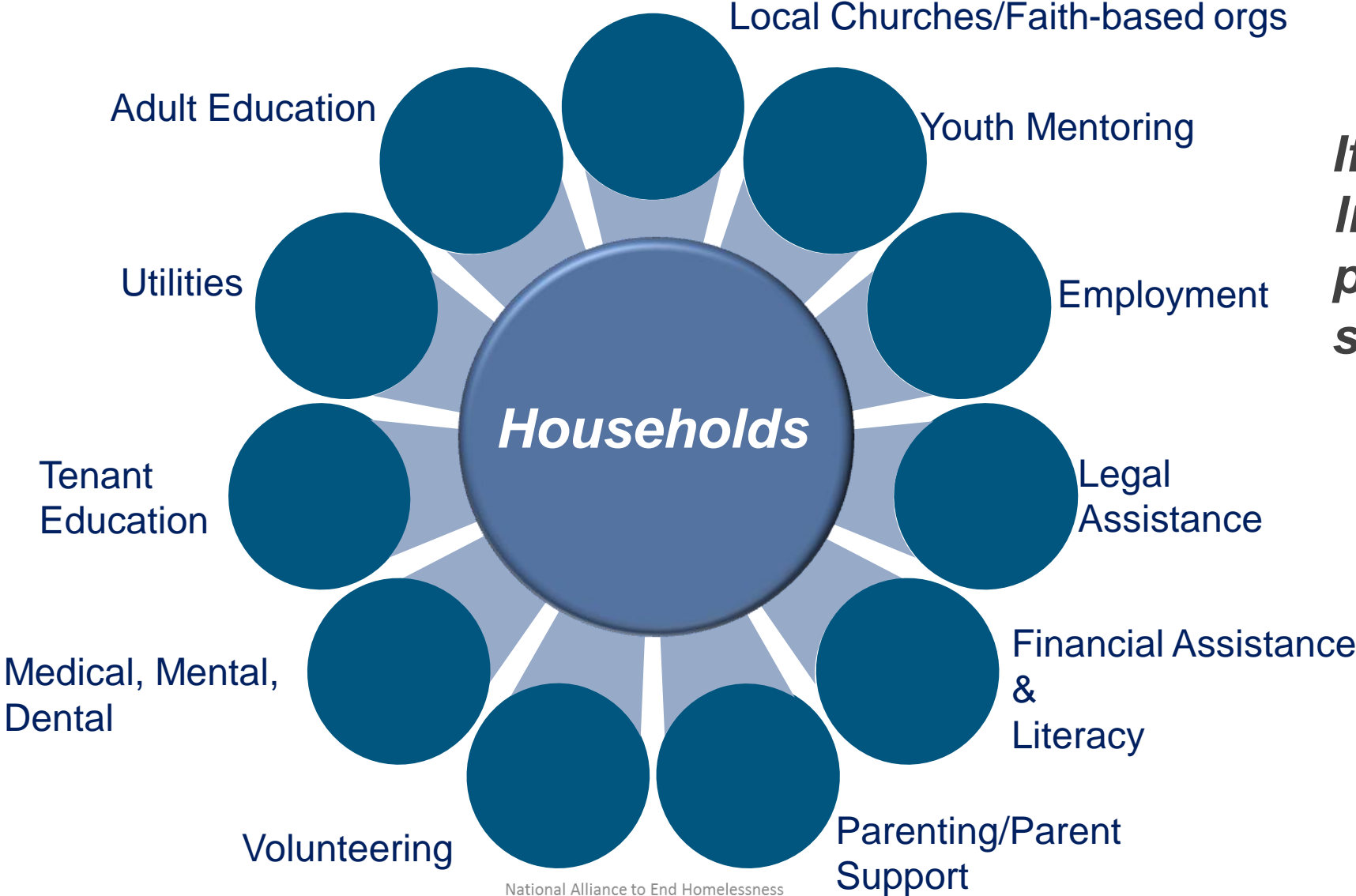
- Demonstrate/teach tenancy skills in real life during home visits (“in vivo”)
- Provide information on landlord/tenant rights/responsibilities
- Review the lease (item-by-item) and related expectations
- Maximize income available for rent
- Monthly budgeting

**Discuss and role play potential retention issues**

- How to talk to landlord, respond to complaints, ask for repairs, etc.
- How to set limits with family/friends
- Plan for future housing crisis that might impact housing stability



# Community/Mainstream Service Linkages



*If you're the only lifeline/support, your participant isn't stably housed....*



# Activity #4: Housing Stabilization/Retention Plan

## HANDOUT and WORKSHEET

- Same three clients
- Basic “Housing Stabilization/Retention Plan” template

## Breakout Group Discussion:

- Develop a Housing Stabilization/Retention Plan for *Robert, Rhonda, or George*. Refer to information you already have.

## Large Group Sharing/Discussion:

- Groups share their plan with the entire group and ask for feedback



# Indicators (and possible prioritization factors) for Increased Support

Serious health conditions including disabling conditions, asthma, heart disease, diabetes, cancer treatment and immune disorders.

Lack of social supports, networks and community connections and/or coping strategies.

Barriers to education and employment, food, child nutrition which are exacerbated by the temporary closure of many resources.

Issues that may increase stress and decrease resilience: such as substance use, mental health problems, income loss, racial inequities, trauma, domestic violence and justice involvement.



# Touch points

## FINANCIAL CONCERNS

Have they paid rent?  
Will they be able to continue to pay rent?  
Do they know how to access the economic impact payments?  
Have they been able to apply for unemployment?

## SERVICE COORDINATION

Are they able to access their regular service providers like their doctor, mental health or substance use providers?  
Can you provide support and assistance with making those connections work better?  
Sharing information with these service providers is critical during this time of decreased contact.

## ACTIVITIES

Take this opportunity to explore what kinds of things your participant likes to do for fun.  
Do they like to draw or paint (you could bring them or send them some supplies)? Do they like to read magazines, watch movies, like zoos?

## ENDING THE VISIT OR CALL

Make sure you have an agreed upon next call/visit day and time. Ask one more times if there is anything they need or something else they want to talk about.  
Sometimes people are more willing to talk about their stresses after they've had a positive interaction with you on the call.  
**Plan out the next meeting/phone call/visit while you still have them on the phone. Verify the best way to reach them for the meeting prior to ending the call.**



# Other Checkpoints During COVID

## PROVIDING ASSURANCES

Your participant may not bring up these feelings and may not want to talk about them. It's fine to indicate if the person sounds stressed or angry or "down" and see where the conversations go.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

How is everyone in the home?  
Does anyone need to get tested?  
Be prepared to give them information about the nearest testing site.

## ACCESS TO FOOD AND SUPPLIES

Have on hand a list of places that are providing free food and meals near where they live.



# Trouble-Shooting

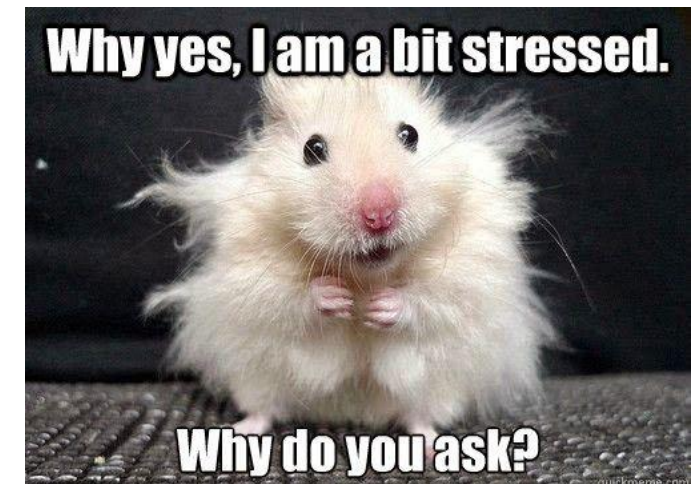
Does the person need time to de-stress?

Does the Plan still reflect the person's current priorities?

Is the Plan too ambitious? Unclear?

Are you offering too much help—or perhaps too little?

***When things get off track, ask what's wrong with the PLAN not what's wrong with the PERSON!***





# When Things Get Stuck...

**Brainstorm potential problems – with the participant and maybe with a colleague, via supervision and/or case conference:**

- ✓ Remember...does the person just need some time to de-stress?
- ✓ Does the Plan still reflect the person's current priorities?
- ✓ Is the Plan too ambitious? Unclear?
- ✓ Are there problems with your relationship with the client?
- ✓ Are you offering too much help—or perhaps too little?
- ✓ What else is going on?



# I can't find my participant!



Kids

1. Check with other providers that the participant is connected to
2. Outreach to friends and family
3. Contact the Landlord if participant is housed and has signed an ROI
4. Send client a letter, email, or text message
5. Stop by if needed



# Case Review, Adjustment & Closure



# When is Housing “Stable”?

## Indicators for Housing Stability

<b>FINANCIAL</b>	<b>RENTING:</b> Income sufficient to pay rent in near term (at minimum next two months) despite high rent burden OR housing subsidy secured.
	<b>STAYING WITH HOST FAMILY/FRIEND:</b> Able to contribute financially to support housing and basic needs OR host is ok with what client is able to contribute.
	Not in need of additional financial assistance from to sustain housing.
<b>LEASE</b>	<b>RENTING:</b> Compliant with lease requirements and not at-risk of violation – e.g., no rent arrears (or has plan), complaints, etc. AND landlord agrees tenant is stable/compliant.
	<b>STAYING WITH HOST FAMILY/FRIEND:</b> Compliant with host expectations and no current major conflict that may jeopardize housing.
	<b>RENTING:</b> Current on rent and utility payments (no arrears).
	<b>RENTING:</b> Understands lease, how to avoid non-compliance, what to do if/when there’s a lease compliance issue.
	<b>STAYING WITH HOST FAMILY/FRIEND:</b> Understands host expectations and what to do if/when there’s a conflict that may jeopardize housing.
	Housing is safe and habitable.



# When is Housing “Stable”?

## Indicators for Housing Stability

<b>LINKAGES</b>	Connected to resources necessary to sustain housing (e.g., childcare) AND connected to other critically needed community services/resources.
	Family, social supports available when needed to assist with ongoing needs or future crisis.
<b>PLAN</b>	Has plan to address potential future housing-related crisis, including updated IHSP for ongoing housing retention after exiting program.
	Aware of and knows how to access key emergency assistance resources in community if/when needed.
<b>CHOICE</b>	Ready to move on! Does not want additional program assistance.



# When is Housing not “Stable”?

## Indicators for Housing Instability

<b>FINANCIAL</b>	Cannot pay rent for next month or two (near term)
	No income sources available
<b>LEASE</b>	Currently in violation of lease or subject of serious complaints
	LL wants continued program involvement
<b>LINKAGES</b>	Not fully aware of other resources
	No other resources are willing/able to assist
<b>CHOICE</b>	Participant wants (and needs) additional assistance.



# When Longer-Term Support is Needed and Desired...

**Goal: avoid eviction, keep participant housed and needs met, keep landlord partners happy**

- **If not yet stable *and* not yet maxed on assistance, *continue support***
- ***Build bridges and make sure they're ready* (relationships, processes, and supports needed)**
  - Ongoing rental assistance:
    - If Rapid Re-Housing: transition-in-place with or move to permanent supportive housing (PSH)
      - Participants in RRH retain PSH eligibility
    - Special population housing (e.g., 202 elderly)
    - General population subsidies (e.g., Section 8)
    - Financial assistance to help relocate participants, if needed
    - Plan and commitment to help find new tenant
  - Ongoing service needs:
    - Income supports, training (e.g., WIOA funded programs/supports)
    - Home-based case management, supports (e.g., early intervention programs)
    - Physical, mental health (e.g., ongoing treatment, group/individual counseling)
    - Childcare, transportation, school supports, etc.





**Questions?  
Reflections?**





# Wrap Up



# Before you go...

*What do feel will be your biggest challenge in implementing effective Housing-Focused Case Management?*

- Providing progressive, flexible assistance
- Serving high acuity, high need households
- Connecting households to services (e.g., job training, mental health)
- Helping households to increase their income
- Conducting home visits
- Other

*Please complete the training evaluation – we appreciate your feedback!*





THANK YOU!