



HOPWA Rental Assistance: Building Programs That Work!

National HOPWA Institute - 2017

Tampa, FL



Presentation Objectives

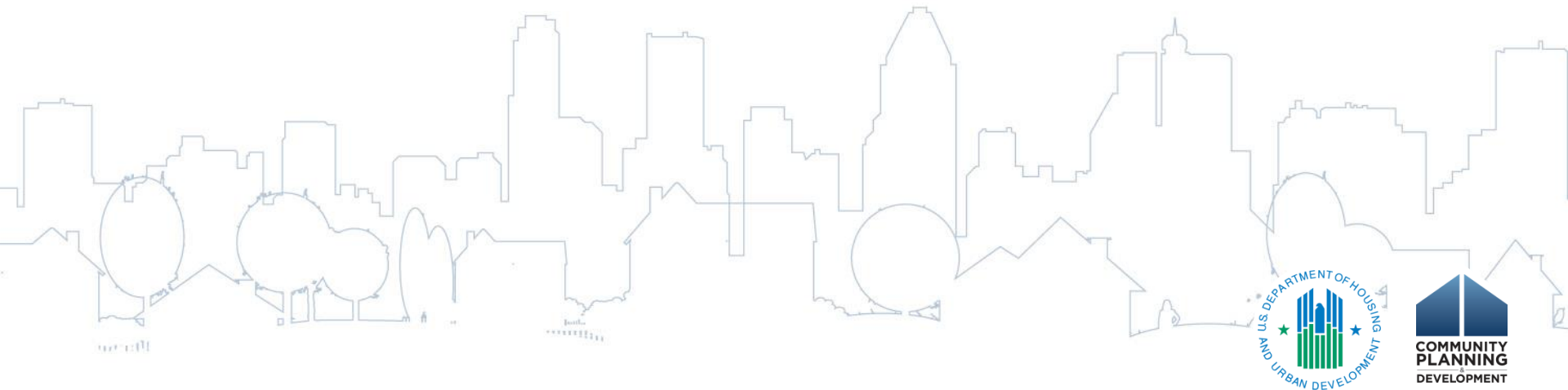
We want you to:

- Consider HOPWA housing options based on community need
- Think about your program design
- Understand the primary HUD rules & requirements
- Have a plan for effective program operation
- Discuss some frequently asked rental assistance questions



The HOPWA Institute:

“Housing’s Role in Ending the HIV Epidemic”

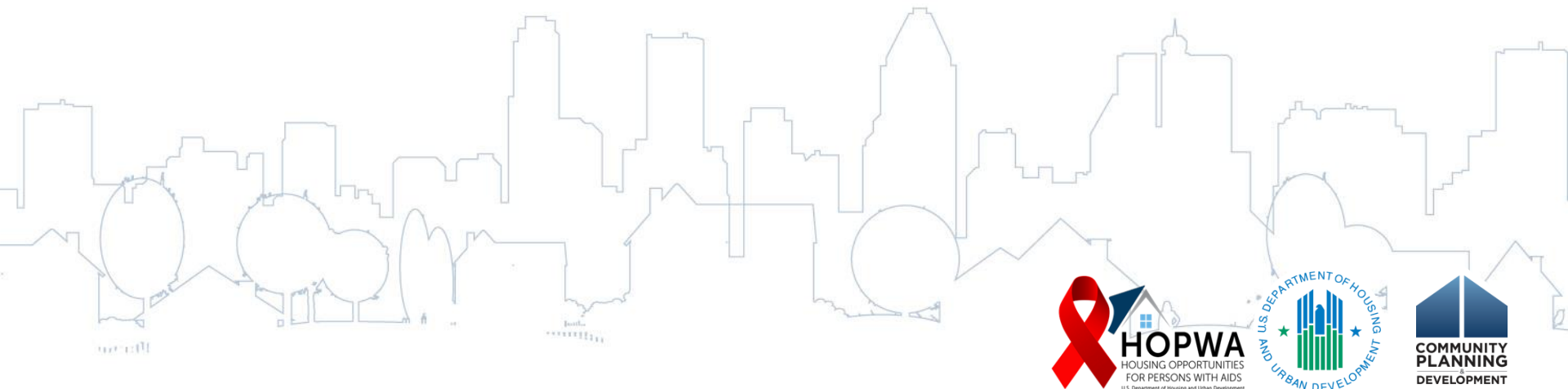


What is HOPWA Rental Assistance?

MORE THAN A ROOM!

MORE THAN A UNIT!

MORE THAN A VOUCHER!



What is HOPWA Rental Assistance?

Rental Assistance:

- Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA)
- Master Leasing
 - Scattered Site
 - Facility-Based
- Project-based Units or Buildings (PBRA, facility-based)
- Permanent and Transitional

Short-term Housing Assistance

- Short-term Supported Housing
- Emergency Hotel/Motel Units/Vouchers
- STRMU – Short-term Rent Mortgage & Utility Assistance



HOPWA Rental Assistance

Tenant Based Rental Assistance:

What: Provides a rental subsidy to clients in a unit of his/her choice

Advantages:

- Maximizes choice, independence and anonymity
- Enhances integration in the community
- Provides flexibility to grantee to increased # of units

Disadvantages:

- May be difficult for clients with daily medical care needs
- Difficult to deliver in areas with limited rental vacancies



HOPWA Rental Assistance

Project-Based Rental Assistance:

What: Provides a rental subsidy to clients in a specific unit; the subsidy stays with the unit

Advantages:

- Clients with similar needs housed together
- A more permanent supply of housing for PLWH since project-based units remain designated for HIV
- Can be used with other funding streams to develop or rehab housing and stretch HOPWA \$ further

Disadvantages:

- Limited anonymity
- More complex operationally/higher staffing
- Longer lead time for development



HOPWA Rental Assistance

Master Leasing:

What: Agency leases units, acting as the master tenant and fills units through subleases with HOPWA-eligible households

Advantages:

- Provides clients with semi-independent living
- Helps clients who are unable to obtain a lease in their name
- Greater opportunity to help clients avoid eviction

Disadvantages:

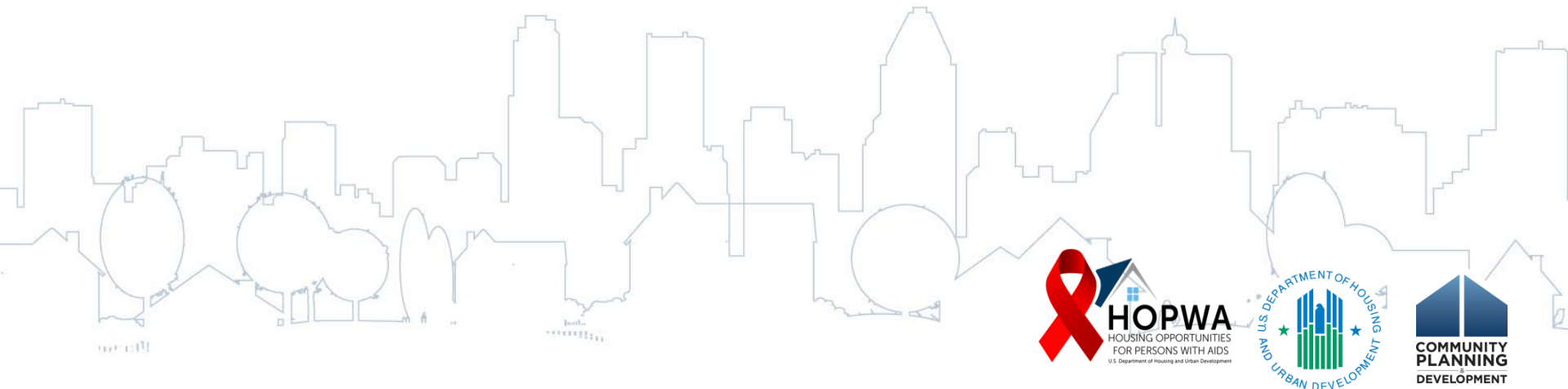
- Greater risk and liability for project sponsors
- Requires a larger outlay of funding with full checks paid by sponsor to landlords



What is HOPWA Rental Assistance?

A program that works should:

- Give housing options that fit your **community's need**
- Have a **deliberate design**...not just filling voucher slots
- Be administered by **HUD's rules**
- **Operate** in a clear and effective manner



Community Need

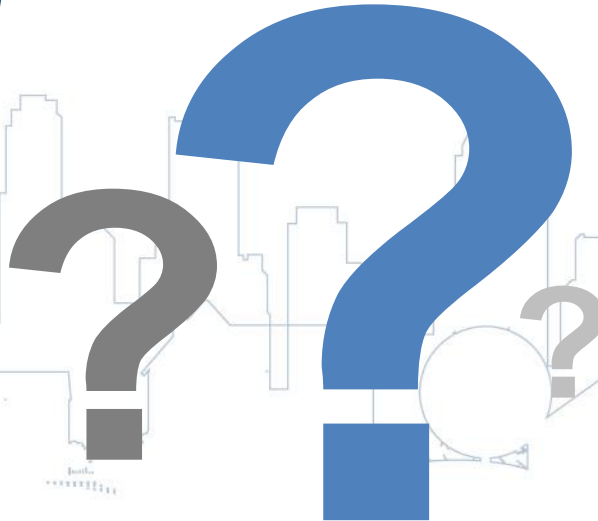


HIV/AIDS Housing Needs

**HIV
HOUSING
NEEDS**

**DO WE
KNOW WHAT
THEY ARE?**

**HOW CAN
WE FIND
OUT?**



HIV/AIDS Housing Needs

Use your data. Use your knowledge.

- Important issues to consider:
 - Housing Cost Burden
 - Affordability Gap
 - Availability & accessibility of affordable units
 - Average client household income
 - Geography



Set Your HOPWA Housing Priorities

Housing



TBRA and
Master Leasing



Emergency Shelter and
Short-term Housing.



Facility-Based PSH



STRMU

Services

Housing Case
Management



Employment Programs



Legal Assistance



Permanent Housing
Placement/Resource ID



Rental Assistance Program Design



Rental Assistance Program Design

DESIGN QUESTION 1: What housing option(s) do we want and need? At what level for each?

- TBRA
- Master Leasing – scattered site or facility based
- Project-based rental assistance
- Other facilities –
 - SRO (Single Room Occupancy)
 - Community Residence – permanent or transitional
 - Housing with treatment component
 - Emergency shelter

Rental Assistance Program Design

DESIGN QUESTION 2: Does our mission drive the design?

- Who is targeted? Homeless, at risk, very low income?
- Housing first concepts....low barrier?
- Alcohol free? Harm Reduction?
- Many requirements or few?
- Quick to terminate or rarely terminate?

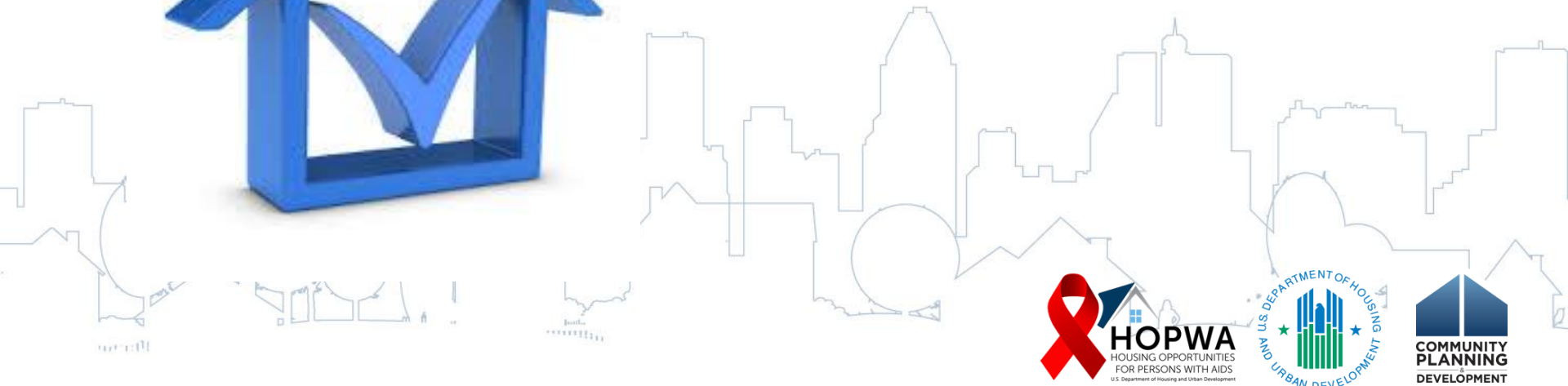
Rental Assistance Program Design

ADDITIONAL DESIGN QUESTIONS:

- Are we reaching all HIV+ persons in our coverage area?
- Is housing accessible – rural versus urban?
- Is our staffing level appropriate to the level of support needed in our housing?
- Are direct and leveraged support services adequate?
- Separation of program management from property management?
- Do we know which types of housing have the best health outcomes based on viral load data?

Rental Assistance Program Administration

- HUD Regulations
- Housing Standards



Rental Assistance Program Administration

HOPWA Rental Assistance: So much more than a voucher!

BUT... you still have to administer the voucher correctly!



Rental Assistance Program Administration

Regulatory Standards:

- Client Eligibility
- HQS/HOPWA Habitability Standards
- Resident Rent Payments
- Rent Standard
- Rent Reasonableness
- Shared Housing



Regulatory Standards

CLIENT ELIGIBILITY

- LOW INCOME
- HIV POSITIVE

Regulatory Standards

HQS – HOUSING QUALITY STANDARDS

- Housing Quality Standards (574.310 (b)) – units must meet HOPWA Habitability Standards
- Must meet state and local housing codes

Regulatory Standards

RESIDENT RENT PAYMENTS

- All residents of HOPWA housing pay rent except in short-term emergency housing
- Income & rent calculation must follow HUD rules
- No minimum rent allowed
- Important resources:
 - HUD CPD Income Calculator
 - HOPWA Rental Assistance Guidebook
 - HOPWA Income/Rent Calculation Worksheet (Excel)

Regulatory Standards

RENT STANDARD

- *Rent Standard* – includes either the HUD published Fair Market Rents (FMR) or the HUD-approved community-wide exception rent standard.
- Important details:
 - PHAs can adjust the standard
 - HOPWA grantees can opt to use FMR or PHA standard
 - Grantees may increase the rent standard by 10% for up to 20% of the units

Regulatory Standards

RENT REASONABLENESS

- Rent Reasonableness – rents paid must be comparable to market rate rents
- Important details:
 - Must conduct comparison
 - Document comparison in client files
 - Required for TBRA, Master Leasing and Project-Based (not STRMU)

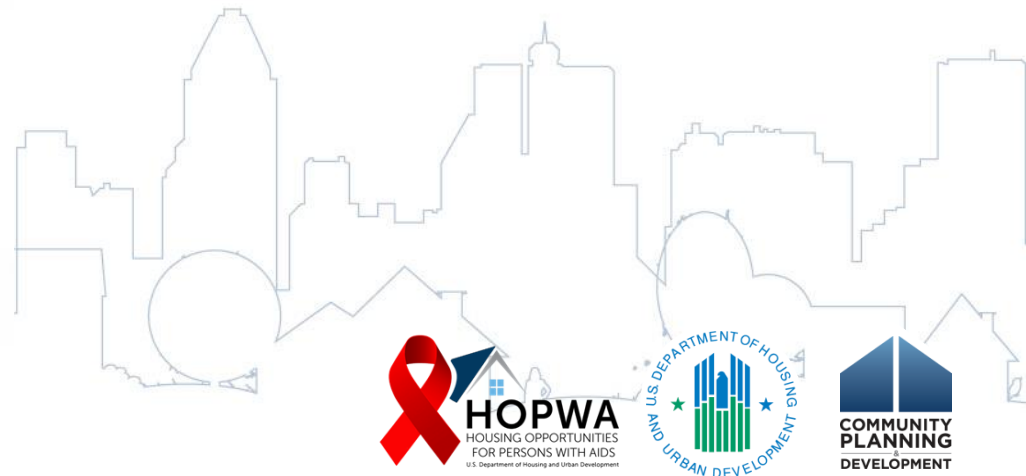
Regulatory Standards

SHARED HOUSING

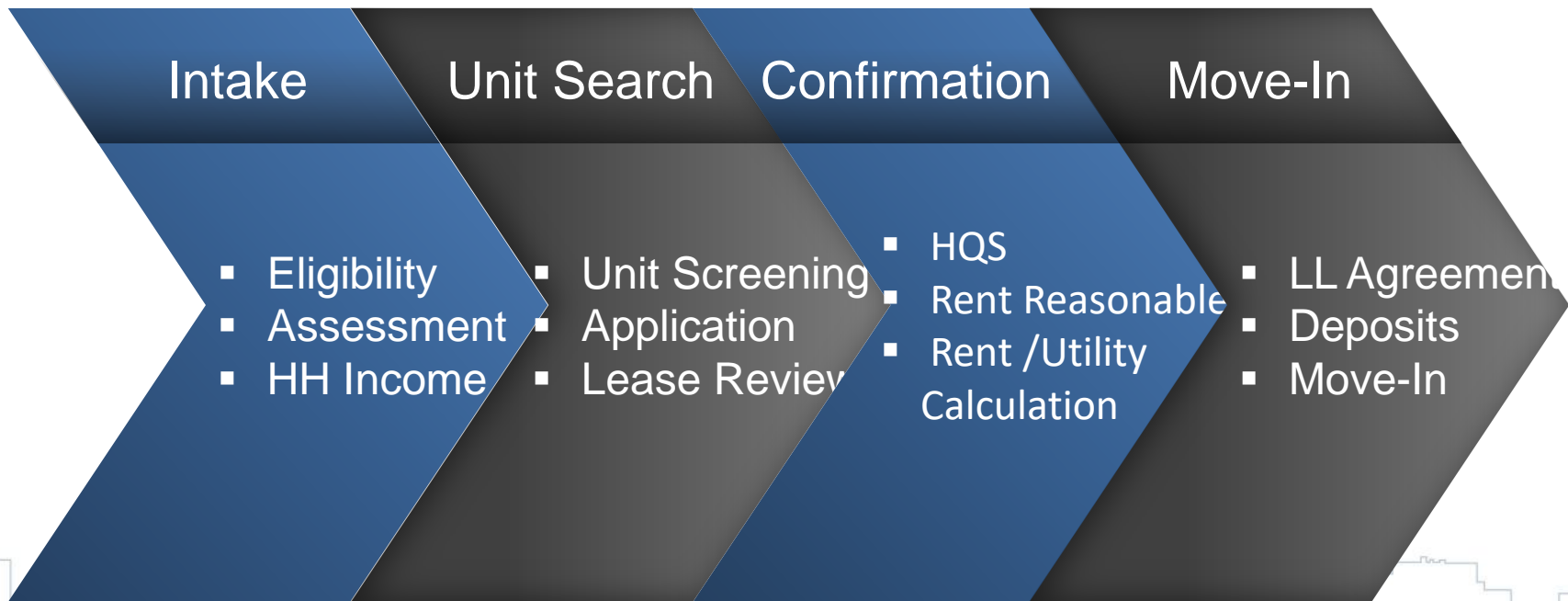
- Shared Housing – allowed by regulations under HOPWA
- Important details:
 - MUST be voluntary
 - Offers a way to reduce housing costs in a low-income, high housing cost market
 - Pro rata calculation of private and shared space

Rental Assistance Program Operation

- Program Structure and Process
- Key Policies & Procedures for Rental Assistance



Rental Assistance Program Operation



Typical Flow of TBRA Process

TBRA Process Steps - Example

Consumer Application and Assessment

Application Reviewed by Sponsor

- ✓ Eligibility – Based on Income/HIV Status
- ✓ Eligibility – Based on Special Program Focus, if applicable, i.e., Program Targets Chronically Homeless

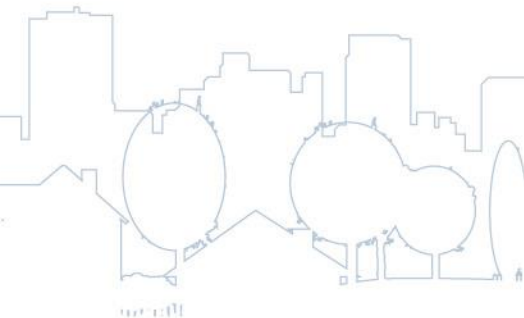
Tenant Selection

- ✓ Based on Tenant Selection Plan
- ✓ Or, Placement on Waiting List

Client Housing Search

Clients Given Information on:

- ✓ Occupancy Standards – Limits on Unit Size
- ✓ Habitability Checklist
- ✓ Limits on Rental/Utility Amounts
- ✓ Other Program Guidelines

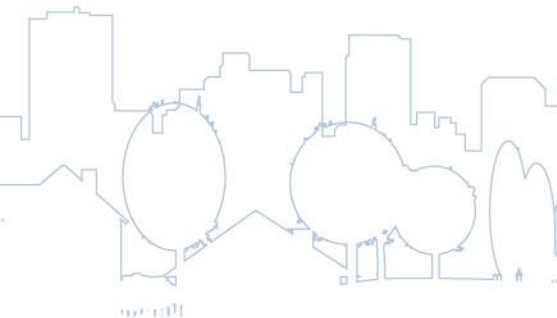


Typical Flow of TBRA Process (Cont.)

Move-In Procedures – Example

- ✓ Initial Client Screening of Unit
- ✓ Client Application to Landlord to Rent Unit
- ✓ Review of Unsigned Lease by Program Staff
- ✓ Confirm Rent Reasonableness
- ✓ Confirm Occupancy Standards
- ✓ Review for Housing Quality Standards
- ✓ Signing of Landlord Participation Agreement and Receipt of IRS W-9 Form
- ✓ Move-In Authorization Given to Client
- ✓ Lease Signed by Client
- ✓ Final Calculation of Client Rent, Subsidy Amount
- ✓ Account Setup
- ✓ Authorization of Move-In Costs – If Applicable

Confidentiality: No-Name Letterhead and Other Safeguards



Rental Assistance Policies/Procedures

Basic written policies/procedures for a rental assistance program may include:

- Program Eligibility
- Tenant Selection/Occupancy Standards
- Client Participation Agreement
- Program/House Rules
- Housing Search Process
- Move-In Procedures
- Emergency Procedures
- Termination of Assistance and Eviction
- Surviving Family Members
- Grievance Procedures
- Shared Housing
- Referral and Wait List Management

Rental Assistance Policies/Procedures

Call Out:

- Occupancy Standards
- Client Participation Agreement
- Program Rules
- Emergency Procedures
- Termination/Eviction
- TBRA Time Limits

Rental Assistance Policies/Procedures

OCCUPANCY STANDARDS

What size is the right size??



Rental Assistance Policies/Procedures

OCCUPANCY STANDARDS

- Grantees/sponsors set the standards
- PHA standards not required
- Should be reasonable, flexible and equally applied
- Must consider Fair Housing, state/local laws



Occupancy Standards Example: Agency X

- The head (and partner, if applicable) of household will be eligible for a separate bedroom.
- All other family members will use the standard of two persons per bedroom.
- Single persons are eligible for a studio or one bedroom.
- Persons of the opposite sex will not be required to share bedrooms except in the case of infants or small children.

Unit Size	Minimum # of Persons in HH	Maximum # of Persons in HH
SRO	1	1
Studio	1	1-2
1 Bedroom	1	2
2 Bedrooms	2	4
3 Bedrooms	4	6
4 Bedrooms	6	8



Rental Assistance Policies/Procedures

Client Participation Agreement:

- ✓ Outlines anything expected of the client household – what does participation entail?
- ✓ Should be clear and transparent!
- ✓ Eliminate any surprises!
- ✓ Signed by client and kept in client file.



Rental Assistance Policies/Procedures

Program Rules/Tenant Responsibilities:

Defines expected behavior in housing units:

- ✓ **Tenant conduct** – behaviors that are dangerous, unsanitary or otherwise harmful to others.
- ✓ **Substance abuse** – policies on possession or use of alcohol or drugs, depending on program focus.
- ✓ **Illegal activities** – listing of illegal activities strictly prohibited that will be reported to police (selling illegal drugs, prostitution, etc.)

Be sure your rules can be uniformly enforced!



Rental Assistance Policies/Procedures

Emergency Procedures:

- ✓ Outlines client and staff response when emergencies occur
- ✓ Do not wait until an emergency occurs to develop these procedures!



Rental Assistance Policies/Procedures

Termination/Eviction Procedures:

Clearly outlines rules for:

- ✓ Specific behaviors or circumstances that will cause termination.
- ✓ Rules must include due process for terminated clients.
- ✓ Explanation of service grace period provided for surviving family members.
- ✓ VAWA grace period.

Note: Make sure termination is a last resort!



Considering TBRA Time Limits

- TBRA is considered permanent housing and there is no set time limit on a TBRA subsidy.
- Programs can and should work to move people into other permanent housing as possible.
- Use caution about setting strict time limits on TBRA. Programs that adopt “hard stop” TBRA deadline policies often run into difficulties enforcing them.
- Bottom line: Do not discharge households into homelessness or unstable housing situations through program time limits.



Rental Assistance Reminders

- Tenants in all types of HOPWA housing with the exception of Short-term Supported Housing must pay rent based on HUD income & rent calculation methods.
- Be certain that income and rent calculations are being done correctly and the rents, including utility allowances, are at or below the FMR or payment standard.
- Use caution in adopting time limits for TBRA participation – especially “hard stop” deadlines for ending client subsidies.

Rental Assistance Reminders

- Keep your program policies & procedures up to date and be sure they reflect your program's mission and focus as well as all HUD rules.
- Be sure your clients have a good understanding of how the program works and what is expected – be transparent.
- Make sure your program is more than a rent voucher!

Q & A

