



# **Eastern PA Landlord Engagement Capacity Building Series**

## **Session One**

Technical Assistance Collaborative (TAC)  
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2022



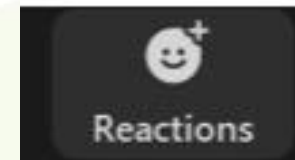
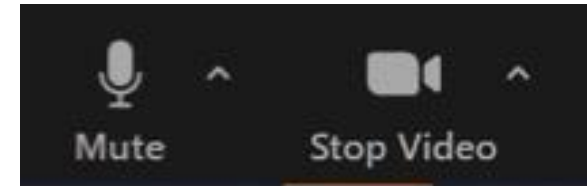
# Logistics

- For today's session, please try to join on a computer to get the most out of the interactive portions.
- Please join us on camera. We need your engagement!
- Don't be shy! Please ask questions and participate.
- Please keep yourself on mute unless talking to minimize background noise.

# Zoom Controls on Zoom Panel

*Typically on the bottom of the screen*

- Mute and Stop Video – gives you control of sound and picture
- Participants – see your peers on the call
- Chat – ask question talk with your peers
- Reactions – emojis to respond to questions





# Landlord Engagement Capacity Building Series

Provider Listening Session

May 25, 1:30 PM

Housing Search Training Part I



June 1, 1:30 PM

Housing Search Training Part II

June 7, 1:30 PM

Leadership Strategy Session

June 10



# Agenda

- 1. Welcome & Grounding**
- 2. Introductions**
- 3. Rental Industry Landscape**
- 4. Building Your Toolbox: Rental Assistance**
- 5. Building Your Toolbox: Supportive Services**
- 6. Next Steps**



# **Welcome from DMA**



# Introductions

- Name
- Pronouns
- Role
- What are you looking forward to this summer?

# Guiding Principles

- All people can achieve housing stability in permanent housing.
- Everyone is “housing ready.”
- Improved quality of life, health, mental health, and employment can be achieved through housing.
- There is a focus on the right to self-determination, dignity and respect.
- Configuration of housing and services is based on the needs and preferences of the participant.
- Some participants will require more engagement efforts & resources.





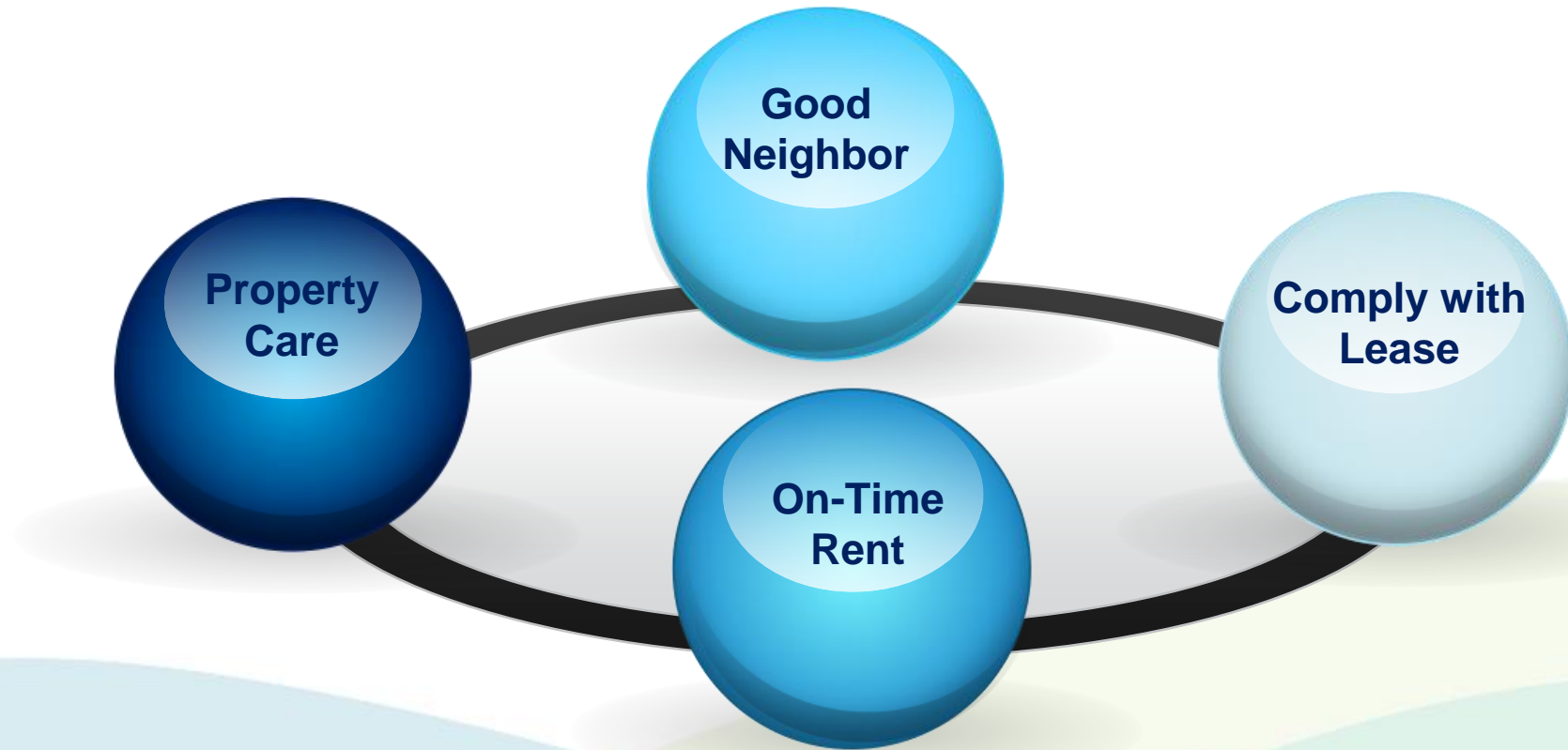
# Inequities that Impact Housing Search Process

- Redlining and historical racism has led to communities being segregated, sometimes from one street to the next, leading to fewer apparent options for disenfranchised groups.
- Marginalized populations more likely to have been incarcerated (due to over-policing and disparate enforcement of laws within communities of color) or have limited direct rental histories, making landlord relationships even more important.
- Implicit and explicit bias may lead us or our partners to deny services or feel less of a sense of urgency to identify housing opportunities to certain populations or groups.

# Rental Industry Landscape

- **Assessing Barriers, Needs, & Preferences**
- **Overcoming Barriers**
- **Small Group Activity**

# Four Things That Landlords Want





# Assessing Screening Barriers, Needs, & Preferences

## Screening Barriers

- Criminal Background
- Income
- Credit History
- Rental History
- Identification

## Housing Needs

- FMR
- Bedroom Size
- Accessibility
- Access to Public Transportation

## Housing Preferences

- Location, Neighborhood, etc.
- Green Space
- Pets Allowed
- Parking

# Assessing Screening Barriers

## Screening Barriers

Criminal Background  
Income  
Credit History  
Rental History  
Identification



## Advocate & Incentive

Service strengths  
Financial incentives  
Stability of subsidy  
VAWA considerations

## Criminal History Questionnaire Example

- Have you ever been convicted of a crime? *(Yes/No/Unsure/Opt Out)*
  - If so, what and when were your most recent offenses? *Open-ended*
- Do you have any open cases? *(Yes/No/Unsure/Opt Out)*
- Have you been in jail in the past 12 months? *(Yes/No/Unsure/Opt Out)*
- Have you been convicted of producing methamphetamine on federally assisted grounds? *(Yes/No/Unsure/Opt Out)*
- Are you subject to a lifetime sex offender registration requirement? *(Yes/No/Unsure/Opt Out)*
- Are you on probation or parole? *(Yes/No/Unsure/Opt Out)*
  - If yes, what is the name/contact info of your probation/parole officer? *(Open-ended)*
  - What date does your probation/parole end? *Date field*
- Do you owe any restitution to the court? *(Yes/No/Unsure/Opt Out)*
  - If so, how much and to which court? *(Open-ended)*

# Assessing Housing Needs

## Housing Needs

FMR  
Bedroom Size  
Accessibility  
Access to Public  
Transportation



## Document

PHA Documentation  
Reasonable  
Accommodations &  
Modifications

## Sample Housing Needs Questionnaire

- What bedroom size would you be willing to live in? As you decide, you should know that often the smaller-sized units have more frequent openings. (Check all that apply)
  - *Single room occupancy with all congregate living spaces, including bathroom*
  - *Single room occupancy with its own bathroom*
  - *Studio*
  - *One bedroom*
  - *Two-bedroom*
  - *Other: please specify*
- Are there other things that might affect where we search? Examples may be: (Check all that apply)
  - *I need to be by public transportation*
  - *I need accessibility features (lower cabinets, visual aids, no stairs, wheelchair accessibility, etc.)*
  - *I am a smoker*
  - *I have a pet*
  - *Please specify more details (accessibility features needed, etc.)- Open-ended*

# Assessing Housing Preferences

## Sample Housing Preferences Questionnaire

- Where would you like to live?\* (Open-ended, or by SPA, neighborhood, etc.)?
- Are there any areas you prefer not to live? (*Open-ended*)
  - Can you tell me a little bit about why you prefer to stay away from those areas? (*Open-ended*)

## Housing Preferences

Location, Neighborhood, etc.  
Green Space  
Pets Allowed  
Parking



## Explore & Revisit

What about the neighborhood is appealing?  
Could your pet qualify as a service animal?

# Overcoming Barriers

- **Directly Address the Barrier w/your Documentation**
  - ▶ A character reference to offset a utility debt will not convince the property the applicant will pay rent on time.
  
- **Documents, documents, documents!**
  - ▶ Document every positive point you or your client wants to communicate **in writing**.
    - Self statements, case manager reference letters, letters from case managers explaining attempts made to retrieve what the property requested, etc.
  - ▶ **Remember:** sometimes a supervisor is making the decision. They may not have heard from your participant directly



# Overcoming Barriers: Tips

## If your client is denied....

- They may receive an appeal letter- this is a chance to formally appeal the decision.
- Read and follow directions *carefully* (timeframe, forms, method of requesting appeal)
- **Exhaust** any appeal process
- **Prepare for appeal hearing:** practice, prep client for who will be in the room, come with additional documentation, bring character witnesses in person if possible, empower client to speak on own behalf as much as possible but fill in as needed.
  - ▶ *Remember*- the stakes are high for your client! Treat as your own job interview.



# Overcoming Barriers

## VAWA, Reasonable Accommodation, & LEP

- Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) amendments in 2006 requires consideration of domestic/dating violence and stalking in variety of policies related to admission and continued occupancy for federally subsidized resources.
- PHAs and owners have duties under 504, FHAA, and ADA to reasonably accommodate (RA) those with disabilities, including admissions and continued occupancy actions.
- PHAs must have forms/notices and policies that address the needs of those with Limited English Proficiency (LEP), including admissions and cont. occupancy.

# Laundry List: Sources of Documentation to Mitigate Criminal Records

- Reasonable Accommodation
- Graduation/program completion letters (TX, training, etc.)
- Use legal services
- Employer/Education Letters
- Faith-based community
- In-person attendees at appeal hearings
- Shelter/outreach references
- Examples of caring for own health
- Letters from lawyer- reason for pleading guilty
- Docket sheets
- Probation/Parole Officer Letters
- Volunteer Letters
- Dept. of Children & Family Service Letters
- Find step-up housing opportunities (i.e. SRO's, RRH often have lower threshold criteria)





# Laundry List: Addressing Negative Credit

- Explain damaging information
- Demonstrate positive changes in income
- Seek reasonable accommodation
- Offer to have some else pay the rent
- Vendor payment, representative payee
- Apply to different landlords
- Domestic Violence: Poor rental payment history can be mitigated if shown it was due to the abuser's presence in the dwelling
  - ▶ Ex. Unemployment, which led to bad credit history, may be due to emotional trauma



# Laundry List: Addressing Negative Rental & Credit History

- Explain damaging information
- Demonstrate positive changes in income
- Seek reasonable accommodation
- Offer to have some else pay the rent
- Vendor payment, representative payee
- Apply to different landlords
- Negotiate a simple reference
- Show that the prior landlord's reference is biased or unfair
- Show that the circumstances that led to the negative history have changed
- Domestic Violence: Poor rental payment history or tenancy issues can be mitigated if shown it was due to the abuser's presence in the dwelling

# Small Group Activity

- In groups of three, choose a common barrier to housing faced by the households you serve.
- List the concerns a landlord would have specific to that barrier.
- List the concrete pieces of information you would document about your participant's situation.
- You can use the “Laundry List” slides for ideas.
- Remember, every small change should be documented to strengthen a case.

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We will do a large group report out.



# **Building Your Toolbox**

## **Rental Assistance**

# Inventory what you have to offer

- Rental Assistance
  - ▶ Timeliness of check cutting
  - ▶ Direct Connection to HP if needed
- Deposit
- Risk Mitigation Funds
- Vacancy Loss Mitigation
- Application Fee
- Tenant Screening Check
- Move-in Kit/ Household Items
- Access to Basic Need Resources
  - ▶ Food
  - ▶ Phone





# **Building Your Toolbox Supportive Services**

# Inventory what you have to offer

- Home visits
- Frequency of case management engagements
- Financial literacy services
- After care services
- Timeliness of response (landlord & participant)
- Connections to other community based resources
- Support navigating VAWA
- Support terminating a tenancy
- Connection to crisis services



# Sample Tool to Assess Supportive Services

Supportive Service	Frequency	Duration	Internal Service	Community Resource
Tenant Screening Barrier Assessment				
Budgeting/Financial Literacy				
Housekeeping & Skills Training				
Access to Food Pantry				
Routine Health & Safety Checks				
Behavioral Health Services				
Medication Management				
Home Health Services				
Employment Services				
Landlord Mediation				
Single Point of Contact for Property Managers				

# Landlord Engagement Resources

- [HUD Landlord Engagement and Recruitment Resource](#)
- [Landlord Engagement | United States Interagency Council on Homelessness \(USICH\)](#)
- [HUD Landlord Engagement Equity During COVID](#)
- [Homeless System Response: Landlord Engagement Strategies in the Time of COVID-19 \(hudexchange.info\)](#)
- [Engaging Landlords: Risk Mitigation Funds Community Profiles | United States Interagency Council on Homelessness \(USICH\)](#)
- [SSVF Practice Area Document on Landlord Support](#)
- [HUD Rehousing With Equity](#)
- [HUD Examples of Housing Discrimination](#)
- [HUD Memo on Use of Criminal Records](#)



**Thank you!**