



# MIAMI DADE HOMELESS HELPLINE TRAINING

PREVENTION & DIVERSION

1

## Helpline Reconfiguration

Goals, Workflow &  
Roles

2

## Diversion & Problem Solving

Quick, housing-  
focused crisis  
resolution

3

## Prevention

Leveraging  
community  
resources for those  
at imminent risk

4

## Homeless Risk & Vulnerability

Prioritizing most  
vulnerable

5

## Housing Planning

Assessment and  
service planning;  
Verification of  
homelessness

# TRAINING STRUCTURE

---

## PART ONE

We will cover:

- System Goals
- Helpline Reconfiguration & Workflow
- Roles



## SYSTEM GOALS

- **Reduce inflow** of newly homeless for all households who can resolve without shelter
  - ⇒ Reduced homelessness
- **Accelerate access to housing** options for persons experiencing literal homelessness
  - ⇒ Shorter length of stay/time homeless
- **Prioritize limited shelter and housing resources** for households with the greatest service needs
  - ⇒ Most vulnerable persons obtain successful housing outcomes



# HELPLINE RECONFIGURATION OBJECTIVES

1

**Reduce repeat callers.** Help callers on the first call, or direct them to the most appropriate service, housing supports, assessment next steps

2

**Clarify worker roles.** Define specific expectations for each team. Design a process for cross-team coordination and alignment.

3

**Standardize decision making.** Use defined tools to promote uniform care coordination, decision making, and support the transition to housing.

4

**Improve staff's work experience.** Enable staff to focus on helping people with clear answers, effective tools, and streamlined access to resources

# HELPLINE WORKFLOW

**Option #1: At-Risk of Homelessness.** Caller will be literally homeless in less than 14 days and has no resources (financial means or family/social connections) to resolve the crisis independently.

- ⇒ **Camillus** staff complete a Diversion screen, assess for HP assistance, identify options designed to accelerate PH options

**Option #2: Domestic Violence.** Caller is currently fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking or sex trafficking.

- ⇒ Call forwarded to **DV Hotline**

**Option #3: Veteran.** Caller is part of a Veteran family, meaning that at least one person in the family served in the active military, naval, or air service, regardless of length of service, and who was discharged or released under any status except dishonorable discharge or General court-martial.

- ⇒ Call forwarded to **Miami VAMC** to assess eligibility

**Option #4: Homeless – City of Miami Beach.** Caller is physically located in City of Miami Beach and will be seeking services directly from Miami Beach.

- ⇒ Call forwarded to **City of Miami Beach Homeless Hotline**

**Option #5: Homeless – City of Miami/Dade County** (exclusive of Miami Beach). Caller is physically located in any part of Dade County exclusive of Miami Beach.

- **Single Adult** (or couple without children) ⇒ **City of Miami Homeless Helpline**
- **Family** ⇒ **City of Miami Homeless Helpline**



# HELPLINE WORKFLOW (CONTINUED)

**Option #5: Homeless – City of Miami/Dade County** (exclusive of Miami Beach). Caller is physically located in any part of Dade County exclusive of Miami Beach.

- **Family** ⇒ **City of Miami Homeless Helpline**

1. **First Time Caller**

- **Registration** – Collect caller’s information and enter data in HMIS
- **Diversion Screen** – assess caller’s housing options and level of severity
- **HP Assessment** – explore all HP options and resources, identify strategies designed to accelerate PH options (vouchers, employment, relocation, etc.) ⇒ **Camillus House**
- **Homeless Risk & Vulnerability Screen** – prioritize for emergency shelter and other crisis services

2. **Repeat Caller**

- **Diversion Screen** – assess if any changes from data previously collected ⇒ **City of Miami Homeless Helpline**
- **Homeless Risk & Vulnerability Screen** – assess if changes needed to prioritization for emergency shelter and other crisis services ⇒ **Camillus House**
- **Manage Motel Stays** – provide case management to families in hotels ⇒ **Chapman**

# ESSENTIAL WORKFLOW UPDATES

## Families

- A diversion screening will be offered to families regardless if they chose **Option #1** (At Risk of Homelessness) or **Option #5** (Literally Homeless)
- City of Miami Helpline will offer shelter/hotel when available ONLY AFTER Diversion has been attempted
- City of Miami Helpline will manage emergency shelter access for families
- Chapman will continue case management for families in motels
- Camillus will refer families to Helpline for shelter screening when Prevention not successful
- Outreach team (“Green Shirts”) to verify homelessness for any unsheltered family



# YOUTH RESOURCES

- Unaccompanied youth and young adults between the ages of 18 and 24 experiencing homelessness can visit any one of these access points:
  - [Lotus House](#)
  - [Citrus Health Network Safe Haven](#)
  - [Educate Tomorrow](#)
  - [Miami Bridge](#)
  - [Pridelines](#)

# REGISTRATION PROCESS FOR FIRST TIME CALLERS

1. Basic Household Information – demographics, household configuration
2. Recent Housing History
3. Previous Housing History
4. Alternate Housing Arrangements
5. Family & Social Supports
6. Diversion – Creative Problem-Solving Conversation



## DIVERSION BASICS

What

Who

When



# HOMELESSNESS DIVERSION/ RAPID RESOLUTION

**Prevents** homelessness for people seeking shelter by:

- Identifying immediate alternate housing arrangements and,
- Connecting people with services and financial assistance to help them return to permanent housing.

**Reduces length of time** homeless for people who are already homeless by:

- Ongoing exploration of creative, solution-oriented housing options
- Identifying short-term placements that are safe, appropriate

- Diversion should always be safe and appropriate for the client
- Diversion efforts don't create barriers to the homeless system for those who need to access it

# PREVENTION CONTINUUM – CLARIFYING DIFFERENCES



The Framework for an  
Equitable COVID-19  
Homelessness Response

#HousingEquity

## Homelessness Diversion

**Target Population:**

HHs presenting for  
homelessness assistance,  
highly impacted  
neighborhoods

**Funding Sources:**

ESG-CV, CDBG-CV, Coronavirus  
Relief Fund, Private/Local  
Sources

## Homelessness Prevention

**Target Population:**

HHs with a previous episode of  
homelessness, 0-30% AMI, HHs  
with rent/utility arrears, highly  
impacted neighborhoods

**Funding Sources:**

Emergency Rental Assistance  
(Treasury), Coronavirus Relief  
Fund, CDBG-CV, ESG-CV

## Eviction Prevention

**Target Population:**

0-50% AMI, highly impacted  
neighborhoods, HHs with rent  
or utility arrears,  
small landlords

**Funding Sources:**

Emergency Rental Assistance  
(Treasury), Coronavirus Relief  
Fund, CDBG-CV

# RISK OF HOMELESSNESS

## Homelessness Diversion

- Extreme risk

## Homelessness Prevention

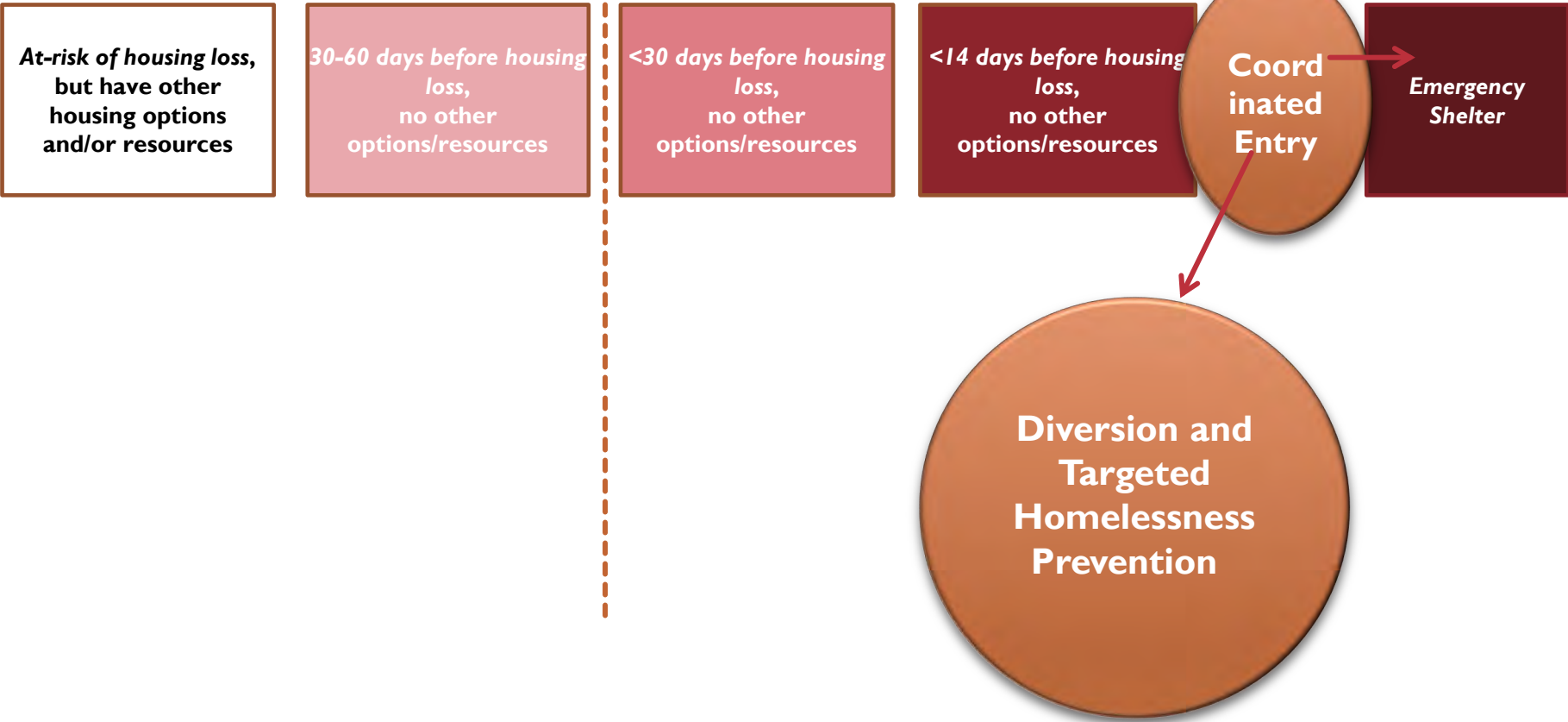
- Moderate risk

## Eviction Prevention

- Low Risk



Risk for housing loss & literal homelessness





## DIVERSION: THE PRACTICE

- Effective **housing problem-solving** involves much more than simply asking a prescribed set of questions.
- It is carried out by skilled, trained, and flexible staff who engage in **open-ended, exploratory conversations** to understand a household's strengths and existing support networks.
- Housing problem-solving starts with conversations intended to:
  1. Identify the **household's strengths** and existing support networks;
  2. Explore **safe housing options** outside the homelessness services system, even if temporary when a part of a diversion or rapid-exit intervention; and
  3. Connect the household to **community supports** and services.

## DIVERSION: THE PRACTICE

- Diversion **explores options** that the household may not have been able to identify or felt comfortable enough to explore on their own.
- After identifying options, staff members determine what **other types of services** or supports may be necessary to make the identified option a reality.
- Sometimes the solutions are as simple as **mediating a conflict** with a family member or connecting a household to community resources like health, social services, and employment.
- At other times, the solution might include **onetime financial assistance**. Since financial assistance isn't always necessary, communities can implement housing problem-solving regardless of whether financial assistance is available.
- Of course, there may also be instances when **ongoing follow up** is necessary to provide continued support to families as they work through conflict or other challenges

## DIVERSION SERVICES

- Strengths-based case management
- Conflict resolution
- Housing search
- Landlord-tenant mediation
- Connection to mainstream resources
- Family mediation
- Tenant legal services
- Credit repair

# DIVERSION FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

## Camillus House Discretionary Emergency Assistance Funds (Food & Beverage Fund)

- Rental application fees
- Security or utility deposits
- Utility or rental arrears
- Moving costs
- Bus, train, or airplane tickets to help facilitate return to family
- Food assistance
- Car repairs, bus passes, gas, vehicle repairs, and other expenses for job-related transportation
- Costs associated with obtaining identification documents
- Employment supplies, like uniforms, work boots, or cell phones
- Employment-related training certifications



# EXAMPLES OF DIVERSION'S COMMUNITY IMPACT

## Southeastern Connecticut

- Reduced shelter beds from 83 to 53
- In 2015 diverted 79% of families
- Average cost is \$1,649

## Cleveland, OH

- 7-12% of single adults calling the hotline were Diverted
- Average cost is < \$500

## Montgomery County, PA

- 85% of cases handled in under an hour
- In 2015 diverted 64% of clients
- Average cost is \$1,325
- Where did they go?
  - 35% stayed doubled up
  - 15% stayed in their housing
  - 12% moved to their own housing

# ASSESSING FOR DIVERSION

Where did you sleep last night?

Can those issues be resolved?

Where do you have your belongings?

Why did you have to leave?

If we can't house you where will you stay tonight?

Do you have any income?

# DIVERSION PRACTICE

## **Ashley**

- Ashley called the Helpline, asking for emergency shelter. She has never been homeless before but now she's sleeping in her car since she got in an argument with her boyfriend, Roberto. Roberto got angry that she was texting with her previous boyfriend, the father of Ashley's 2-year-old daughter. Roberto has a nice apartment, makes about \$4,000 a month and has been a stabilizing resource for Ashley and her daughter. Ashley's mother lives in South Miami, but they haven't spoken in several months. Ashley has never had an apartment in her own name. Ashley makes about \$1,000 a month doing hair and nails out of Roberto's apartment.

**What Diversion strategies would you pursue with Ashley?**



# DIVERSION STRATEGIES FOR MIAMI

- **Target first time homeless.** Diversion is most effective for persons who are experiencing homelessness for the first time.
- **Target persons with income.** Clients with current income, recent work history, or ability to quickly increase income can often resolve through Diversion.
- **Explore Problem Solving.** Identify the primary factors contributing to the current housing crisis. Discuss how resolution might be possible through the client's active exploration of their own resolution strategies.
- **Offer Mediation.** Many housing crises are the result of a communication breakdown with landlord, property management or family. Can case management step in to clarify core problems and identify solutions?
- **Explore Reunification.** Is the client's most recent housing placement a safe, appropriate place to explore, even for a short-term placement?
- **Leverage temporary financial assistance.** Often very modest financial assistance can



## PART 3: PREVENTION

We will cover

- Resources
- Eligibility
- What are the essential elements
- When is Prevention most effective
- Roles: who is doing what

# MIAMI/DADE PREVENTION RESOURCES

## **Miami-Dade Community Action and Humans Services Department (CAHSD)**

Office of Housing Advocacy (OHA)

Housing Advocacy Hotline: 786-469-4545

Housingadvocacy@miamidade.gov

<https://miamidade.gov/housingadvocacy>

## **Legal Services of Greater Miami** (for people facing an eviction)

Website: <https://www.legalservicesmiami.org/>

(305) 576-0080

## **Rental Assistance Options**

Miami-Dade Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP)

Website: <https://www.miamidade.gov/global/housing/emergency-rental-assistance-program.page>

Miami-Dade County, Community Action and Human Services Department (CAHSD)

Find nearest location at: [https://www.miamidade.gov/global/service.page?Mduid\\_service=ser1542309305236810](https://www.miamidade.gov/global/service.page?Mduid_service=ser1542309305236810)

Homeless Helpline

1-877-994-4357

Select Option #1 to speak to someone from Camillus House, Homelessness Prevention Program

# EVICTIION PREVENTION CONTINUED

- ERAP [ERAP@miamidade.gov](mailto:ERAP@miamidade.gov) 305-723-1815.

Northern Miami-Dade County

Victory Homes

520 NW 75 Street

Miami, FL 33150

Southern Miami-Dade County

Homestead Gardens

1542 SW 4 Street

Homestead, FL 33030

# PREVENTION SCREENER

1. Is client eligible based on the funding source being considered (ERAP, ESG, SSVF, Bezos, Food & Beverage)?
2. Is client very low income?
3. Is client at imminent risk of literal homelessness?
  1. Where is client staying right now?
  2. Is the current housing situation safe?
  3. When do they have to leave?
  4. What's causing you to have to leave?
  5. How long can you stay there and still be safe?
  6. Can I contact landlord, family, friend where you are staying to verify?
  7. What are other safe and appropriate places to stay while we look for/access new housing?



# APPLYING 'AT-RISK' DEFINITION

1. **Low Income.** Total household income is below 50% of area median income for ESG-CV or below 30% of AMI for annual ESG

**AND**

2. **Lacks Resources.** Household lacks sufficient resources or support networks to prevent them from having to seek emergency shelter or other housing situation that meets the literal homeless definition (Category I)

**AND**

3. **“At-Risk”.** Meets any one of the following:

- Has moved because of economic reasons two or more times during the 60 days preceding the application for assistance
- Is living in the home of another because of economic hardship
- Has been notified that their right to occupy current housing will be terminated within 21 days of the application for assistance
- Lives in a hotel/motel that is not paid by charitable or government programs
- Lives in overcrowded housing (a SRO or 0-BR housing more than 2 persons or a housing unit with more than 1.5 persons/room)
- Exiting a publicly funded system of care

# HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS LINKED TO INSTABILITY AND INCREASED RISK OF HOMELESSNESS

- “According to the National Alliance to End Homelessness, there are various factors that contribute to an increased risk of homelessness. These housing characteristics include households that are
  - doubled up, or living with friends or family
  - persons recently released from prison,
  - young adults out of foster care
  - households with severe cost burden
  - households facing unemployment
- HUD defines cost-burdened families as those “who pay more than 30 percent of their income for housing” and “may have difficulty affording necessities such as food, clothing, transportation, and medical care.” **Severe rent burden** is defined as paying more than 50 percent of one’s income on rent.



# SHINN-GREER PREVENTION SCREENER

## 1 point – Any of the following for the HoH

- Pregnancy
- Child under 2
- No high school/GED
- Not currently employed
- Not leaseholder
- Reintegrating into community

## 2 points – Any of the following

- Receiving public assistance
- Protective services
- Evicted or asked to leave by landlord or leaseholder
- Applied for shelter in last 3 months

## 3 points

- Reports previous shelter as adult

## *Age*

- 1 pt: 23 - 28 years
- 2 pts: ≤22 years

## *Moves last year*

- 1 pt: 1-3 moves
- 2 pts: 4+ moves

## *Disruptive experiences in childhood*

- 1 pt: 1-2 experiences
- 2 pts: 3+ experiences

## *Discord (landlord, leaseholder, or household)*

- 1 pt: Moderate
- 2 pts: Severe

# CAN HOUSEHOLDS WITH LEGAL LEASE BE 'AT RISK' OR 'IMMINENT RISK' ?

## 'At Risk of Homelessness'

- **Notified that right to occupy housing will be terminated within 21 days**
  - Written notification from property owner/manager with authority to terminate tenancy that tenancy will terminate within 21 days – DOES NOT NEED TO BE THE EQUIVALENT OF A COURT-ORDERED EVICTION
  - If notice specifies a way for tenant to remedy situation – must substantiate that tenant is unable to meet terms to avoid eviction
  - If source documents and third-party verification are not obtainable, written statement by intake worker documenting efforts to obtain required documentation demonstrating due diligence in seeking documents.

## 'At Imminent Risk'

- **MUST substantiate that housing will be lost in 14 days:**
  - A court eviction order that requires the family to leave within 14 days
  - Notice equivalent to eviction action
  - Notice to Quit or
  - Notice to Terminate under state law
  - Notices to Quit or Terminate do not have to be equivalent of court ordered eviction but there **must be reasonable expectation that household will lose residence within 14 days**

## DOCUMENTING THAT RESIDENCE WILL BE LOST IN 14 DAYS

### At least one of the following:

- Court order resulting from eviction or formal eviction notice
- For those living in hotels/motels, evidence that household lacks financial resources to stay more than 14 days
- Oral statement that owner or primary tenant of the residence **will not allow them to stay** for more than 14 days AND
  - Written verification from owner/primary tenant verifying client's statement OR
  - Documentation of staff efforts to obtain verification from owner/primary tenant AND
  - Client self-declaration of homelessness

## DOCUMENTATION FOR... *NO SUBSEQUENT RESIDENCE OR RESOURCES*



No Subsequent **Residence: self-certification by individual or head of household** that no subsequent residence has been identified



Lacks resources or support networks: **self-certification or other written documentation** that household lacks the resources and support networks to obtain other permanent housing

# PREVENTION PRACTICE

## Cassie

- Cassie called the Helpline, asking for emergency rental assistance. Cassie lives with her 6-year daughter and her adult sister, Jackie, in a two-bedroom apartment. Jackie used to help with the rent, but her unemployment ran out and she hasn't worked or helped financially since the early summer. Cassie is three months behind on rent and owes over \$1,000 in utility arrearages. Cassie makes about \$3,000 monthly as a server. Her rent is \$1,800 a month. The landlord will let Cassie sign a new lease in a one-bedroom for \$1,500 a month but he requires a double deposit plus first month's rent, and he doesn't want the sister, Jackie, on the lease or staying in the apartment. Cassie doesn't know if she can afford the one-bedroom and she doesn't know what her sister will do if Cassie downsizes to a one-bedroom.

**Is Cassie eligible for Prevention? What strategies would you pursue with Cassie?**



---

## HOUSING PLANNING

- **Collaborative and planned** approach to ensuring that a person experiencing homelessness gets the services and supports they need to get housing
- **Client-centered** approach means the client has a say in identifying goals and the services they need
- **Critical Time Intervention (CTI)** can be a key to early intervention and supports for the client's transition to housing and independence.

# TASKS TO PREPARE PEOPLE FOR HOUSING APPLICATION

1. Educate on housing options and expectations of each option
2. Identify client's goals and preferences and develop a housing plan
3. Assess housing and homelessness history
4. Assess ability to increase income or improve employment
5. Gather documents for the application process
6. Assist with housing search and negotiations
7. Connect to resources that support community stabilization-treatment and supports
8. Teach tenancy skills

# ENGAGE IN THE PROCESS

- Get a homeless and housing History
- Ask what their plan is to end their homelessness
- Start establishing long term and short-term goals: I want housing so that.....
  - Long term goals are something people can feel – this keeps people motivated through an often-tiring process to gather resources needed to access housing
  - Short term – time limited goals provide momentum, confidence and an opportunity to reevaluate
- Begin to review housing options process and eligibility
- Reach an agreement on what to pursue
- Think about this as skill building to access and maintain housing





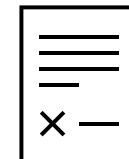
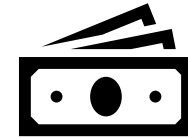
# EDUCATE ON HOUSING OPTIONS

- Based on income, housing history and housing goals determine eligibility for in system housing and out of homeless system housing
- Ask everyone to apply for Section 8 if the list is open: use this as a base to start gathering documents
- Discuss the eligibility for RRH, PSH and any subsidy available through CoC (EVH) use the eligibility discussion to start assembling documents
- Register with Coordinated Access
- Talk about options such shared housing, room rentals, market rate apartments
- Discuss family and friends that may be a possible share opportunity
  - We reevaluate housing options at every step – as people learn more about the process and their own resources and skills



# INCOME AND DOCUMENTS

- Work on increasing income and work on benefits both cash and in-kind
  - Keep in mind not everyone will be able to pursue this on a referral
  - Plan for a percentage of people to need hands on assistance and need to be accompanied to appointments
  - Work on linkages to employment programs and employment resources
  - Some people may be without documents and will need connections to immigrant resources and likely faith communities to access assistance
  - Families with young children will need connections to schools look for Homeless Liaison
- Begin to assemble documents needed to access housing
  - Some people will need more help use progressive engagement to determine who needs assistance.



# TEACH TENANCY SKILLS AND CONNECT TO RESOURCES

- Be prepared to review tenancy rights and responsibilities so people can prepare for expectations
- Do some eviction prevention based on previous issues
- Connect to resources to assist now and who may be able to help each person maintain housing –
  - Invite legal aid attorneys in to do a class on tenancy for both staff and participants
  - Ask them to give out their cards and problem solve situations where they may need assistance



# HOUSING LOCATION AND TRANSITION FROM SERVICES



Assist with housing interview prep and be prepared to help with housing location

Do a preferences worksheet and prepare people to negotiate



Work with programs such as RRH or PSH and pass on the preferences work sheet and all assessment material



Structure a warm handoff with each participant to the next resource or program providing assistance

Mentor people to accept services and guide the process by talking about the accomplishments pre-housing and prioritizing the work after housing



Planning: review document



Plan is determined after initial plan by the requirement of chosen housing program

# HOUSING-FOCUSED CASE MANAGEMENT PRACTICE

**Jenny and Carlos have three small children.** Jenny worked part time and Carlos worked full time. Jenny's mom took care of the younger children while she was at work. Carlos got hurt on his job and is dependent on crutches to get around. He got some short-term disability payments but that and Jenny's job was not enough to cover rent, let alone food and utilities. The children slept at her mothers and Jenny and Carlos slept in their car, until it got towed. Jenny then lost her job. They also now have a transport problem getting Carlos to his medical appointments and getting their children to school. They have been sleeping wherever they can largely in alleys. They are at wits end. The school is asking questions. She is afraid that they will take her children. She tells the worker if she doesn't get into a shelter she might as well just call the foster care people herself. Carlos just stares and doesn't say a word.

- Using the document: one person is the family, one person is the case manager, one person observes and reports back
- Please talk about the mutuality of the discussion and point where you needed to reach for more information

**What's the housing plan for Jenny, Carlos and their family?**



# THANK YOU!

ANDREA WHITE: [AWHITE@HOUSINGINNOVATIONS.US](mailto:AWHITE@HOUSINGINNOVATIONS.US)

MATT WHITE: [MWHITE@HOUSINGINNOVATIONS.US](mailto:MWHITE@HOUSINGINNOVATIONS.US)