



Accessible Housing:

A Human Right

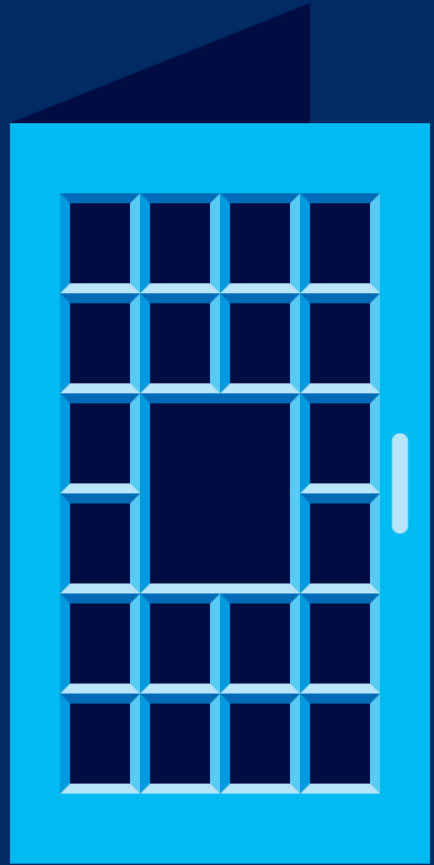
Inglis Self-Determination Housing of PA
Statewide Housing Conference

Presented By



In Partnership With





Landlord Engagement: Investment in Relationships

Timothy Burchett and Rainy Boyle



Landlord Mediation

Why is it so important to build strong relationships with landlords?



- **PA Inclusive is a provider of services for people with disabilities who have a 'Waiver for Service' through the Pennsylvania Office of Developmental Programs (ODP). We provide In-Home and Community Supports, Companion Services, Supported Employment, and Supported Living Services.**
- **PA Inclusive has Housing Transition/Tenancy Sustaining Services for those individuals who want to live independently.**
- **Our housing specialist are trained in PREP rental training, and help our individuals to find, secure, and maintain housing.**
- **Luzerne, Lackawanna, Berks, Monroe, Pike, Carbon, Schuylkill, Leigh, Northampton, Columbia, Wyoming, Bucks, and Wayne County**

Why is communication always important?!

Prior to Renting

- Highlight your positive qualities and show you are working to address any issues.
- Can help get questions answered on the rules and policies which may be outlined in the lease.
- Learn if the landlord will allow the security deposit to be paid in monthly installments.
- Allow for open negotiation on the rent if the tenant offers to take care things such as yard work.

While Renting

- Learn the contact preferences of the landlord.
 - Pay rent in person initially to get better acquainted.
 - Respect their time.
 - Know what rises to the level of a maintenance request.
 - Provide the best personal contact information.
- ❖ This engagement can help gain a landlord who may have been refusing to accept section 8 or other rental assistance programs.

Why is communication always important?! (2)

Landlord mediation

- Can be done at any stage
- Allows for both parties to be heard, solutions to be discussed and agreed upon by both parties

Diversion Programs

- A combination of services including rental assistance, mediation and other local resources that help avoid eviction court judgment

Tenant should be upfront and honest with the landlord about all history.

Some stats and facts. (Based on Luzerne County)

- Single individuals on Social Security Income usually get anywhere from \$900-\$1100/month.
- Housing waitlists in Luzerne County are 6 months to one year. (Some are three years!)

| Year | <u>Efficiency</u> | <u>One-Bedroom</u> | Two-Bedroom | <u>Three-Bedroom</u> | <u>Four-Bedroom</u> |
|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| FY 2024 FMR | \$730 | \$854 | \$1,039 | \$1,343 | \$1,464 |
| <u>FY 2023 FMR</u> | \$706 | \$825 | \$1,008 | \$1,304 | \$1,417 |

- https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/fmr/fmrs/FY2024_code/2024summary.odn

Some Stats and Facts (Continued...)

- *70.6 million* people received benefits from programs administered by the Social Security Administration (SSA) in 2022.
- *5.6 million* people were newly awarded Social Security benefits in 2022.

That is 22.9% of the population receiving Social Security Income.

Yet less than three percent (2.84%) of the American population lives in low-income housing, at a total of 9.3 million people.

<https://www.statisticser.com/section-8-statistics/#:~:text=Section%208%20Facts%202022%2D2023,total%20of%209.3%20million%20people.>

https://www.ssa.gov/policy/docs/chartbooks/fast_facts/2023/fast_facts23.html#:~:text=70.6%20million%20people%20received%20benefits,Social%20Security%20benefits%20in%202022.

Looking at a local listing together

- PLAINS
- 1st floor, 1 bedroom, clean & freshly painted, wall to wall carpet, parking in rear,
- Tenant pays electric & cable. Basement Washer/ dryer hook up & storage. \$850/month + \$850 security, no pets, no smoking.
 - Call 570-555-5555

Fair Housing

The Fair Housing Act was established in 1968 as a follow up to the original Civil Rights Act. The Act was created to protect individuals from discrimination when renting or buying a home.



Disability



Race



Sex



Color



National
Origin



Religion



Familial
Status



Sexual
Orientation/
Gender
Identity

Common Violations

- Refusing to rent to someone because of their race
- Refusing to allow a service animal
- Refusing to make reasonable accommodations and/or modifications

Housing Authority search engines.

- <https://www.hud.gov/states/pennsylvania/renting/hawebsites>
- <https://www.luzctyha.org/>
- <https://www.wilkesbarrehousing.org/housing-application/>
- <https://www.scrantonhousing.org/>

Other housing options

- 211 – will put you in touch with services in your area. I.E food banks, shelters, rental assistance programs, community action programs, etc.
- <https://www.phfa.org/> for repairs on owned properties
- <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/811-pra/>
- SHARE Housing
 - <https://www.aging.pa.gov/aging-services/housing/Pages/SHARE.aspx>

❖ In emergency situations with our clients with disabilities, Supports Coordinator's can reach out to the county AE's to get emergency respite or life sharing.

Important Numbers

- HUD office WB PA
 - 570-825-6657
- For someone trying to navigate section 8 my housing search housing navigator www.myhousingsearch.com
 - 1-877-428-8844
- For legal advice
 - North Penn Legal Services Pittston PA
 - 33 N Main St Pittston, PA 18640 Office: 570-299-4100 Apply by phone: 1-877-953-4250
Apply online: <https://www.nplspa.org/>
 - Summit Legal Aid
 - 10 West Cherry Avenue Washington, PA 15301 Office: 724-225-6170 x2754 Hotline: 1.877.725.4472 Fax: 724.250.1078

Questions



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Building and maintaining strong landlord relationships

The need/demand for affordable landlords varies based on the area

Solutions vary based on an agencies funding and local resources

The benefits to good landlord relationships include opportunity
for higher utilization, stronger long term relationships

Strategy by Process Improvement

- Education and Outreach
 - New Landlord Outreach
 - Do landlord lunches/dinners work?
 - Is Zoom educational events a better investment
 - Tenant Education
 - How being a better tenant will help with future rentals
 - Utilize Ross coordinator?
 - Link with community resources for education.
 - Real Estate Groups/Management Companies
 - One bad relationship or misunderstanding with Management Group
 - Offer to give groups education about the program
 - Listen to concerns, even if you cannot give a answer they want.

Technology

- Landlord Page

- How good is the information posted (have staff attend trainings geared toward landlords so staff contact can answer questions.)
- How delayed is the posting of information.
- Can our system give landlords what they want. (Be a resource to the landlord)

- Inspections Technology

- Is this just as good as to how the inspectors match in what they look for and their ability to be responsive. Consistency and scheduling flexibility
- Do you want the inspectors to be the point of contact? Pluses and minuses of this.

Monetary Incentive/Community Partnership

- Monetary Incentive
 - Almost impossible for a Housing Authority to offer
 - Voucher programs like the Emergency Housing Voucher program
- Partnerships with Community agencies who have shared housing goals.
 - Money for reimbursement of damages
 - What other resources have you found.
 - Mediation through community partners (as discussed in other portion of the presentation)
 - Landlord Risk Mitigation Fund

Avoid Confusion

- Change in inspection processes?
 - Inspire, are landlords aware
 - Does the City, County do their own inspections.
 - Why does the City, County pass the unit and the Authority does not.
 - How many are allowing the use of photos, videos, to identify corrected deficiencies.
 - Educating as to second failed inspection, timing of next inspection and information throughout the process.

Delays

- What happens if one staff member is off.
 - Does work for that person stay in place or is the means to avoid delay of processing of RTA's
 - Distribute and prioritize work.
 - Is everyone trained the same way to complete task.
 - Steps to avoid errors/corrections late in the process
 - Is mail the source of contact
 - Reliability of mail
 - Delay in mail

Cost of delays

For voucher management/ For Landlord

- Utilization rate
 - Could end up reducing SEMAP
- Time spent reissuing vouchers due to a lack of housing.
- Staff time spent with hearings, request to extend vouchers.
- Administrative Fees provided for leased units.
- Availability of units for residents who have move vouchers due to abatement or landlord leaving the program.
- Days that the unit is not available to rent by the landlord
 - How long until missing information is found on the RFTA
 - Evaluate number of deficiencies founds
 - Number of days between initial and re-inspection.
 - Number of units denied due to affordability.
 - All the above may point to areas that landlords/potential tenants need education.
 - Understanding transition to full rent by the resident

Improve Relationship with Landlords

One person as direct contact for landlord.

- Avoid landlord hearing different information from different people.
- Avoid confusion as to status of RTA, inspection.
- Familiarity is built between landlord and the Authority.
- Clear policy frames the relationship for all landlords

Tenant and landlord education.

- Confusion as to the abatement process for both parties.
- Are “required” trainings and educational workshops more of a discouragement then positive.
- Do both parties understand the RTA, what each parties responsibility is with the RTA and inspection process. (tenant issue fail)
- More changes to understand with HOTMA and Inspire

THE PROCESS IS HIGH STRESS FOR BOTH PARTIES. NEW RELATIONSHIP

Thank you for attending this session! Please take a moment to fill out this survey
(Also available in your program book)



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