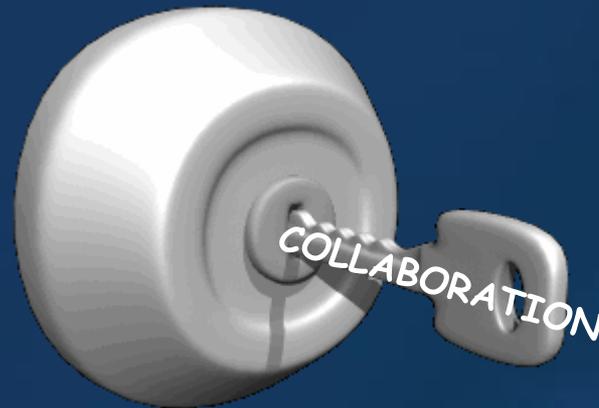


# Homelessness: PHAs Partnering with the Community

“Collaboration is key to ending  
homelessness”



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# Background



- Historically PHAs considered homelessness the responsibility of homeless service agencies and Continuums of Care.
- In June 2013 HUD issued PIH Notice 2013-15 providing guidance to PHAs on housing the homeless through the Public Housing and HCV programs.
- Shortly thereafter all PHAs received a letter from HUD Secretary Donovan urging them to utilize their PHA resources in accordance with PIH 2013-15.
- This timing was terrible as PHAs were reeling in the aftermath of sequestration.
- To implement PHA had to fundamentally change its normal business practices.



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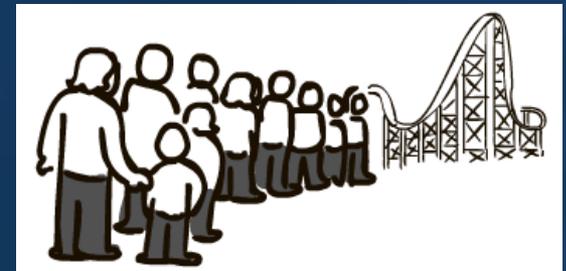




# PHA Waiting Lists

PHA waiting lists are typically handled like lines at an amusement parks – first come-first served.

Unless you have a flash/fast pass (local preference such as residency, working, or disability). But applicants likely still wait a very long time.



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# PHA Waiting Lists

Housing is critical to the health and well-being of our families and communities and therefore waiting list should be treated more like hospital emergency rooms where

patients are triaged and those with the greatest need are served first.



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# Using PHA Resources in the fight to end homelessness

## The 4 P's of PHA involvement



Planning



Programs



Policies



Partnerships



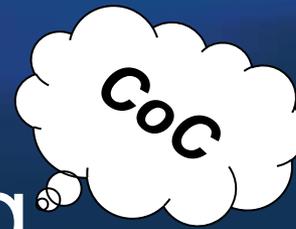
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# Planning



## Participate in the Continuum of Care (CoC)

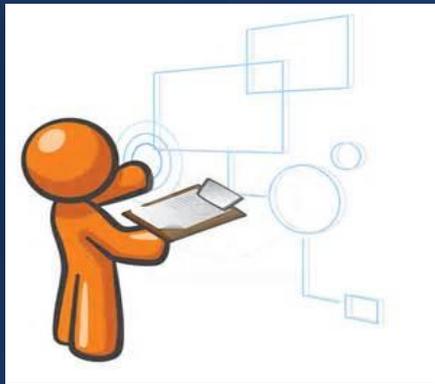
- At minimum attend the CoC meetings and participate in discussions
- Better yet, have a designated seat on the Board
- CoC and PHA efforts can support & complement each other – identify gaps and avoid duplication of effort



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# Programs

- Administer Tenant Based Rent Assistance (TBRA) CoC grants on behalf of grantee
  - Economies of scale in that a PHA is the best equipped expert at administering TBRA
- Develop a Project Based Voucher program specifically for homeless individuals & families



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# Policies

- Establish Waiting List Preferences
  - Housing Choice Voucher & Public Housing Programs
  - Limits
    - Can be limited to particular Public Housing or PBV developments
    - Can limit the number of applicants
    - Can be limited to those referred by a partnering organization
  - Waiting lists can be opened or remain open for only those qualifying for the preference



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# Policies, continued

- Admissions & Terminations
  - Policies
    - Aside from mandatory denials and terminations - use PHA discretion related to criminal background and previous rental history
    - Use language in the Admin Plan and ACOP that allows the PHA to consider the circumstances such as seriousness, effect on other members, length of time, case management, or treatment (24CFR982.552(c)(2))



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# Partnerships



- Are not a one-way street – arrangement should benefit all partners including the participating families
- Contracts ensure responsibilities and expectations are clearly defined



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# The City of Tucson Experience

## Homeless Preference Program (HPP)

*The good*



*The bad*



*The ugly*



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# The City of Tucson Experience



The PHA Commission approved a limited referral based homeless preference for up to 10% of the Public Housing and Housing Choice Voucher Program portfolios effective 7/1/14.



Concurrently, the Mayor & Council approved \$150,000 in Human Services funding from the General Fund for case management in support of the Homeless Preference Program.



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# The City of Tucson Experience

## Round One

- In October 2014 the PHA and the Human Services Programs issued a joint RFP for agencies wishing to participate in HPP
  - 50 Housing Choice Vouchers
  - 20 Public Housing studio units at the Tucson House for elderly/disabled chronically homeless veterans with office space on site.
  - Human services funding for case management
  - HOME funds for Security & Utility Deposits
- Eight agencies applied—three were chosen



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# The City of Tucson Experience

## Round One

- Old Pueblo Community Services (OPCS) was chosen for the 20 Public Housing units at the Tucson House for chronically homeless elderly/disabled veterans.
- A contract defined expectations.
- OPCS opened an office on site.
- OPCS partnered with 51Homes Vets to fully furnish all 20 units.
- OPCS received General Fund Human Services funding to provide case management



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# The City of Tucson Experience

## Round One

- Esperanza En Escalante (EEE) was chosen for 10 Housing Choice Vouchers for chronically homeless veterans.
- A contract defined expectations.
- EEE received General Fund Human Services funding for case management.
- EEE wanted to use the vouchers in units they owned or controlled. Despite not explicitly prohibiting such in the contract the request was denied.



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# The City of Tucson Experience

## Round One

- Primavera Foundation was chosen for 40 Housing Choice Vouchers for homeless.
- The homeless definition was deliberately left broad to allow for “move on” strategies from Transitional or Permanent Supportive Housing Programs.
- A contract defined expectations.
- Primavera received General Fund Human Services funding for case management.



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# The City of Tucson Experience

## Round One – OPCS Results

- OPCS leased all 20 units as fast as they turned over and were made available to them.
- The PHA expanded their contract to 30 units because they were so successful.
- OPCS exceeded expectations -
  - Ensured rent was paid on time
  - Pre-inspected units
  - Created a veteran's club at the Tucson House for HPP clients and all other veterans in the building.
  - Only 1 HPP client has been evicted in 18 months.



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# The City of Tucson Experience

## Round One – EEE Results

- EEE expended all of their case management funding in first 4 months.
- After 18 months only 9 of the 10 vouchers are under contract.
- Lesson Learned - EEE wanted to have HPP clients lease units they owned or controlled. Contracts now prohibit HPP clients to lease in units owned or controlled by referring agency.



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# The City of Tucson Experience

## Round One – Primavera Results

- Primavera expended all of their case management funding in first 6 months.
- After 12 months only 32 of the 40 vouchers were under contract and 39 of 40 in 18 months.
- Lesson learned – Contracts must have incentives or repercussions to lease HCVs quickly.



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# The City of Tucson Experience

## Round One – Primavera Results

- Primavera expended all of their case management funding in first 6 months.
- After 12 months only 32 of the 40 vouchers were under contract and 39 of 40 in 18 months.
- Lesson learned – Contracts must have incentives or repercussions to lease HCVs quickly.



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# Frustrations and Barriers



- Lease up time
  - Difficult clients
  - Need landlords willing to ease screening criteria & work with agencies
- Case Management funding
  - Trying to match Regional Behavioral Health, ACCCHS, or other funding for case management
- National Alliance to End Homelessness - conference
  - PHA bashed for unwillingness to dedicate resources to homelessness.



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# New Approaches



- Reallocate through CoC NOFA the City of Tucson Bridges transitional housing program to permanent supportive housing
  - Use HCV to provide housing assistance
  - Use CoC grant to fund employment services, case management, and wrap around services.
  - A little risky because it is new program funding vs renewal program in Tier 2.
- Launch Round 2 of HPP adjusting for lesson learned in the first round.
  - Prohibit leasing in agency controlled units
  - Incentives for leasing quickly
  - Further clarify expectations



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# The City of Tucson Experience

## Round Two

- In November 2015 the PHA & the Human Services Programs issued another joint RFP for agencies wishing to participate in HPP
  - 100 Housing Choice Vouchers
  - 15 Public Housing units (5-1br, 5-2br, & 5-3br) scattered site-midtown/east side of Tucson
  - Human services funding for case management in a fee for service model (\$900 per unit under contract by 6/30/16)
- Six agencies applied - four were chosen (None applied for the Public Housing units)



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# The City of Tucson Experience

## Round Two

- January 2016 - 100 HCVs were awarded:
  - 40 COPE Community Services
  - 35 Pasadera Behavioral Health Network
  - 15 Southern Arizona Aids Foundation
  - 10 Primavera Foundation
- Shortly thereafter Primavera lost its funding for its CASA II transitional housing program through the COC NOFA.
  - Their HPP contract was expanded by an additional 10 HCV to continue housing assistance for the CASA II families.



# The City of Tucson Experience

## Round Two - Results

- As of 6/30/2016 only 32 of the 100 vouchers were under contract despite the monetary incentive of \$900 per lease up.
- Two of the four agencies performed well
- Per the new contracts vouchers can be reallocated from poor performing to well performing agencies.
- We continue to work with the agencies and are evaluating a means to connect our available units/vouchers directly to the coordinated entry system.



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# Resources

- PHA Guide to Ending Homelessness <https://www.usich.gov/tools-for-action/pha-guidebook-to-ending-homelessness>
- PIH Notice 2013-15  
<https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/Notice-pih-2013-15-ha-guidance-on-housing-individuals-and-families-experiencing-homelessness-through-ph-and-HCV-programs.pdf>
- PHA guide to modifying tenant screening and eligibility policies and procedures.  
[https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset\\_library/PHA\\_TenantScreening.pdf](https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset_library/PHA_TenantScreening.pdf)
- HUD Secretary Donovan's June 2013 letter to PHAs -  
[https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset\\_library/Message\\_from\\_the\\_Secretary\\_Donovan2.pdf](https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset_library/Message_from_the_Secretary_Donovan2.pdf)
- USICH Opening Doors - <https://www.usich.gov/opening-doors>



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# Resources

If you have questions or if you would like to discuss barriers please feel free to contact me.

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