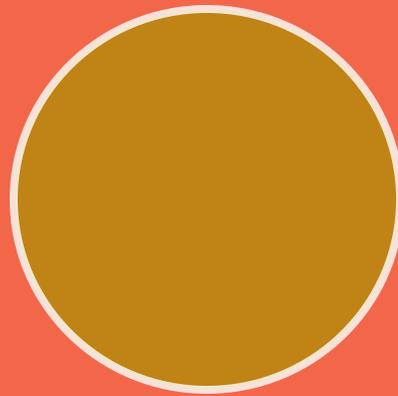


Housing First and Landlord Relations in an Aboriginal Context





Overview



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Housing First- The Process

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Landlord Relations

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Principles of Housing First

Housing Outreach Worker (HOW)



- Provide Outreach and Introduction to the Housing First Program
- Intake and Assessment for Housing First:
 - History of Homelessness
 - SPDAT Pre Screen and SPDAT Tool
 - Provincial Intake Forms
 - Service Agreements and Consents
- Assistance with connection to immediate needs resources (crisis related, medical, income support)
- Complete Housing Process and transfer to follow up support

The Housing Process



- **Plan for Housing**
 - Incorporating participant choice in housing options is critical
- **Apartment search and viewings**
 - Again, participant choice is key but HOW helps find middle ground between participant's dream home and what is affordable/accessible in the market
- **Move in**
 - Arrears payment
 - Lease Signing and Inspection Report
 - Rental Assistance
 - Utilities
 - FIND Furniture Bank
 - Start up Package
 - Connection to Follow Up Support (Rehousing provided if necessary)

What to do before the viewing:



- Arriving prepared with paper work demonstrates professionalism of your organization
 - Provide a **Service Agreement** and **Letter of Reference**
 - Inform the Resident Manager that the client has signed a **Housing Agreement** with the Agency (Take a blank copy)
 - Business Card (has your contact info on it)
 - Wear photo ID (Professional courtesy)
- Provide opportunity for the client to present themselves well, shower and have clean clothing to wear. (Help with resources for a shave and a haircut)

Before the viewing:



- On the drive over with the participant for the viewing, prepare them for what is about to take place:
 - Point out it is in their best interest not to share their life's story because things a client might say to lighten the tension will be scrutinized heavily
 - Discuss what types of questions the landlord might ask, and how they might answer them. Highlight what information is and is not appropriate for the landlord to request. What questions might they have for the landlord?
 - We are not there to be the Resident Managers “buddy”
 - You’re in and out as quickly as possible

At the Viewing:



- You have made an appointment. **BE ON TIME**
- Introduce yourself, your agency, and the **Housing First Program**
- Always be very open with the Resident Manager
- Your body language can say it all
- Reassure the Resident Manager that your agency will provide a Follow-up Support Worker for this Tenant. Supports for this person is for 12 – 18 months, with GRAI support program after that.

At the Viewing:



- Point out that they will have three (3) phone numbers to contact if there are any concerns:
 - *Your cell
 - *Your Team Lead
 - *Agency contact
- Never use words that lump the individual into a group or category (e.g. addict, alcoholic, homeless). Let the Resident Manager form their own opinion of them. Use statements that indicate the individual is caught up in circumstance beyond their control. We're here to give them an opportunity to start over, a second chance.
- *Everybody deserves a 2nd chance*

At the Viewing:



- Never say or think things that would give the Resident Manager the idea that you are unsure about your client. You need to show confidence in the Program, in yourself and the support that the individual will be receiving after they move-in.
- When bringing a individual to look a prospective place – you are only representing the Client. (Although you should always be aware of the big picture.)
- You need to show support for the client you are presenting to the Resident Manager, if you can't do that.....
DON'T GO!

What if the Resident Manager asks about.....



- Who are you? Have proper identification.
 - Business Card, forms, knowledge of program
- We need to do a Credit Check and you haven't given any references
- I have some concerns about Bed Bugs coming into my building
- Where do I get the rent from?
- Its not so much the tenants; it's the friends!!!
- Do you do a Criminal Records check?

Property Management Companies



- With the magnitude of the scope of our work we need companies that manage a lot of property.
- If you say you are going to do something for a Resident Manager, make sure you do it. This is important to maintain healthy relationship. Resident Managers do pass on any issues and complaints, anything that causes them grief.
- You are part of a city wide team, what you do will have a ripple effect throughout the program. You are an ambassador for the Housing First program.

The Service Agreement



Housing First Service Agreement

mm / dd / yyyy

Please PRINT

Renter(s) Information

Date Completed

Renter(s) name: _____

Residential Address _____ EDMONTON City

Complete Street Address including suite number

Postal Code

Building Name

Property Management Company

The Renter(s) named above is/are renting on the following basis:

1. Renter pays:

Monthly Amount _____ Effective Date mm dd yyyy Is rent owing? No if yes, amount _____ For what period of time? _____
 Weekly \$ _____ Yes \$ _____

2. Are utilities included in rent?

	No	Yes
Heat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Power	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Water	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. Is a Security Deposit required?

No If yes, amount _____
 Yes \$ _____

Landlords Information (who do you want the rent cheque made out to; e.g. Building Name, Property Management Company, etc)

Name (please print) _____ Phone # _____

Address _____ City EDMONTON P.C. _____

Signature of Agent/Resident Manager _____

Authorization

I _____, authorize that my rent portion of my monthly income can be sent THIRD PARTY to the Landlord.

Signed _____ Dated _____

Consent to release information

Landlord I _____, give permission to Alberta Health Services, AE&I and AISH to release information regarding my situation to the Housing First Agent and Agencies listed herein.

Signed _____ Dated _____

Revised March, 2012

HOUSING FIRST AGENCIES

Please check *none*

- Bent Arrow Healing Society
- Bissell Centre
- Boyle Street Community Services
- DiverseCity Housing
- E4C Intensive Case Mgt.
- George Spady LHFT
- Hope Mission – Rapid Exit
- Jasper Place Health & Wellness
- Pathways – Boyle McCauley Health Centre
- YMCA – Homeward Bound Outreach & Support

FSW Name (please print) _____

Phone & e-mail _____



- Identifies you to the property management company that you have the proper paperwork

- The Service Agreement is:
 - AE&I approved
 - AISH approved

- Place a copy of this form in the clients file

Building a better relationship with the Landlord



- During home visits with participants, always stop in at the landlord office to say hello/check in
- Every once in a while or on special occasions such as holidays, bring them a little treat (coffee, muffin) and a card expressing your appreciation
- You don't necessarily have to talk about the participant, friendly and open conversation is important to relationship building
- When there is an issue they will feel very comfortable calling and speaking to you before they escalate it to their supervisor

Principles of Housing First



For everyone working within the housing first program, it is important to consider the aspects that are especially prevalent for Aboriginal Participants and be prepared to address any potential challenges.

- Facing Racism and Discrimination
 - Work with landlords we know and trust
 - Pursue alternative options
 - Set an example
 - Highlight the individuals strengths, exceptional qualities, and potential. Describe how this housing is part of the individual's plans for a bright future
 - Know the participant's rights (i.e. Human Rights, Residential Tenancy Act)

Principles of Housing First...



- Family and Friends
 - Conversations about family and friends begin at intake
 - Learn who is in this individual's life, and how the relationship might impact their tenancy- either positively or negatively
 - Work to secure housing situation to the individuals expressed choice, based on their family situation
 - Consider what the needs of family and friends might be. Connect them to resources, offer housing first!

Principles of Housing First...



- **Communication and Worker Understanding**
 - Understand the individual's perspective on their own cultural and historical backgrounds, acknowledging diversity in perspective amongst Aboriginal peoples. Create an environment which is culturally aware and sensitive, starting with yourself
 - Incorporate various methods of communication and consider which assessment methods are most informative
 - Be genuine and honest about expectations and capabilities

Principles of Housing First...



- **Systems**

- Consider the participant's previous experience with "systems" and how it may impact their experience with housing first.
- Housing outreach workers are responsible for sharing system navigation knowledge or skill. Exploring the individual's strengths, and how they might apply in this new context is key in breaking cycles of systemic oppression and inequality
- Demonstrate the principles of Housing First through actions and attitude, always meeting the individual where they are at. How will a participant's trust be earned?

○ Thank you!



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