



Benefits for Landlords: Partnering with a Service Agency to Provide Services to Your Tenants Who Were Previously Homeless

Service agencies throughout Virginia assisting families and individuals experiencing homelessness seek partnerships with landlords. These partnerships can benefit you as a landlord because the service agency will provide services to tenants in your rental housing to help them be successful tenants and good neighbors. Temporary financial assistance and ongoing case management services are examples of the services an agency might provide.

Landlords are among the most important partners and resources for service agencies who are serving homeless clients who need housing, and as such, they are committed to helping you:

- Find tenants and reduce vacancy rates;
- Ensure rent is paid on time;
- Keep renters in their units for the long term;
- Prevent costly evictions;
- Make sure tenants are good neighbors.

Questions and Answers

How do we ensure you will receive rent in a timely manner?

Most families receive time-limited financial assistance to help them to get back on their feet. Case management staff will develop with the family a plan for long-term income stability. The family will also receive budgeting and financial management education to help them remain good tenants and successfully manage their expenses.

How do we reduce your vacancy rate?

Without the need for costly advertising, service agencies can quickly connect you with renters in need of housing. When a unit becomes vacant, service agencies can match you with a family looking for housing.

How do we help you prevent evictions?

Service agencies want to help you avoid costly evictions. Case management staff regularly check-in with tenants and landlords to make sure they successfully meet the terms and rules of their lease. Assistance is always available to you from case management staff who will respond to any issue that may arise. You may call the service agency if you experience any challenges with the tenant and the service agency will respond as soon as possible.

How do we help you reduce turnover?

Our goal is for families to be permanently housed. By helping families develop plans for stable income and by helping you to avoid evictions, service agencies will help you to reduce expensive turnover and enable tenants to stay in their units for the long term.

How do we ensure that your rental units will be kept in good condition?

Case management staff will check in with families and will respond to issues should they arise. When doing case management visits, staff will check on the condition of the unit and respond appropriately.

How do we work with families who have members with special needs?

For families where there is a special need, service providers assist the tenant to receive necessary services to manage the issue.

How do we help you resolve any possible issues that may arise?

Service agencies work with families and landlords on an ongoing basis and do their best to proactively prevent issues from arising in the first place. If an issue does unfortunately arise, the landlord may call the service agency, who will meet with the family to resolve the issue.

How do we help you abide by fair housing laws?

Fair housing law in Virginia designates eight protected classes including race, color, religion, national origin, sex, elderliness, familial status, and disability. Homeless populations are disproportionately made up of individuals and families who have previously faced unequal access to housing, so by serving homeless households, you can help further fair housing and prevent housing discrimination. To abide by fair housing laws, you must establish and abide by a written tenant selection process by which you will prioritize homeless households as part of an agreement with a service provider. This written process must include a means to determine proof of homelessness and need for services with supporting documentation. Proof of homelessness could be a statement from a case worker. You must select tenants

based on their status as homeless individuals and without regard for any of their protected characteristics. We will assist you in developing a written tenant selection process. As long as the process is well-documented, you are furthering fair housing by agreeing to select homeless individuals for tenancy.

Fair Housing advice provided by Housing Opportunities Made Equal of Virginia.

How do you connect with a service provider?

If you know a service provider in your area that serves people experiencing homelessness, contact them directly.

For more information and to be connected to service providers who can enter an agreement with you to deliver services to those you agree to house, contact Jillian Fox, Director of Programs and Evaluation, 804-332-0560 or jill@vceh.org.