



Landlord/Service Provider Partnership

Expectations

Landlords who agree to participate in the Chicago Low-Income Housing Trust Fund Special Initiative programs are expected to serve a higher need population in collaboration with a social service provider. The purpose of this letter is to share the Trust Fund's expectations regarding these partnerships.

As a Trust Fund partner, the Landlord, will:

- respond promptly to all communications received from the Services Provider;
- ensure the safety and upkeep of the building and unit;
- correct all health and safety violations discovered by the Trust Fund or the City of Chicago within 30 days of discovery;
- immediately investigate, and promptly correct, unsafe conditions brought to their attention by the Tenant or Services Provider;
- promptly notify the Services Provider if their client (the tenant) falls behind on rent payments, or if any other situation occurs that threatens the tenant's occupancy;
- communicate immediately to the Trust Fund and Services Provider partner any decision to stop participating in the Special Initiative and/or not to renew the Agreement with the Trust Fund; and
- notify the Trust Fund and Services Provider partner at least 30 days in advance of any sale, foreclosure, or other transfer of ownership.

When a unit is about to become vacant (or is already vacant), it is the Trust Fund's understanding that the landlord and the Services Provider will work together to fill that unit in the following ways:

- the landlord will immediately give the Services Provider notification of any anticipated or current vacancy;
- The landlord will advise the Services Provider of the tenant selection criteria – preferably in writing - including any and all criteria that will result in the automatic rejection of a prospective tenant (such as household income, financial background considerations, tenant history);
- the Services Provider will work to identify households that meet the building's tenant selection plan;
- the unit will be rent-ready within 30 days of becoming vacant;
- all applications from prospective tenants will be reviewed fairly; and
- the landlord will immediately notify the Services Provider if the tenant application is not accepted and in general terms, let them know why the household was not eligible for the unit.

The Services Provider acts as a resource for the tenant and works toward the goal of achieving economic stability by providing affordable housing. The Services Provider will:

- identify households which meet the requirements of the Special Initiative for application to any vacant Special Initiative unit;
- stay in contact with, and act as a resource for, each tenant in the Special Initiative;
- complete an annual home visit with each of their tenants;
- identify issues faced by the tenant which may impact housing stability;
- connect the household with financial management or other life skills programs;
- respond promptly to all communications from the landlord, including requests for assistance with the tenant;
- mediate any disputes between the landlord and the tenant;
- explain to landlord the range of services available from the Services Provider for each household;
- answer any questions the landlord may have about the range of services available;
- check in with the landlord in-person, by phone or by email at least once every three months;
- contact the landlord 90 days before each tenant's leases is to expire, to discuss renewal; and
- help the tenant prepare the annual income certification for the lease renewal and ensure those documents are delivered **to the landlord** before the lease expires.

The Services Provider is not responsible for:

- screening or selecting tenants; except in the case of special initiatives that require such;
- negotiating any lease terms;
- managing the landlord lease agreement with the tenant; or
- paying any portion of the tenant's rent.

The Services Provider partner may be available to assist with completion of the other documents required for the Rental Subsidy Program Agreement. As a reminder, the **Services Provider is not responsible for ensuring that paperwork is turned in on time**. The Landlord is ultimately responsible for turning in all Trust Fund required paperwork in a timely fashion. *The landlord and Services Provider should coordinate to determine their availability for paperwork assistance.*

It's all about Communication. When a landlord becomes aware that a unit is about to become vacant, the best practice is for the landlord to notify the Social Services Partner **immediately**, and in writing. This allows for the opportunity to start working to identify a new household. Then, once the unit is officially vacant, the landlord is to send the Social Services Partner written notification of the opportunity to identify a new household. The Lead Trust Fund staff liaison should always be included in the written notice. The more communication there is between the landlord and the Services Provider, the faster units will be leased, and families will be housed!