

# Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency

## **First Occupancy Initiative -**

An Affirmative Marketing Strategy for  
Accessible Rental Housing

# Introduction

## ● Goal

- To increase the number of accessible housing units
  - Provided additional points and incentives

## ● Problem

- Units designated as accessible were not being filled by those tenants that required the unit features
- Unable to identify how many accessible units were actually occupied by households needing accessibility features

## ● Solution

- Developed outreach program and monitoring system
  - Focus on First Occupancy

# Strategy

## ◎ Plan

- Gathered data on accessible units
  - Technical Services Representative- visited, verified, and entered accessible units into database
    - Completed Accessibility Worksheet (See Attachment 1)

## ◎ Result

- Established number and location of each accessible unit in our portfolio

# Strategy- Continued

## ⦿ Accessible Unit Policy

- Provides clear guidance for owners/agents to follow regarding the leasing and on-going occupancy of accessible units (See Attachment 2)

## ⦿ Lease Addendum Pertaining to Occupancy of Accessible Unit

- Achieves maximum utilization of the accessible units by disabled households (See Attachment 3)

# Report

## ◎ State-wide results

- Mobility Units
  - 69.7%
- Mobility, Hearing, and Vision Units
  - 81.4%

## ◎ Wanted to improve results

- Created Supportive Housing Officer

# Supportive Housing Officer (SHO)

## ⦿ Responsibilities

- Supports access to affordable housing for people with disabilities
  - Organizations (See Attachment 4)
    - Department of Human Services (DHS)
    - Pennsylvania Department of Aging (PDA)
    - Community and Economic Development
    - Centers for Independent Living
    - Local Lead Agency
- Distributes construction pipeline report (See Attachment 5)
- Monitors all properties listed on [www.pahousingsearch.com](http://www.pahousingsearch.com)

# Supportive Housing Officer (SHO)

## ⦿ Responsibilities- Continued

- Works directly with property management agent
  - Leases accessible units
  - Builds a wait list
  - Provides marketing support
- Conducts a survey to evaluate utilization (See Attachment 6)

# Additional Support

- ◎ Properties with PHFA debt financing
  - PHFA Housing Management Representatives (HMR)
    - Review
      - Accessible unit efforts made by owner
      - PHFA's Accessible Unit Policy
      - Affirmative Marketing Procedures
      - PAHousingSearch Registration
      - Accessible unit reporting requirements
    - Complete Quarterly Rent Up Report (See Attachment 7)
  - Complete monthly occupancy report



# Additional Support

- Training
- Accessible Unit Resources Center - <https://www.phfa.org/mhp/propertymanagement/>
  - Supports owners and agents by educating them on PHFA requirements
  - Provides them with tools to help them fill their accessible units
  - Includes links
    - Accessibility Unit Worksheet
    - Accessible Unit Policy Timeline
    - Lease Addendum
    - Listing of the Local Lead Agencies
    - PAHousingSearch  
(See Attachment 8)

# Results

- ◎ Mobility Units

- 90%

- ◎ Mobility, Hearing, and Vision Units

- 91%

(See Attachment 9)

- ◎ Since June 2016

- All but one PHFA-financed properties have 100% of accessible units filled by those that need the features of the units (See Attachment 10)

# Questions?

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