



Arlington Point  
Lawrence, MA

# Alternative Workplace Strategy

Management Innovation – Internal Operations



**... And then there was a  
global pandemic.**

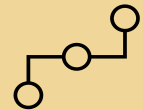
# What does a future-forward workplace strategy look like?

MassHousing hired Ernst & Young to create a Business Operations Transformation Plan in September 2020.

## Plan Goals:



Enable MassHousing staff to work both effectively and efficiently regardless of work location



Identify process improvement areas for MassHousing to increase efficiencies while adopting new “ways of working”



Consider potential cost-saving opportunities for reduced real estate needs

# Business Operations Transformation Plan

## Internal Survey Results:

96% 

Staff can perform >75% of their work remotely

90% 

Staff are successful or highly effective working remotely

79% 

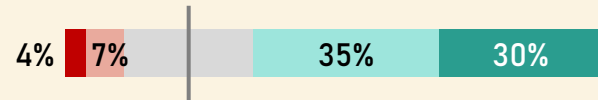
Staff are extremely or very confident they can meet their career goals remotely

### Effectiveness

4.6

*out of 5 points on average by 239 respondents*

MassHousing's One Beacon Office enables me to be effective.



My home or other primary location enables me to be effective.

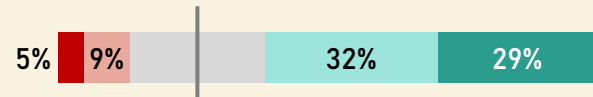


### Efficiency

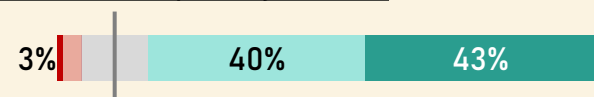
4.3

*out of 5 points on average by 239 respondents*

MassHousing's One Beacon Office enables me to be efficient.



My home or other primary location enables me to be efficient.



# Business Operations Transformation Plan



## 1 People + Process

- Workforce survey + creation of Alternate Workplace Strategies
- Governance + performance management framework

## 2 Technology

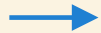
- Update IT plan based on Alternate Workplace Strategies

## 3 Real Estate

- Review One Beacon lease + assess space needs going forward

### Timeline:

October 13, 2020  
Workforce survey  
launch



November 6, 2020  
Review of Alternative  
Workplace Strategy



November 20, 2020  
Transformation roadmap



July 6, 2021  
Transformation  
roadmap

# Business Operations Transformation Plan

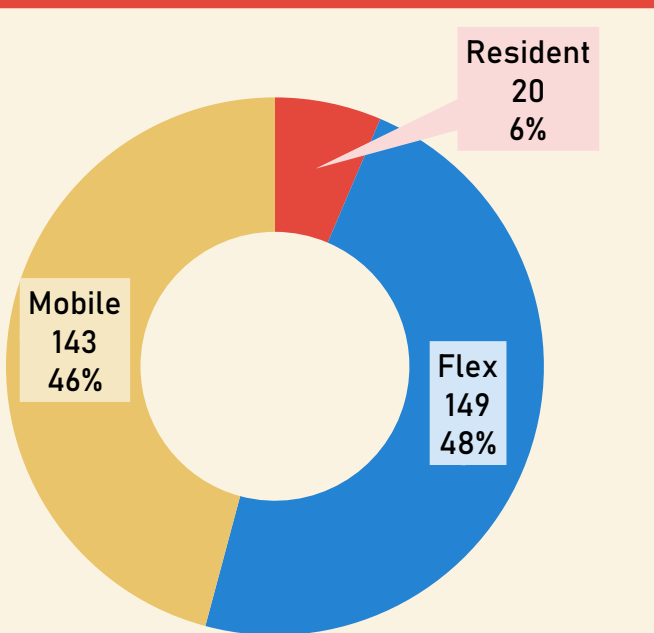


29 Essential Staff on site since March 2020

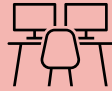
68 Early Adopters in July 2021



97 staff at One Beacon in July 2021



## Resident



Primarily works at One Beacon, comes in 4-5 days a week, has a dedicated workspace

## Flex



Works remotely and at One Beacon, comes in 2-3 days a week, may not have a dedicated workspace

## Mobile



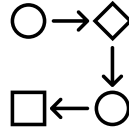
Primarily works remotely, comes in 1 day a week or less – at minimum once a month, may not have a dedicated workspace



Governance &  
Policies



Real Estate +  
Workplace



Process  
Improvements



Technology



Employee  
Wellness

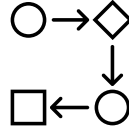
- A MassHousing Hybrid Work Policy & Acknowledgement form was sent out to staff in June of 2021 with the goal of preparing for a return to the workplace with the new designations in Fall 2021.
- Unfortunately, the rise of the delta variant and increasing covid cases has pushed back this return date to early January 2022.



Governance & Policies



Real Estate + Workplace



Process Improvements



Technology



Employee Wellness

- A Return to Workplace Action Plan was finalized in mid-June 2021 with the understanding that adaptations would be made based on evolving COVID-19 guidelines.
- Early adaptors returned to the workplace with their new schedules on Tuesday, July 6, 2021.
- A Return to the Office video for staff was released in mid-June to showcase COVID-19 office improvements and protocols.
- Review and selection of shared/hoteling space software and check-in applications for hybrid workforces alongside the Technology Pillar.

## Phase 0

- **March 15, 2020**
- Essential Operations
- Essential Staff

## Phase 1

- **July 5, 2021**
- Early Adopters
- Resident, Executives, Directors, Early Adopters

## Phase 2

- **January 2022**
- Hybrid Model Full Implementation

## Phase 3

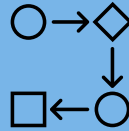
- **2022 (TBD)**
- Full Operations
- Full staff, visitor access, conference space use



Governance &  
Policies



Real Estate +  
Workplace



Process  
Improvements



Technology



Employee  
Wellness

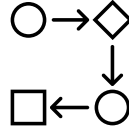
- Working with all divisions/departments to catalogue existing and planned process improvements
- Following cataloguing completion, dashboards will be created to track improvements
- *Examples: No touch faucets, single device model, laptop calling, etc.*



Governance &  
Policies



Real Estate +  
Workplace



Process  
Improvements



Technology



Employee  
Wellness

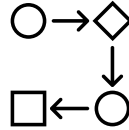
- Single Device Model (SDM) pilot started in May 2021 and completed by June 2021.
- The goal of SDM is to employ “Get Up and Go” hybrid work environment.
- Pilot group includes staff members who frequently work remotely and at MassHousing’s Boston office. Pilot staff will work exclusively on their Agency-issued laptops to connect to resources on the Agency’s network and in the cloud whether working remotely or in MassHousing’s offices.
- Currently, all remote staff members must connect remotely to their desktop computer in the office to access network resources. This “tunneling in” process can sometimes be unwieldy. With SDM, remote access to desktops will be seamless and eliminate the need for desktop computers when staff return to the office.



Governance &  
Policies



Real Estate +  
Workplace



Process  
Improvements



Technology



Employee  
Wellness

- Five AWS Pillars are established for ongoing review and improvement. The Employee Wellness Pillar has been active in developing club offerings for enhanced socialization opportunities including meditation, cooking, book, and walking clubs.
- This team has also established Helpful Etiquette for Meetings and Emails
  - No internal meetings from 12 - 1pm. Allow staff to catch up on other work, eat their lunch, go for a walk, etc.
  - Utilize delay send feature for emails after sent after established work hours. Help employees not feel obligated to answer emails during this time.
  - Weekly IT “office hours” are established. Designated day/time to support staff in training and to answer questions.



# Alternative Workplace Strategy

Management Innovation – Internal Operations



# Covid 19 – Call Center

Focus: Agility, Innovation, and Empathy



# Background

- Covid-19 : Agency staff working remote
- New Jersey Small Landlord Emergency Grant program to support communities
- Tight Deadline – Two phases between August and October
- Questions & Concerns by Landlord – Before & During program
- **Inhouse** Robust Call center Application with ATT & Sharepoint
- 20 Staff members, 15000+ calls

# The Need

- Rapidly create a centralized system to
  - Communicate promptly with and support Landlords
  - Help them in applying for funding in this health and financial crisis
  - Keep the staff informed
  
- Escalation of the call to the right group
- Re-assigning for the faster resolution

# The Concept

- **Organized, Skilled and Empathic** call center during a crisis is immeasurable.
- Streamlined the data in an efficient and digestible way
- Have it on the representative's fingertips for quick accurate response
- Better serve the community in need by providing right path
- Controlled cost by utilizing internal staff for the design, development and call center staffing
- Accurate reporting feature for shifting staff resources during highest call volume

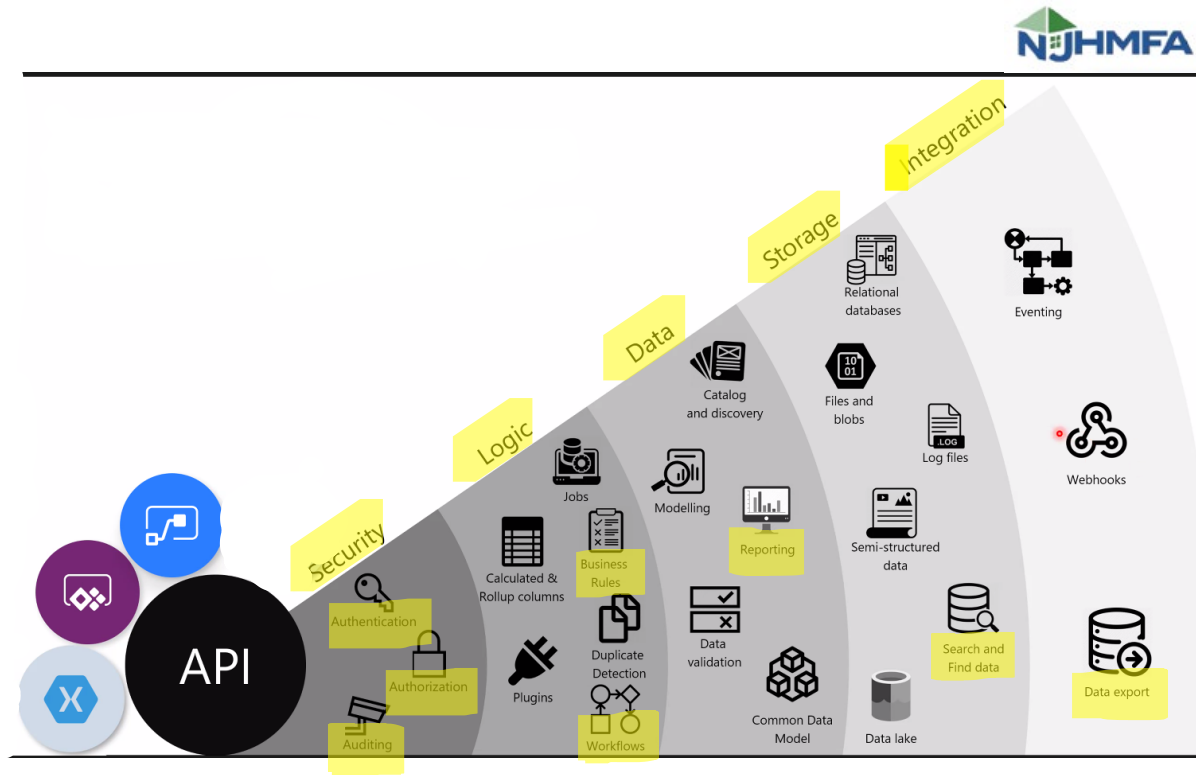
# The Team

- Various levels from Senior staff to all levels below
- Divisions / Departments
- Diversity workwise
- Skilled in specific domains

# The Project

- Rapid, Robust
- Inhouse design and development
- Organization of the call center
- Training in Teams for the ATT and Sharepoint and using Teams
- Address, track and monitor calls to ensure clients' needs were met

# - What is in the Box?



# - Portal



**HOUSING & MORTGAGE FINANCE AGENCY INTRANET**

### Sleg Call Tracker

Color Name (\*) Required: [Text Box]

Color Photo # (\*) Required: [Text Box]

Color\* [Dropdown]

Call Type\* [Dropdown]

County [Dropdown]

Zip Code [Text Box]

Status (\*) Required:  Received  Follow-up Required

Describe the question(s) posed by the caller (\*) Required: [Text Area]

Describe how the question(s) was resolved (\*) Required: [Text Area]

**Category Calls Tracker**

| Call ID | Call Name                      | Call Type | Color     | Status   | Received | Resolved         | Created By              | Message Name |
|---------|--------------------------------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|------------------|-------------------------|--------------|
| 101     | Application Platform Questions | Received  | Hudson    | Received | 07/24    | October 21, 2020 | Sandra Seals            |              |
| 102     | Application Platform Questions | Placed    | Follow-up | Required |          | October 21, 2020 | Jennifer Dunfee-Johnson |              |
| 103     | Application Platform Questions | Received  |           | Required |          | October 21, 2020 | Mary Crossroads         |              |
| 104     | Other                          | Received  |           | Received |          | October 21, 2020 | Debbie Rival            | Shawn Anglin |
| 105     | Status of Application          | Received  | Bergen    | Received | 07/24    | October 21, 2020 | Tiffany Brown           |              |

**CALL CENTER SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

| File Name                             | Created            | Modified           | Author |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------|
| Call Center SCHEDULE_Oct_10_2020      | October 10, 2020   | October 10, 2020   | Cyril  |
| C_H Desktop App_Jul16                 | August 6, 2020     | August 6, 2020     | Georg  |
| SLEB Resource Manual_Call Center      | August 24, 2020    | August 24, 2020    | Georg  |
| SLEB TWGL Resource Manual_Call Center | September 28, 2020 | September 28, 2020 | Georg  |
| TRAINING SLIDES                       | July 20, 2020      | July 20, 2020      | Sallyp |

**REAL TIME REPORTING**

| Call Type                      | Number of Calls received |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| General Enquiries              | 2274                     |
| Application                    | 1442                     |
| Other                          | 1362                     |
| Grant Endorsements             | 362                      |
| Real Estate                    | 247                      |
| Application Platform-Questions | 2025                     |
| Grant Approval                 | 86                       |
| Unfunded Towns/Essex           | 43                       |
| Training/Support               | 88                       |
| <b>Grand Total</b>             | <b>9022</b>              |

**DATA ENTRY**

**DATA LIST**



# The Teamwork

- Collaboration
- Meetings
- Teams channel and chat
- Phone calls
- Emails and Letters
- Streamlined caller access and follow-up
- Real-time analytics

# The Impact

- Inter-agency collaboration
- Utilize staff resources effectively
- Direct interaction between Landlord and agency staff
- Guidance throughout the application process
- Ability to complete application successfully
- Reminders and updates about application
- Quick help with technology

# The Outcome

- This is now a turnkey, streamlined system for crisis response and program funding communications. The system is agile, efficient and easily allows for modifications customized towards individual program needs.
- The system developed is easily replicable, for us, as well as being easily replicable for other HFAs.

# Thank you!

Neha Patadia  
Manager, IT Applications

**on behalf of NJHMFA Team.**

# Training for In-House Attorneys

## Michigan State Housing Development Authority Legal Affairs Division

Clarence L. Stone, Jr.  
Director of Legal Affairs



# Background

In 2011, Michigan State Housing Development Authority's ("MSHDA") Legal division was facing the following challenges:

1. Difficulty finding attorneys with relevant experience after the Great Recession.
2. Loss of Senior Staff Attorneys.
3. Anticipated Difficulty Keeping Attorneys Due to End of Defined Benefits Plans for Staff Joining MSHDA after 1997.
4. The Earlier Training of Attorneys Had Not Been Well Planned or Organized.

## Background

- ▶ In response, MSHDA's Director and Deputy Director of Legal Affairs created an inhouse training program.
  
- ▶ To be effective, in-house attorney would need to understand the basics of the following three areas:
  1. Real Estate Law
  2. Affordable Housing Programs
  3. MSHDA's Act, Rules, and related case law

## ▶ The Training Program (aka “Docs and Training”):

- Senior attorneys assigned to teach concepts during weekly staff meetings focusing on the key areas - Real Estate Law, Affordable Housing Programs, and MSHDA’s Act, Rules, and related case law.
  - Topics repeated based on request and attorney turnover.
  - Sessions are recorded for future use.
  - Outlines and materials provided by presenters.
- When applicable, staff attended external trainings by groups such as Michigan Real Property Law Section and ABA Affordable Housing Forum.
- Guest speakers also invited from other divisions (Finance, Rental Development), as well as state agencies (Attorney General’s Office).

## ► Key Goals:

1. Help attorneys quickly learn basics of three key areas.
2. Have attorneys could apply what they learned through work assignments.
3. Have senior attorneys serve as mentors/resource.
4. Encourage thinking and problem solving.

## Sample Presentation: Real Estate 101

- Presented over a period of 6 months for attorneys and support staff.
- Discussed/Reviewed topics such as Deeds, Mortgages, Foreclosures, Tenancies and Estates, Surveys and Zoning.

*THEORETICAL  
TOWNSHIP DIAGRAM  
SHOWING  
METHOD OF NUMBERING SECTIONS  
WITH ADJOINING SECTIONS*

|        |    |                      |    |    |    |        |    |
|--------|----|----------------------|----|----|----|--------|----|
| 36     | 31 | 32                   | 33 | 34 | 35 | 36     | 31 |
| 80 Ch. |    | 6 Miles - 360 Chains |    |    |    | 80 Ch. |    |
| 1      | 6  | 5                    | 4  | 3  | 2  | 1      | 6  |
| 12     | 7  | 8                    | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12     | 7  |
| 13     | 18 | 17                   | 16 | 15 | 14 | 13     | 18 |
| 24     | 19 | 20                   | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24     | 19 |
| 25     | 30 | 29                   | 28 | 27 | 26 | 25     | 30 |
| 36     | 31 | 32                   | 33 | 34 | 35 | 36     | 31 |
| 1      | 6  | 5                    | 4  | 3  | 2  | 1      | 6  |

173  
2



# Sample of Covered Topics:

## Real Estate:

- ▶ Land Control Documents
- ▶ Leases
- ▶ Title Insurance
- ▶ Surveys
- ▶ Zoning
- ▶ Construction Process
- ▶ Mortgages
- ▶ Tax Exempt Bond Requirements for Closings
- ▶ Foreclosures and Deeds in Lieu

## Affordable Housing:

- ▶ LIHTC – 4% and 9%
- ▶ Housing Bonds
- ▶ HOME
- ▶ Project-Based Section 8
- ▶ Project Based Vouchers
- ▶ Cross-Cutting Federal Requirements
- ▶ Subsidy Layering
- ▶ Preservation
- ▶ Federal Compliance
- ▶ NSP

## MSHDA Related:

- ▶ Authority Act
- ▶ Advisory Opinions
- ▶ PILOTs and Property Taxes
- ▶ FOIA
- ▶ Insurance Requirements
- ▶ MSHDA Underwriting Process
- ▶ MSHDA Closing Process
- ▶ MSHDA Borrower Entities (LDHA, Nonprofit Housing Corporations)

# Results:

- ▶ The program has been very successful.
- ▶ Attorneys learn the skills necessary to do their jobs.
- ▶ Attorneys have also improved their understanding of topics by giving presentations.
- ▶ Irony—training has led to turnover by enabling attorneys to seek better paying jobs.

# Looking Ahead:

- ▶ Legal Affairs staff continue to meet weekly and utilize this time for trainings:
- ▶ Future topics currently planned include:
  - Tax Exempt Bond Introduction
  - True Debt
  - Income Averaging in LIHTC program
  - Attorney Opinions

← Needle Point Created for  
Gift Exchange at Staff  
Holiday Party



**QUESTIONS?**