

NCSHA 2016 Annual Awards Entry Form

(Complete one form for each entry)

Deadline: Wednesday, June 15, 2016

Visit ncsha.org/awards to view the Annual Awards Call for Entries.

Instructions: Type entry information into the form and save it as a PDF. Do not write on or scan the form. If you have any questions contact awards@ncsha.org or 202-624-7710.

Fill out the entry name *exactly* as you want it listed in the program.

Entry Name: _____

HFA: _____

Submission Contact: (Must be HFA Staff Member) _____ **Email:** _____

Please provide a 15-word (maximum) description of your nomination to appear on the NCSHA website.

Use this header on the upper right corner of each page:

HFA: _____

Entry Name: _____

Select the appropriate subcategory of your entry and indicate if you are providing visual aids.

Communications	Homeownership	Legislative Advocacy	Management Innovation
Annual Report	Empowering New Buyers	Federal Advocacy	Financial
Creative Media	Encouraging New Production	State Advocacy	Human Resources
Promotional Materials and Newsletters	Home Improvement and Rehabilitation		Operations
			Technology
Rental Housing	Special Needs Housing	Special Achievement	Are you providing visual aids?
Encouraging New Production	Combating Homelessness	Special Achievement	Yes
Multifamily Management	Housing for Persons with Special Needs		No
Preservation and Rehabilitation			

Housing for Persons with Special Needs: Recognizes programs (other than those focused primarily on combating homelessness) that best provide affordable housing and services for persons with special needs.

The collaboration that successfully led to the codification of significant policy changes passed during the 2016 legislative session began in 2013. These policy changes will have significant impact on housing assistance for persons with special needs who need decent and stable housing in their communities.

This journey involved substantial policy work between the Florida Housing Finance Corporation (Florida Housing); the Governor's Office; the State Legislature; State agencies; and a broad array of key stakeholder organizations representing or serving persons with special needs, including veterans with disabling conditions, adults with severe and persistent mental illness, and persons with intellectual or developmental disabilities. Key stakeholders include The Arc of Florida, Florida Supportive Housing Coalition, Disability Rights of Florida, Florida Council of Community Mental Health, Florida Community Loan Fund, the Corporation for Supportive Housing, the Florida Housing Coalition and the Florida Council on Homelessness.

To portray how vital the policy changes that were codified, it is important to show how Florida Housing is responding to these issues and providing permanent rental housing opportunities to serve Florida's most vulnerable citizens. The following outlines the background events that set the foundation for the changes codified in statute in 2016.

PATH TO SUCCESS

In 2013, Florida Housing received funding from the National Mortgage Settlement via the passage of Senate Bill 1852, which allocated resources targeting additional housing opportunities for persons with special needs. Some significant changes included in that budget bill contain the following provisions, which have been a part of budget proviso in the years to follow:

- \$10 million for the State Apartment Incentive Loan (SAIL) program which specifies that at least 10% of the units in developments receiving these funds would be for units designed, constructed, and set aside for persons with developmental disabilities. These developments were required to enter into an agreement with at least one designated supportive service lead agency, such as the local Center for Independent Living, the Agency for Persons with Disabilities, or any other such agency approved by Florida Housing for the purpose of services and housing for persons with disabilities.

For the past three fiscal years (FY 14/15, 15/16, and 16/17), the Legislature has included proviso in the general appropriations act of a similar nature modifying the percentage of 'not less than 5%' to 'no more than 10%' of developments receiving SAIL funds would be for units designed, constructed, and set aside for persons with developmental disabilities.

- \$40 million for our State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) program, where each local government must use a minimum of 20% of its allocation to serve persons with special needs. The first priority of these special needs funds must be used for persons with development disabilities, with an emphasis on home modifications, including technological enhancements and devices, which will allow homeowners to remain independent in their own homes and maintain their homeownership.

- In implementing this bill, Florida Housing did extensive outreach to generate program input from various Centers for Independent Living, Family Care Councils, Arc of Florida Chapters and the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council.
 - For the past three fiscal years (FY14/15, 15/16, and 16/17), the Legislature has included proviso in the General Appropriations Act containing the same language.
 - In the first year of data available for the set-aside requirement, (FY 2013-2014) Florida Housing learned first-hand the impact this set-aside had. Local governments exceeded the 20% requirement with 42% of SHIP funds (statewide average) being used to serve persons with special needs.
- \$10 million to fund a competitive grant that would provide housing developments designed, constructed, and set aside for persons with developmental disabilities. Projects funded with these grants may include community residential homes or individual housing units, and may include new construction and renovation of existing housing units. In evaluating the proposal for these funds, Florida Housing had to consider the extent to which funds from local and other sources will be used by the applicant to leverage the grant funds provided under this section; employment opportunities and support that will be available to residents of the proposed housing; a plan for residents to effectively and efficiently access community-based services, resources, and amenities; and partnerships with other supportive services agencies.

For the past three fiscal years (FY 14/15, 15/16, and 16/17), the Legislature has included proviso in the general appropriations act containing the same language.

In the fall of 2014, Florida Housing convened the Florida State Interagency Workgroup on Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH). Florida Housing contracted with the Corporation for Supportive Housing to coordinate the short-term workgroup, provide PSH training and technical assistance, and write a set of policy recommendations at the end of the workgroup. The workgroup participants include the State Medicaid Office, the Florida Department of Children and Families, the Florida Department of Elder Affairs and the Florida Department of Health. This workshop was beneficial in consolidating across State agencies the permanent supportive housing approach and Housing First principles. It also helped to facilitate an understanding between Florida Housing and the agencies regarding the public benefits of blending affordable housing, healthcare and supportive services to help persons with special needs live stable lives in their communities while being more efficient and cost effective with public resources.

The Florida Legislature's support of affordable and permanent supportive housing and setting aside resources for persons with special needs set the tone for the passage of SB 1534, relating to Housing Assistance, this year. This bill provided significant policy changes that not only codified some of the budgetary proviso in the past few fiscal years, but included language that Florida Housing and our stakeholders both believed were essential in the delivery of housing for these populations. The bill included the following, as it pertains to housing for persons with special needs:

- Provides that the Corporation reserve a minimum of 5% of its annual appropriations from the State Housing Trust Fund for forgivable loans to projects serving persons with a disabling condition, with priority given to projects serving persons with developmental disabilities.
- Revises the SAIL demographic reservations as it relates to persons with special needs. In 2011, the statute was revised via the passage of HB 639, to add persons with special needs as a specified tenant group under the SAIL programs funding reservations, capping it at no more than 10% of funds available, which is appropriated by the Legislature. Every three years in accordance with the statute, Florida Housing uses the most recent market study to identify the need in the state and allocate the resources appropriated accordingly to the following demographic categories: families, elderly, persons

who are homeless, persons with special needs, commercial fishing workers and farmworker households. The 2013 market study reflected a higher need for housing persons with special needs than the statute allowed. The passage of SB 1534 removed that barrier, by taking off the cap and providing its new reservation by not less than 10%. The table below provide the best breakdown for the changes made in this demographic reservation:

Specified Tenant Group	Actual % of Total Households in Need	Current Statutory Reservation Requirements	CS/SB 1534 Statutory Reservation Requirements
Persons with special needs	13%	May not be more than 10%	Not less than 10%

- Revises definition of ‘rent subsidies,’ under the SHIP program as ongoing rental assistance, which includes:
 - Security and utility deposit assistance;
 - Eviction prevention not too exceed 6 months’ rent; and,
 - A rent subsidy program of up to 12 months for very-low-income households with at least one adult who is a person with special needs or who is homeless.

While security and utility deposits have always been allowable in SHIP, the authority to provide rental subsidies has been limited to one-time payments under “eviction prevention.” The bill broadened that authority to provide eviction prevention to any household for up to six months. The language also allows a SHIP entity to provide for twelve months of assistance to households with a member who qualifies as having special needs or is homeless. It also gives local governments the ability to pool their SHIP resources to address regional homeless housing issues. Finally, this allows up to 25% of SHIP funds to be reserved for rental housing for eligible persons, which includes demographic categories such as persons with special needs.

These legislative changes will significantly help the State’s efforts to end chronic homelessness for persons with disabilities by helping them to access permanent housing linked with community-based supportive and healthcare services, as well as help persons with disabling conditions divert or transition from more restrictive living environments.

CONCLUSION

The result of these statutory codifications has led to increased appropriations and a greater commitment to Florida Housing’s SHIP and SAIL programs:

- FY 2014-2015: Total appropriation of \$167.66 Million
- FY 2015-2016: Total appropriation of \$175 Million
- FY 2016-2017: Total appropriation of \$200.1 Million

Since 2011 1,099 units in 62 developments have been created for persons with special needs in the state of Florida. SB 1534 will go further in establishing permanent rental and supportive housing for persons with special needs. In conjunction with the funding from the state Legislature, the policy changes that were codified via the passage of SB 1534 will positively affect the special needs community for years to come. The path to success was not one of Florida Housing’s alone, it was the synergy among elected officials, state agencies, the stakeholder communities, and passionate citizens that allowed these policy changes to come to fruition.

Housing for Persons with Special Needs: Visual Aids

Success Story

Duval Park is an 88 unit permanent supportive rental housing development in St. Petersburg, Florida. It opened in March 2016 and was fully leased within 45 days. The majority of the permanent supportive housing is set aside for veterans. At least 40 percent of the units must be set-aside for veterans with disabilities, including those with significant service-connected disabling conditions that are transitioning from facilities within a designated VA Hospital or medical center. Duval Park is a new construction development that helped veterans gain and maintain optimal independence and self-sufficiency in their community through stable and affordable housing that is linked with community-based services and resources. Many of the residents will wounded veterans who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan, and are transitioning out of Bay Pines VA Medical Center, James Haley Veterans Hospital, and the Tampa Polytrauma/Traumatic Brain Injury Rehabilitation Center. Thirty percent of the units are fully accessible for persons that are mobility impaired or wheelchair bound. An intent of this development is to enable veterans to transition out of the VA hospital, nursing home and rehabilitation center more quickly Duval Park not only provides quality affordable housing for veterans, but also their families.

Duval Park is a private/public partnership including Boley Centers, Inc., Pinellas Affordable Housing, ServiceSource's Warrior Bridge Program, and Blue Sky Communities, LLC. Florida Housing Finance Corporation awarded Duval Park competitive housing credits and SAIL funds. The development also received a grant from the Home Depot Foundation and HUD Project Based Section 8 Vouchers for most 90% of the units.



