

Self-Paced Interactive Training for Housing Partners

North Carolina Housing Finance Agency
Special Achievement

HFA Staff Contact

Mandi Gormas

mhgormas@nchfa.com

The Need: In 2020, North Carolina’s independent reviewer reported a need for Fair Housing training for housing partners who serve people with disabilities. The reviewer challenged the NC Housing Finance Agency (the Agency) to provide additional training to help strengthen their retention of Fair Housing rights discussed at the larger free Fair Housing trainings offered throughout the year in partnership with Legal Aid of North Carolina. The Agency recognized the training challenges of busy housing professionals/advocates and how that impacts their retention and frequency of trainings. These partners have huge workloads coupled with high employee turnover rates that existed long before the “Great Resignation.” Their understanding of Fair Housing is paramount to getting and keeping vulnerable populations housed.

The Response: The Agency needed to make autonomous trainings that are easily accessible, engaging and most importantly, relevant. With that in mind, the Agency wrote, designed and produced self-paced interactive e-Learning trainings focused on refreshers for both Fair Housing advocacy and program guidelines that would be forwarded to our target audience throughout the year. Our initial goal was to build five Fair Housing refresher trainings that were supplemental to the Agency’s full trainings; however, these trainings were so well received that the Agency developed best program practices courses.

The Agency collaborated with the NC Department of Health and Human Services—Aging and Adult Services to write content for multiple programs around the following topics:

- Assistance animals in housing
- Community engagement
- Eviction due to nonpayment
- Fair housing resources for service providers
- Informed decision-making process and tools
- Calculating income correctly for program purposes
- Reasonable accommodation and reasonable modification

These trainings used real-life scenarios to write conversation simulations and knowledge checks. Learners make decisions, hone their critical thinking skills and then receive instant feedback on their choices. Other features encourage learning retention and engagement, and additional resources and other trainings are promoted within the refreshers.

Innovation: Interactive trainings are usually linked to costly learning management systems that limit course access to just registered learners, but anyone seeking training has access to these e-Learnings because they’re hosted on the Agency’s website. Learners can take the trainings from their desktop, tablet or phone, and they can easily forward the link to anyone else interested in the topic. These interactive trainings combine the ease of learning on YouTube with the science of learning retention.

Benefits that Outweigh Costs: These e-Learnings were developed in-house to keep costs down. The cost for stock photos, stock videos, music and software to host the e-Learnings on the Agency’s website was just under \$1,000 but these trainings fostered benefits beyond the state reviewer’s initial request. Learners provided positive feedback and felt comfortable enough to make suggestions for additional refresher topics. The e-Learnings are able to reach audiences in real time when they need the training and not just through email blasts because they are easily forwardable. For example, when an outside

partner is struggling with calculating program income, a staff member can easily forward the partner the relevant interactive training.

Achieve Intended Results: The Agency's 2022 year-end goal of 100 unique page views was exceeded in the first four months of this year. Unique views have already reached 116 with an average time on page exceeding two minutes. Approximately 65 learners completed the first course released in December of 2020. Approximately 120 learners completed the latest course released in January of 2022. This growth in active users indicates these e-Learnings are reaching more and more of our target audience which was exactly the purpose of hosting them on the Agency's website. The Agency continues to develop Fair Housing and best program practices courses.

"I learned a great deal about informed decision-making," an LME/MCO employee said. "For example, in informed decision-making it's always best to provide [a member with] accurate information so that a member can decide based off facts."

"[The training] helped me understand that there are ways to help our members maintain housing.... I downloaded the reasonable accommodations form from the training... I thought [it] was super helpful, especially for me being new to this field."-LME/MCO employee

Visual Aids

Access the interactive trainings here: <https://www.nchfa.com/training-community-living-partners>

Course Summaries

Fair Housing Refreshers for Service Providers

Assistance Animals in Housing



🕒 9 mins

Refresh your introductory knowledge of assistance animal guidance from the American's with Disabilities Act and Fair Housing Act.

Eviction Due to Nonpayment



🕒 8-10 mins

Test your introductory knowledge of eviction due to nonpayment. Then participate in a conversation simulation with instant feedback.

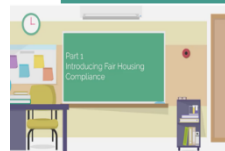
Fair Housing Resources



🕒 6 mins

Explore ways you can remain current with Fair Housing guidance in between the recommended annual full Fair Housing trainings

Reasonable Accommodation & Reasonable Modification Part 1



🕒 6 mins

Refresh your introductory knowledge of Fair Housing compliance for reasonable accommodations and reasonable modifications.

Reasonable Accommodation & Reasonable Modification Part 2



🕒 8 mins

Review best practices for writing clear and concise reasonable accommodation and reason modification letters.

Skilled-Based Training for Service Providers

Community Engagement Part 1 Communication Strategies



🕒 9 mins

Refresh your understanding of conversation strategies that can help you discover your client's interests and goals for community engagement.

Community Engagement Part 2 Communication Strategies



🕒 7-10 mins

Exercise your communication skills in this conversation simulation and discover a client's interests and goals for community engagement.

Informed Decision-Making



🕒 19 mins

Familiarize yourself with informed decision-making and how to use the informed decision-making tool.

Questions to Ask Members When Calculating Income

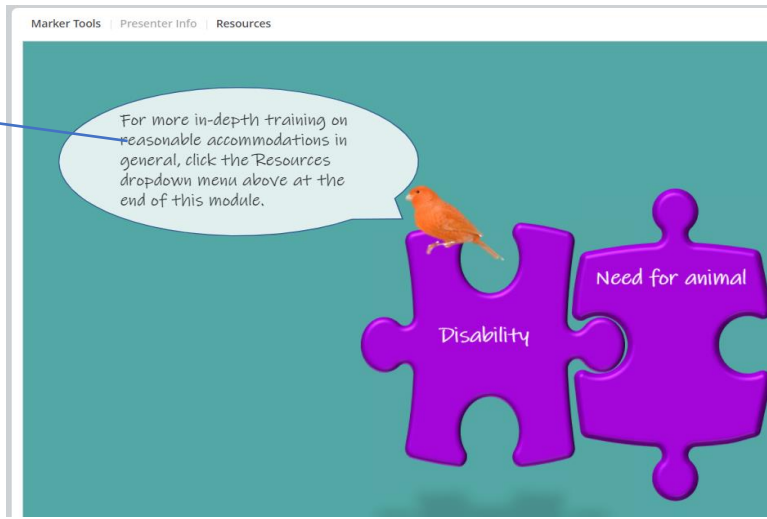


🕒 6-8 mins

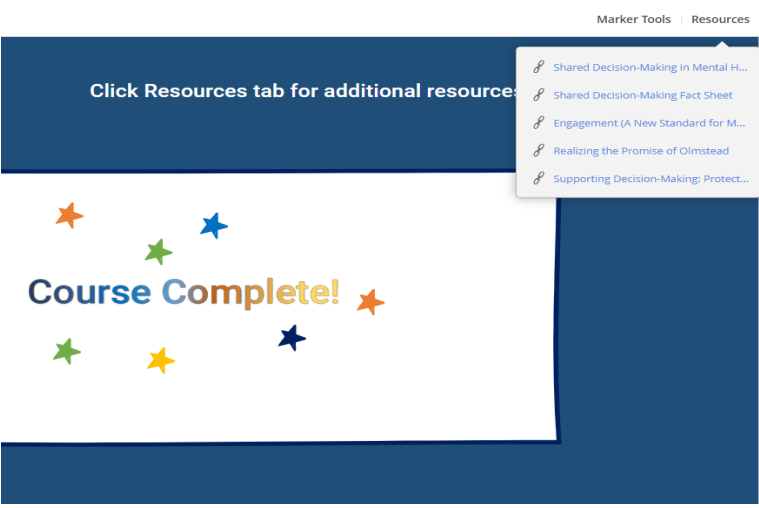
Familiarize yourself with a Program Income Calculation Worksheet and how to get an accurate understanding of your member's income for program purposes.

Self-Paced Interactive Training Features

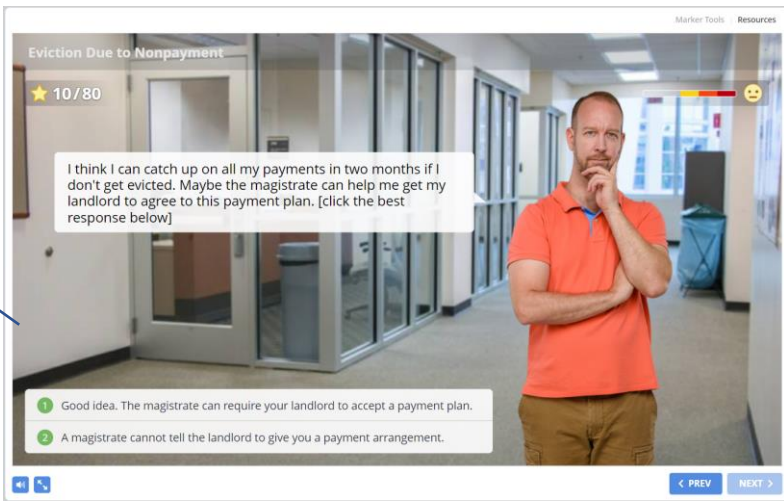
Promote trainings within trainings



Link additional resources



Practice responses to clients



Resources | Question 2 of 2 | Your Score: 10 of 20

KNOWLEDGE CHECK

You must reference the Americans with Disabilities Act when requesting a reasonable accommodation or reasonable modification.

True
 False

Incorrect

Incorrect. Although it is recommended to reference the Americans with Disabilities Act, it is not required. Reasonable accommodations and reasonable modifications don't require any special language.

CONTINUE >

Explain why an answer is incorrect

Resources | Question 1 of 10 | Your Score: 0 of 0

Reasonable Accommodation Reasonable Modification

DROP HERE DROP HERE

A tenant asks the housing provider if he can install a ramp leading from his unit to the sidewalk.

SUBMIT

Require interactivity

Fair Housing Resources for Service Providers Resources

Main Menu

Let's look at ways you can stay current with fair housing training...

- ✓ Fair Housing Trainings
- Fair Housing eLearning
- Fair Housing Websites

8 / 19 00:04 / 00:04 < PREV NEXT >

Customize training for LME/MCOs vs. advocate

Marker Tools Resources

Are you an employee at an LME/MCO? Click the box below that applies.

YES NO

14 / 32 00:00 / 00:00

< PREV NEXT >

Review the forms used in workflow

Marker Tools Presenter Info Resources

RAGuide.pdf

EXAMPLE C-2
 REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION REQUEST FOR CURRENT TENANT

If the information isn't directly related to the request, it isn't necessary.

7 / 22 00:19 / 00:19

< PREV NEXT >

Marker Tools Presenter Info Resources

Participants Name _____ Effective Date _____

Type of Certification (Move In, Interim, Baseline) _____

Step 1: Income Calculation

ADSD		
Employment Income		
Other Disability Income (DDI) _____ V.A. _____		
Community Living Assistance Income (CLAI)** (not included during first 4 months of tenancy - LME/MCO required to completed Interim Certification effective month <u> </u> of lease period)		
Other Source of Income		
Other Source of Income		
ESTIMATED TOTAL MONTHLY INCOME (sum of all income)	\$	

Notes: - Income does not include other resources or benefits, such as Special Assistance in Home, Food and Nutrition Services or Energy Assistance
 **LME/MCO is required to perform Interim Certification at month 3 and include CLAI to determine rent/subsidy amounts

18 / 20 00:05 / 00:09

< PREV NEXT >

Model realistic examples

The screenshot displays a training interface with a dark blue background. On the left, a woman's profile picture is shown next to three blue speech bubbles containing her statements: "I've wanted to for a long time.", "I've always wanted to take classes so I can work with animals but I won't.", and "I don't want to go through a lot of schooling." On the right, a man's profile picture is shown next to three white speech bubbles containing his questions: "What do you think about furthering your education?", "That's interesting. Tell me more about that.", and "Why do you feel that way?". Below these, a white text box contains the text: "Without an Assumed Limit", "The service provider kept the conversation going and discovered more about his client when he didn't assume anything.", and a red arrow pointing right with the text "CLICK NEXT". At the bottom, there is a navigation bar with a play button, "10 / 24", "00:39 / 00:39", and buttons for "PREV" and "NEXT".

Solicit feedback

The screenshot shows a feedback question in a training interface. The question text reads: "Thank you for taking this course! Before you go, are there any fair housing topics you'd like to learn more about? Be as specific as possible." Below the text is a large empty rectangular box for the user's response. To the right of the box is a teal graphic with a central lightbulb icon and arrows pointing to the words "Where", "When", "Who", and "Why". At the bottom right, there is a blue "SUBMIT" button. The interface also shows "Fair Housing Resources for Service Providers" and "Question 1 of 1 | Resources | Question List" at the top.