Job Description
UNITY of Greater New Orleans
Housing Specialist
Rebuilding Communities Shelter Plus Care Program

TITLE: Housing Specialist

TYPE OF POSITION: 1 FTE

DIRECT SUPERVISOR: S+C Program Manager

POSITION OVERVIEW
The Housing Specialist is responsible for housing coordination duties with UNITY’s new Hurricane Shelter Plus Care program which will provide Shelter Plus Care services (rental subsidies plus services) for homeless persons who meet Shelter Plus Care eligibility criteria.

SPECIFIC DUTIES

1) Completes Permanent Supportive Housing application with all required accompanying documentation supporting eligibility and submitted to S+C Program Manager who will submit to appropriate LLA. (Client caseload will be assigned by S+C Program Manager who will work closely with Director of Supportive Housing Registry.)

2) Obtains the following documentation that will be needed for the PSH application:
   - Documentation of homelessness
   - Documentation of income
   - Documentation of disability
   - Completed “Need for PSH” form

3) Conducts housing search to secure appropriate housing for each participant of his/her choice that does not exceed area Fair Market Rents. An array of choices will be presented to the client including scattered sites throughout the area and possibly PSH tax credit properties, if appropriate. When conducting the housing search, the Housing Specialist will take into consideration other factors that will result in a successful housing placement including: type of neighborhood needed for mental health/substance abuse concerns; first floor vs. second floor apartment if client is physically disabled, whether utilities are included (preferred), whether unit has a refrigerator and stove/oven (preferred), etc. The UNITY Welcome Home HousingLink services will be utilized which include personalized housing referrals from the www.unityhousinglink.org website and Housing Link staff. Collaborates with staff who will be completing HQS inspections for units.

4) Once a unit is identified, coordinate a HQS inspection with a certified UNITY staff person; in case of emergency, Housing Specialist may need to complete HQS inspection.

5) Completes a rent reasonableness survey on all properties receiving Shelter Plus Care funds
6) Explains Hurricane Recovery S+C program to landlord and negotiates Housing Assistance Contract to be co-signed with UNITY.
7) Negotiates lease with landlord/property owner and collaborates with DHH Housing Support Team to be present for lease signing.
8) Calculates rent for participant using S+C Rent Calculation Form and obtains client signature agreeing to pay the tenant portion of the rent.
9) After housing is secured and participant moves into housing, the primary case management will be provided from the DHH Housing Support Team (HST). An effort will be made to have all parties present at the lease signing (participant, housing specialist and HST).
10) After the HST begins the provision of services, communication between the Housing Coordinator and the client or landlord will primarily focus on problems relating to housing stability - rent payment to landlord and coordination for re-housing, should it become necessary.
11) Case files will be maintained for each participant containing necessary eligibility and referral documentation. Case files should include the following documentation: homelessness, income, disability, lease agreement, provision of case management from HST, HMIS, case/progress notes with client and landlord, rent reasonableness survey, HQS inspections, etc.
12) All client data should be entered into HMIS (Homeless Management Information System) within 24 hours after program entry.
13) Attend housing-related workshops and receive training as required by supervisor.
14) Compiles and prepares appropriate program reports and other required reports as necessary.
15) Attends regular staff meetings and other meetings with HST, LLA, etc. as necessary.