



No Subsidy No Problem: Housing Selection and Advocacy Tips

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A housing subsidy is not the reason someone acquires and/or maintains housing stability in the community.

CMHA Middlesex Housing First team has housed over 100 people in the past 2 years without a rental subsidy.



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Focus of Presentation

- How to search for and find safe, affordable housing
- Strategies on how to build relationships with landlords, building managers and property owners
- How to effectively and successfully work with landlords without having the subsidy incentive
- How to balance the needs of the client, landlord, stability workers and community partners



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The Selection and Recruitment Process of Units

4 A's

- Affordability
- Availability
- Accessibility
- Appropriateness



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Affordability

- Rooms for those on OW shouldn't exceed \$425/month
- Nothing over \$600/month for single occupant on ODSP, ODSP/CPP
- Search online postings, network with landlords



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Availability

- Willingness to consider our clients as potential tenants
- Provide realistic incentives for why our clients should be considered
- Be empathetic to the concerns of landlords
- Start to establish a credible relationship



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Accessibility

- Geographically preferred and varied
- Stairs vs elevator
- Bus routes
- Community resources



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Appropriateness

- Neighbourhood
- Avoiding triggers
 - Substance use
 - Trauma
 - Social network
- Demographics
 - Age
 - Socioeconomic factors
 - Cultural



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Building and Maintaining Relationships with Landlords

- Contact landlords to explain role of Housing Selection & Advocacy Worker and Housing Stability Workers
- Consents signed by clients giving us permission to speak with landlords
- Community supports –PGT, ODSP, OW, HSB, direct rent payments, arrears payments, etc.
- Staff support during tours and viewings of units



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Building and Maintaining Relationships with Landlords

- Onsite support –Housing Stability Workers
 - Financial
 - Interpersonal
 - Substance use
 - Mental health
- Act quickly on concerns related by landlords, i.e.:
 - Late rent payments
 - Guest management
 - Increased traffic of drugs, sex, etc.
 - Property damage, noise complaints
 - Increased mental health concerns

Building and Maintaining Relationships with Landlords

- Rapidly rehousing tenants
 - Low vacancy rates, quick transitions
- Trying to avoid and prevent legal issues
 - Beneficial for both landlord and tenants



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5 Step Guide to Guest Management

1. Establish rapport with tenant
2. Respond quickly and respectfully to concerns
3. Communicate risks and consequences clearly to all parties involved
4. Offer supports and resources to vulnerable individuals in need of housing
5. Follow up plan: be aware of indicators, safety concerns; encourage tenant to contact supports early



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Dealing with Trespassing

Trespass to Property Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. T.21

Trespass an offence

2. (1) Every person who is not acting under a right or authority conferred by law and who,

- (a) without the express permission of the occupier, the proof of which rests on the defendant,
 - (i) enters on premises when entry is prohibited under this Act, or
 - (ii) engages in an activity on premises when the activity is prohibited under this Act; or
- (b) does not leave the premises immediately after he or she is directed to do so by the occupier of the premises or a person authorized by the occupier,

is guilty of an offence and on conviction is liable to a fine of not more than \$10,000. R.S.O. 1990, c. T.21, s. 2 (1); 2016, c. 8, Sched. 6, s. 1.



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Trespassing and Giving Notice



Limited permission

4. (1) Where notice is given that one or more particular activities are permitted, all other activities and entry for the purpose are prohibited and any additional notice that entry is prohibited or a particular activity is prohibited on the same premises shall be construed to be for greater certainty only. R.S.O. 1990, c. T.21, s. 4 (1).

Limited prohibition

(2) Where entry on premises is not prohibited under section 3 or by notice that one or more particular activities are permitted under subsection (1), and notice is given that a particular activity is prohibited, that activity and entry for the purpose is prohibited and all other activities and entry for the purpose are not prohibited. R.S.O. 1990, c. T.21, s. 4 (2).

Method of giving notice

5. (1) A notice under this Act may be given,

(a) orally or in writing;

(b) by means of signs posted so that a sign is clearly visible in daylight under normal conditions from the approach to each ordinary point of access to the premises to which it applies; or

(c) by means of the marking system set out in section 7. R.S.O. 1990, c. T.21, s. 5 (1).



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Trespassing Support



NOTICE OF TRESPASS TO

CMHA Middlesex hereby gives you formal notice under the provisions of the *Trespass to Property Act* that you are prohibited from entering the lands and premises owned by CMHA Middlesex municipally located at _____.

This notice is given to you pursuant to sections 2, 3 and 5 of the *Trespass to Property Act*.

Should you be found on these premises in future, CMHA Middlesex will not hesitate to prosecute by all means available at law, including contacting the London Police Service to enforce this Trespass Notice.

Dated this _ day of _____, at London Ontario

Per: – Manager Property Services CMHA Middlesex



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CMHA Middlesex Landlord Recruitment and Retention Plan

The Housing Selection and Advocacy Worker (HSAW) will support the Housing First program by obtaining appropriate private sector housing throughout London for individuals with a mental illness experiencing homelessness or having a history of chronic homelessness. The Housing Selection and Advocacy Worker will develop and maintain effective relationships and working partnerships with landlords, property owners, and/or property management. In addition, the Housing Selection and Advocacy Worker will support individuals at risk of homelessness, to find and procure accommodation of their choice consistent with providing a psychosocial model of care.

To foster a collaborative working relationship with landlords the Housing Selection and Advocacy Worker will:

- Locate and engage private sector property owners, property managers and/or landlords with emphasis on the support the Housing First program can provide;
- Secure a number of appropriate, scattered housing units from varied geographic locations within the City of London including diverse building and unit types and a range in affordability, amenities and support levels



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Landlord Recruitment and Retention Continued

- Inspect all housing options and maintain an inventory of above housing options;
- Clarify perceptions of the role of CMHA Housing First regarding landlord and tenant relationships;
- Facilitate open and monthly communication with landlords/building superintendents to ensure positive relationships and resolve immediate concerns or issues;
- Ensure landlords/building superintendents understand the nature of the partnership, the role and function of Housing Support Worker and the goals and objectives of CMHA Housing First;
- Develop practices and protocols that promote positive housing outcomes including such things as pay direct for rent and utilities and conflict resolution practices;
- Organize a landlord roundtable of CMHA Housing First partners that convenes 2-4 times per year to discuss community progress, possible concerns and strategies for resolution or program enhancement;
- Facilitate an Open Housing Advocacy and Resource Group for individuals served to provide them with: communication skills with landlords, local housing resources, assistance with housing applications, education about the Residential Tenancy Act and assistance with navigation of the CMHA housing database.



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Community Outreach

- Housing Selection & Advocacy Worker works out of shelters, hospital and drop-in centres
- 1:1 and group meetings about how to navigate the system
- Phone calls with family members and community support workers, i.e. London Police Services, Children's Aid Society, OW/ODSP, etc.
- Partnerships with Housing Selection Workers, London Homeless Coalition, London CAREs, etc.



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Thank You



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