

Housing Choices Coalition

- Started in 1995 to create alternatives to the family home or Residential Care Facilities (aka “Group Homes”).
- Funded by SARC to help consumers gain access to affordable housing.
- Negotiated “set-asides” with affordable housing developers so lowest-cost units are targeted to people with DD.
- Also help people apply for other affordable housing (not set-aside). Moved more than 1,000 people with DD into affordable housing.

in Affordable Partner Properties

HCC maintains the wait lists for 154 affordable rental apartments set aside for people with developmental disabilities in 9 affordable rental properties, with 87 more “set-aside” apartments under development at five additional properties. Benefits of this model:

- A “sheltered” wait list leading to an integrated housing option.
- Affordable for someone without a Section 8 voucher.
- ILS or SLS is chosen by individual—support service is independent of housing choice and can change as needed without affecting housing.
- Near public transit, shopping and services.
- “Green” building standards, professionally managed, with on-site support by HCC.



When is Housing “Affordable”?

- Best Case: Individual has Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) and pays only 30% of household income for rent--can apply for any apartment that will accept Section 8 Fair Market Rent.
- Next Best Case: Individual gains access to a property with Project-Based Housing Vouchers (PBVs) so rent equals 30% of the actual household income. (\$270 if income is \$900/month.)
- More Likely: Rent is fixed to be “affordable” to a household earning a specific percentage of the Area Median Income. For example, at Fourth Street Apartments, rent is “affordable” to people at 25% of Santa Clara County Area Median Income)
 - 1 Bedroom/1 bath: \$465

Housing Cooperatives

- An independent living alternative to the group home, at an affordable rent (\$350/month).
- 4 or 5 people share a single-family home, each with his or her own key, no live-in staff.
- Residents have a private bedroom and share the common space.
- Residents adopt house rules, meet regularly to discuss issues.
- Residents choose their own ILS—support service is tailored to each individual's need and is independent of housing choice. Can be changed over time without affecting housing.
- 20 hours/week of on-site support by HCC for the housing community.



What it takes...



Planning and Follow Through

- Plan several years ahead: Assess housing and support needs well in advance of urgency.
- Create housing goals for IEP and IPP that reflect desired balance of independence and support.
- Create and implement a specific housing plan.
 - Apply for appropriate wait lists. Keep contact info current.
 - Monitor new properties or properties that re-open wait lists.
 - Evaluate multiple options for ILS or SLS and have support plan in place in advance of housing availability.
 - Be prepared for long wait followed by short turn-

Finding Affordable Housing with Open Wait Lists

- The Bad News: Wait lists open and close. Every property has different rent and income guidelines. No centralized source of information on affordable housing wait lists that are open in SF.
- The Good News: Regional Center will fund POS-based services for housing intake and housing search provided by HCC, which maintains current information on each property's rent and income guidelines and whether the wait list is open or closed.

Once you're on a wait list....

- Maintain up-to-date contact information—address, phone, email.
- Respond immediately to “purge” letters.
- Call property manager regularly to ask about wait list status. Be persistent but not annoying.
- Be ready to respond immediately when called for a vacancy with updated application, recent SSI award letter, 3 months paycheck stubs, 6 months bank statements, cashier's check or money order to pay for background check.

Creating More Housing Opportunities

- What we “should” do.
- What we “can” do.
- What we “will” do.

What We Can Do: Planning Commission Advocacy

- Each local government must have a Housing Element in its General Plan that meets its regional fair share of the affordable housing need.
- The Housing Element must quantify and address the specific housing needs of people with DD.
- What does your city's Housing Element state? What projects are in the works that address the need?
- How to organize to be a voice in this process?

What We Can Do: PHA Advocacy

- Section 8 wait list is closed.
- Section 8 Preference? Public Housing Authority has policy discretion to provide preferential wait list treatment for Section 8 vouchers—
- PBVs? PHA has the authority to competitively award Project Based Vouchers to units specifically set aside for people with DD—what is the PHA's history of using this strategy and how can they be induced to try it?

What We Can Do: Statewide Advocacy

- Advocate for CHFA to submit a program design for 811 funding that better aligns with the needs of people with DD in SF (most of whom are not "exiting institutions").
- Advocate for DDS to make CPP dollars available for housing people with DD who are not exiting DCs. One proposal is for "operating savings" from closing DCs (\$400,000 annually/resident) be committed to affordable housing and other community services.
- Advocate for CA Housing and Jobs Act SB 391 on condition of set-asides for people with DD.

What Will We Do?

- Questions?
